Adapting to Devolution: Governmental Participation and Organisational Reform in Plaid Cymru and the Scottish National Party

Craig McAngus
School of Government and Public Policy
University of Strathclyde

Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

October, 2013

Declaration of Authenticity and Author's Rights

‘This thesis is the result of the author’s original research. It has been composed by the author and has not been previously submitted for examination which has led to the award of a degree.’

Signed:

Date:

Table of Contents

List of Figures and Tables

Acknowledgements

When I embarked upon this project back in autumn 2010, I had a number of expectations about what the process would be like. In some ways it has been much tougher than what I expected: dead ends, pieces of written work cast aside, the periods of utter despair when an obvious way forward was not forthcoming, and the frequent disconnect between brain and project. On the whole however, the process has been an extremely positive one. Not only have I learned an awful lot, but I feel that I have matured as a human being and finally discovered the discipline and focus which I had for a time and then lost in my teenage years.

The person who has been absolutely crucial in this process has been my wife, Johanna. Without her I would never have gotten this far. Her pragmatism, common sense and amazing ability to see the bigger picture, as well as her sharp intellect and fabulous attention to detail, have been invaluable in helping me reach this point. I apologise profusely for the many absences, grumpy demeanours and the all too frequent periods I had to focus on the thesis rather than focus on being a good husband. I hope this goes some way to making up for all of that.

Many things have happened over the last 3 years: I got married, moved home, lost a much loved lap-friend and companion, travelled to previously unvisited places and met fantastic people, but the jewel in the crown was the birth of my daughter, Frieda. The oldest cliché in the book is that of the proud father, but it is undoubtedly true. She is the apple of her Dadda's eye and a constant source of joy, laughter and amazement. At the time of writing this, she is just over 20 months old and is beginning to speak and providing glimpses of what her personality might be like. We are also eagerly awaiting the arrival of Frieda's brother who, all being well, will make his way into the world soon after New Year (indeed, as I make my corrections, Philip has made his way into the world.)

The academic support I have received over the last few years has been vital. A special ‘thank you’ goes out to my supervisor, James Mitchell, who has supported, advised and dragged me through this process. His expertise, knowledge and oversight have been invaluable and crucial. Thanks also to Mark Shephard who, with his colourful, abstract and often hilarious analogies, has been a big help, along with Stratos Patrikios who interjected discussions with statements like ‘I want to talk now about data’ and thus provided an important perspective that prevented my thinking becoming too parochial. I must also mention Neil McGarvey, who started the wheels turning in the first place, as well as Peter Lynch who sparked my interest in devolution as an undergraduate. (Thanks are also extended to Richard Wyn Jones and Heinz Brandenburg who examined my thesis and suggested the corrections which have undoubtedly made it better, as well as Neil McGarvey who chaired proceedings.)

The best part about doing a PhD is the people you meet along the way. In Arno Van De Zwet, Alan Convery and Rosie Greig I have met people who I know will be my close friends for life. This is not to overlook the wider (former) PhD community at Strathclyde: you know who you are! It has also been a pleasure to meet fellow young researchers who I would probably not have crossed paths with had it not been for this project. In particular, Malcolm Harvey, Adam Evans, Siân Powell and Ed Poole have all contributed in some way to my understanding of Scottish and Welsh politics. Lastly, but certainly not least, an enormous amount of gratitude goes to Elliot Bulmer, who has provided with incredible insight, new knowledge, and questions to ponder.

I must also take time to thank those people who have helped me get access to documentary material, interviewees and kept me up to date with internal developments. Cat Robertson, Ian McCann and Cai Jones were particularly helpful. However, the person who helped me out more than anyone was Caryl Wyn Jones who was instrumental in helping me when I travelled to Cardiff for fieldwork. Without her, I would have been genuinely lost. I also

wish to thank all of those who I interviewed, as well as all the staff who worked for many of these interviewees who kept me entertained when things were running late and provided me with many a biscuit and a cup of tea.

All of those mentioned above, as well as others, have contributed to this thesis in some shape or form. There are others who don't appear on this list, but that does not make me any less grateful. Any mistakes and shortcomings are, of course, entirely my own.

Craig McAngus, October 2013 (March 2014)

Abstract

Recent contributions to the study of autonomist parties have examined their development in the context of sub-state governing structures such as devolution n Wales and Scotland. Using this, and other relevant literature, this thesis examines the recent organisational development and governmental experience of Plaid Cymru and the Scottish National Party (SNP), and explores how they have adapted to the opportunity structure that is devolution. The thesis takes a comparative case study approach and deploys mixed methods, using interview, documentary and survey data in the empirical analysis. The thesis finds that whilst the SNP were able to achieve unprecedented electoral success in the 2011 Scottish elections from the position of incumbency, Plaid Cymru suffered electorally due to, in part, organisational vulnerabilities. This led to an internal review of the party's structures and subsequent reforms which mirror, fairly closely, reforms undertaken by the SNP in 2003-2004. Despite the different experiences of government and varying triggers for organisational reform, both parties have adapted to devolution by, essentially, becoming more office-seeking organisations and placing greater emphasis on electoral success as a strategic imperative for the achievement of their primary goals.

Chapter 1 – Introduction

Introduction

Plaid Cymru[1] and the SNP, formed in 1925 and 1934 respectively, exist to challenge the power and authority of the British state in Wales and Scotland by advocating succession from it. Both parties share similarities in the sense that they share broadly comparable objectives. Unlike the SNP, Plaid has historically placed more focus on cultural aspects of Welsh national identity, particularly the Welsh language. Furthermore, both parties differ in parallel with the way that Wales and Scotland differ from each other in terms of their relationship with the broader UK. These differences reflect the make-up of the UK itself, described by Mitchell (2009a) as a 'state of unions'.

Both Plaid and the SNP made a significant political impact in the 1960's and 1970's. Gwynfor Evans, former president of Plaid, famously won the constituency of Carmarthen in a by-election in 1966, followed by the SNP's famous win in the safe Labour seat of Hamilton in a 1967 by-election. In his book *Union and Unionisms*, Colin Kidd (2008) describes the constitutional status quo in Scotland up until the 1970's as one of 'banal unionism'. This concept invariably applies to the nature of the Anglo-Welsh union as well. The rise of Plaid and the SNP challenged and ended this period of 'banal unionism' and brought the 'state of unions' into sharp, political focus. For the first time since the 1880's, the issue of how autonomous the national units which make up the UK should be *vis-a-vis* the central British state was firmly on the agenda.

Referendums were held in 1979 in Wales and Scotland with both failing to produce the necessary result which would lead to Welsh and Scottish Assembly's being created. The 1980's, however, saw the continued salience of the devolution question, at least in Scotland. Much of the Welsh and Scottish electorate rejected the social and economic agenda of Margaret Thatcher's Conservative government which oversaw the radical

[1] Plaid Cymru will be known as 'Plaid' from this point on.

transformation of the economies of both nations, resulting in the closure of the vast majority of the traditional industries such as coal and steel. Labour, under the leadership of Tony Blair, decisively won the 1997 general election and held referendums on the question of devolution once again. This time, both plebiscites produced a positive result in the sense that devolved institutions received popular support and were duly opened in 1999.

Overnight, the opportunity structure for both Plaid and the SNP changed. These parties of mere protest now had the opportunity to become parties of government and therefore the capacity and opportunity to strive towards their objectives. Being in government is a learning process in itself, throwing up the challenge of reconciling a new status as well as discovering the challenges that government entails with regards to meeting competing objectives. Furthermore, both parties faced choices in terms of how to adapt as organisations to the new context in which they found themselves. The SNP undertook fundamental reforms to their organisational structures in 2004 and thus professionalised in order to become a more effective vote-winning machine. Plaid, on the other hand, experienced government first before completing a substantial reform process in 2013. Both parties have thus adapted to devolution, with organisational reform and governmental participation being key, interrelated themes in that adaptation and development. It is this theme that will be the focus of this thesis.

Why Study Plaid and the SNP? – Research Rationale

In 2007, both Plaid Cymru and the SNP entered government for the first time. Up until the advent of the National Assembly for Wales (NAW) and the Scottish Parliament in 1999, both parties could only concentrate their electoral efforts, aside from winning seats on local councils, at the UK level. The UK operates a single member plurality electoral system for general elections, more commonly known as First-Past-The-Post (FPTP), which has resulted in Labour and the Conservatives being the dominant parties in terms of seats won, at least since the Second World War. Despite often winning a relatively large share of the vote, a lack of geographical concentration in key

constituencies meant that Plaid and the SNP have struggled to turn this support into parliamentary representation in the House of Commons. The logical continuation of this historical fact has also meant that governmental participation at the state-wide level has been a remote possibility at best.

Devolution transformed the strategic prospects for both parties. Government was now a distinct possibility. More importantly was the prospect of using the new institutions as a platform for the promotion of the further transfer of powers from the UK level to Wales and Scotland. Both parties advocate independent statehood for their respective nations, and both parties have, on the whole, regarded holding office at the devolved level as a crucial stepping stone to achieving that end. The presence of both parties in government between 2007 and 2011 has indeed initiated constitutional change and set the agenda in a way which has increased the salience of constitutional issues in the UK. In Scotland, the pro-UK parties set up the Calman Commission, the recommendations of which heavily influenced the Scotland Act 2012 which will eventually see a range of tax powers devolved to the Scottish parliament.[2] The SNP were also able to use governmental office as an agenda-setting mechanism with the undertaking of a public consultation scheme, the so-called 'National Conversation', as well as the publication of a range of government documents discussing and exploring different aspects of Scottish independence. The SNP went on to win an unprecedented majority in the 2011 Scottish election, and a referendum on Scottish independence will be held on the 18th of September 2014. In Wales, a referendum was held in March 2011 which led to the first primary law-making body in Wales since 1400. Furthermore, the ongoing Silk Commission is looking into a range of tax powers and further policy competencies which can be devolved to the NAW. Plaid's role as a junior coalition partner in government played a crucial role in these developments.

The role that both Plaid and the SNP are playing in constitutional change in the UK is an important one and academic interest in the two parties is

[2] This is dependent on there being a 'No' vote in the independence referendum.

growing. Literature on the SNP (Lynch, 2002, 2009; Mitchell, 1996, 2009b; Mitchell et al, 2012) and Plaid (McAllister, 2001; Elias, 2009b, 2009c; 2011; Wyn Jones, 2009) has considered the historical background, ideological change, development of thought, and the nature of the party membership (in the case of the SNP). The aim of this thesis is to contribute to this literature in the sense of understanding both parties, but it also aims to place the findings in a wider theoretical context. The thesis will focus on both of these parties in the form of a comparative case study (Yin, 2009), and will assess how both parties have adapted to and learned from the changed opportunity structure that devolution has provided. Focussing specifically on governmental participation and organisational reform, the thesis will examine how Plaid and the SNP have learned and adapted to some of the challenges and opportunities which both parties have been presented with.

A Question of Structure and Agency

Both parties therefore face a structure-agency 'problem'. It has been argued that the structure-agency issue is too remote for key concerns of empirical research and theory building. Firstly, it is a puzzling debate and relates to the unanswerable dichotomy between determinism and free will. Are actors free to do as they wish, or are their very actions determined by the environment the find themselves in? Secondly, it is not worth reflecting upon because it boils down to little more than common understanding. Regardless of these issues, the debate is an unavoidable problem because one will always adopt a position, at least implicitly (McAnulla, 2002: 272-273). Indeed, political phenomena have traditionally been explained by camping on either one, or the other, side of this debate; factors that are structural explain or factors that are agential explain (Hay, 2002: 94).

This thesis is not a theoretical exploration of the structure-agency debate. However, it has been addressed at the outset because the philosophical basis of the thesis is drawn from such considerations; the aim is to consider the behaviour of specific agents with due regard to the effect that their environment has had on that very behaviour. Moreover, the actions of

agents are not only influenced by their context, but also the environment they operate in is influenced by the very actions of agents. Such an approach is often associated with Giddens' (1984) 'structuration theory'. Such approaches have been 'improved' somewhat in order to provide frameworks more empirically suitable and viable (McAnulla, 2002; Hay, 2002).

These philosophical issues are not explicitly dealt with in this thesis, but they are implicit considerations in guiding the analysis. Devolution, as a structure, provides both opportunities and challenges for both Plaid and the SNP. The opportunity to enter into government and instigate constitutional change, either directly or indirectly, are attractive opportunities. However, to seize these opportunities it may be necessary to engage in challenging and controversial organisational reforms in order to engage with the electoral marketplace more effectively, work closely with rival political parties and make difficult trade-offs between competing objectives in government. These challenges, of course, are analogous with the parties as agents but also parties will face tough choices between challenging the organisational ethos and traditions of the party in pursuit of professionalization, 'watering down' constitutional objectives in the pursuit of a 'softer' electoral messages, and how to reconcile anti-establishment tendencies with a mainstream political profile.

This thesis will examine the relationship between both parties as agents and their adaptation to the opportunity structure of devolution. More specifically, it will examine how Plaid and the SNP have learned and adapted by considering their organisational responses and their experiences as parties of government. Literature on parties who enter government for the first time (Bolleyer, 2008; Deschouwer, 2008) suggests that Plaid and the SNP would be susceptible to organisational, identity and electoral 'vulnerabilities'. However, parties can undertake organisational reform in anticipation of entering into government (Bolleyer, 2007), something that the SNP did in 2004. Such adaptation is evidence of having learnt from the challenges of changed opportunity structures and adapting accordingly. Plaid, on the other

hand, undertook fundamental organisational reform after being in government having learnt from the weaknesses they experience whilst in government. The thesis will examine how Plaid and the SNP adapted to devolution in an organisational sense, looking specifically at the reasons for reform, the actual reforms that occurred, and, most importantly, what this says about the type of party that they have become. This represents one strand of the empirical investigation.

Governmental participation is the second empirical strand that this thesis will examine. Both parties, besides being relatively inexperienced when it came to the business of government, fundamentally wish to alter the institutional framework within which they operate. This thesis will examine how they managed to cope with the obvious paradox that government represents, which also illustrates how they have learned and adapted to devolution. How is the business of being a party of government which has to illustrate its competency in order to appeal to valence voters (Johns et al, 2009, 2013; Scully and Wyn Jones, 2012) reconciled with the autonomist[3] party profile? Is there even a paradox here? Literature on parties in government suggests that trade-offs need to be made (Strøm and Müller, 1999) between policy, office and vote-seeking behaviours, and the expectation is that Plaid and the SNP are no different. Chapter 2 will discuss the specific strategic challenges faced by autonomist parties in far more detail. The broad expectation is, however, that these parties face very similar challenges to any other party types (Elias and Tronconi, 2011a). How these pressures are dealt with, and perhaps overcome, will shed light on how these parties have adapted to, as well as reconciled their identities with, being parties of government.

The thesis therefore examines the theme of change. How have Plaid and the SNP adapted and learned from the institutional and political context within which they found themselves? Both parties have professionalised their organisational structures, thus adapting to the changed electoral marketplace created by devolution, and both parties have gone into government, either

[3] There are a number of different labels and names that have been used for this party family, but this thesis will refer to them as 'autonomist' throughout.

alone or in a coalition, and had to come to terms with their new found status and reconcile this with their identity as autonomist parties. This essentially means investigating how both parties managed the balancing act between pursuing autonomist, 'primary' goals and providing competent government.

It is important to provide context for the research, both in terms of understanding the research findings, but also to highlight the limitations and opportunity for meaningful comparison. This means an overview of the structural, institutional context and the party specific, agential factors is important in order to do this.

Institutional Contexts – The Differing Nature of Devolution in Wales and Scotland

Referendums were held in Scotland and Wales in September 1997 which provided public endorsement for the creation of the Scottish Parliament and the National Assembly for Wales in 1999. Whilst the Scottish Parliament was granted full legislative capacity over all policy areas that were not reserved at Westminster, Wales was given a much more limited form of devolution. The central principle behind Welsh devolution was the notion of executive devolution: an assembly with powers to alter only secondary legislation. To quote Bogdanor (1999: 209);

> The Government of Wales Act [1998] differs fundamentally from the Scotland Act [1998] in that it proposes a novel form of devolution, one hitherto untried in the United Kingdom. It confers executive but not primary legislative functions on a National Assembly for Wales – not a parliament as with Scotland. The assembly will have the power, transferred from ministers, primarily the Secretary of State for Wales, to make subordinate legislation in any areas within its competence.

As consequence of the 1998 act the assembly was 'a corporate body combining the roles and responsibilities of a legislature with those of an executive' (Shortridge, 2010: 87). In short, it had no separation of the executive and legislative branches.

Welsh and Scottish devolution were thus markedly different. As a result of the differing structures, the relationship between the main parties and the changed institutional context was immediately dissimilar. In Scotland, the

Labour-Liberal Democrat coalition, formed after the first elections to the Scottish Parliament in 1999, immediately began the business of governing and legislating. In Wales, the first year of business was, on the whole, a constitutionally difficult one (Thomas and Laffin, 2001), leading to the Labour-Liberal Democrats coalition, formed in 2000 and, immediately seeking to move towards 'the separation of powers characteristic of parliamentary government' (The Constitution Unit, 2000: 17). The restrictive nature of the powers that were granted to the NAW in 1999 was, almost immediately, a source of frustration for politicians in the NAW. The Richard Commission, which reported in 2004, recommended substantial reform of the NAW including, amongst other things, the abolishment of the corporate model and the statutory separation of powers (Wyn Jones and Scully, 2012: 44). The reserved model of devolution granted to Scotland was never challenged to this degree outside of the SNP, and only when the SNP went into government did the state-wide parties feel it necessary to form the Calman Commission in order to consider reforming Scottish devolution.

Despite the different institutional structures, devolution presented both Plaid and the SNP with a hugely different opportunity structure than what they had been used to for the majority of their existence. The opportunity to enter into government was now a serious possibility for both parties, leading to an alteration of their political potential from that of 'blackmail' potential to 'governing' potential' (Deschouwer, 2008: Sartori, 1976). However, despite the existence of this 'potential', it does not necessarily mean that Plaid and the SNP were destined to become 'mainstream' political actors. Rather, this is a deliberate strategic decision that is taken by party elites (Elias and Tronconi, 2011a: 508), although notably this decision could have been made long in advance of devolution, and this is certainly the case with Plaid (Evans, 2001; Evans, 2008; McAllister, 2001) and the SNP (Lynch, 2002; 2009; Mitchell, 1996; Mitchell, 2009b; Mitchell et al, 2012; Wilson, 2009). Despite the differences in the institutional structures within which both parties were operating, similar pressures to adapt in organisational terms to new electoral marketplaces in policy and strategic terms, maximise the capacity of

the party's membership to deliver electoral success, and show the electorate that the party in question was a credible and trustworthy government-in-waiting were present. This process did not stop with governmental participation: Plaid and the SNP used governmental status to attempt the breaking down of stereotypes which they believed sections of the electorate held such as lacking credibility, dysfunctional, ill-disciplined and solely focussed on primary goals.

Party Specific Factors

Both Plaid and the SNP belong to the so-called 'autonomist' party family. Despite the different historical, cultural and philosophical backgrounds of both parties, as well as the different relationships of Wales and Scotland *vis-a-vis* England, both Plaid and the SNP articulate disillusionment with the British state. This disillusionment is predicated on the belief that the British state harms the economic, social and democratic fabric of Wales and Scotland, resulting in both parties advocating that Wales and Scotland should be independent nation-states in their own right. However, autonomist parties often do more than just advocate independent statehood. As chapter 2 will outline in more detail, autonomist parties exist to protect and promote cultural distinctiveness, and/or campaign for more political and economic autonomy to be transferred from the central state to the territory within which they operate. In terms of the promotion and protection of cultural distinctiveness, Plaid have historically been very closely associated with the preservation and continuation of a distinctive Welsh heritage, the most common aspect of which is a pronounced involvement in the continued survival and vitality of the Welsh language. The SNP do not share such deep commitments to aspects of Scottish culture and heritage, and instead have deliberately focussed on advocating an exclusively civic conception of what it means to be Scottish (Van Der Zwet, 2012).

There is evidence to suggest that the autonomist party family is a loose one in terms of its ideological cohesiveness (De Winter and Gomez-Reino Cachafeiro, 2002). Plaid and the SNP are no different. Although both parties

have historically cooperated with each other in the House of Commons and considered each other as 'sister' parties, they are very different in terms of their philosophical roots and ideological heritage. As previously mentioned, both parties share deep misgivings when it comes to the British state and the UK as it is presently constituted, but even these misgivings, channelled in the form of the parties' 'primary goals' (Harmel and Janda, 1994), differ enough to make meaningful comparison more difficult. Plaid and the SNP's historical relationship to the European Union (EU) is an example of this: Plaid has traditionally been comfortable with a 'post-sovereign' vision of Wales within a wider 'Europe of the Regions' (Wyn Jones, 2009), whilst the SNP has seen the EU as either a hindrance or, since the 1980's, as a means to an end when it comes to the assertion of Scottish statehood. In addition, the SNP has been less influenced by the 'Europe of the Regions' ideal (Hepburn, 2008). In short, below the surface of the primary goals of both parties is a distinctiveness that, despite outward appearances, is driven by differing ideals, philosophical traditions and historical experiences. Despite these differences, there is enough commonality with regards to the general thrust of both parties' primary goals, as well as the process of becoming parties of government, in order to warrant meaningful comparison.

The Opportunities and Limitations of Comparing Plaid and the SNP

In order to provide rigorous comparative research, it is important to make sure that the units of analysis being compared result in meaningful findings. If the systems within which they operate differ then it is important to ensure that the units of analysis are similar, and if the units of analysis are markedly different then it is crucial to ensure that there is an element of control regarding the systems. As has been outlined above, there is enough difference between both systems and units of analysis to make a 'pure' comparative study problematic. However, despite these differences, it does not make meaningful comparison impossible. As chapter 4 will highlight, the adoption of the comparative case study approach circumvents many of the weaknesses inherent in the 'pure' comparative approach (Yin, 2009).

The comparative case study provides the methodological underpinning that allows for the comparison of both parties without requiring the 'scientific' rigour of the pure comparative method. This is not to say that the comparative case study method is less rigorous, but rather that it examines cases where there are more variables of interest than data points (Yin, 2009: 18). In this sense it resembles the historical approach, the exception being that it draws upon data collected from much more contemporary events.

As discussed above, Welsh and Scottish devolution, as well as Plaid and the SNP, differ quite markedly. The comparative case study method is much more able to cope with these differences. However, it is important to not overstate these differences as there are multiple aspects of overlap between the institutional contexts and the parties under investigation. Firstly, devolution exists as a 'space for politics' (Carter and Pasquier, 2010). Both parties have taken the strategic decision to adopt a 'mainstream' approach in the sense that they have decided to compete with the other main parties by broadening their electoral appeal (Elias and Tronconi, 2011a). As a result, they have shifted away from the possibility of becoming considered more as 'niche' parties (Adams et al, 2006; Hepburn, 2009; Meguid, 2005; Wagner, 2012) in the sense that they could have been more exclusively focussed on their primary goals. The history of both parties leading up to devolution suggests that such a decision was practically inevitable, as chapter 3 will discuss. What this means with regards to devolution as a 'space for politics' is that both parties consider holding governmental office as an important method through which primary goals can be enacted. Despite the differing nature of devolution in Wales and Scotland, the strategic imperatives for both parties are similar enough to warrant meaningful comparison.

Secondly, adapting to a new electoral marketplace often facilitates organisational reform in political parties (Mair et al, 2004a). In the case of Plaid, this process occurred immediately after government, whilst for the SNP in happened three years before. Despite the difference in terms of the timing of organisational reform, both parties have learned from their experience as

parties coming to terms with their new status as major political players in their respective nations. Therefore the theme of learning and adapting to pressures within and without is a common experience for both parties. Meaningful comparison is therefore possible in this regard.

Thirdly, both parties became parties of government (at nearly the same time, incidentally) and therefore experienced similar pressures to be parties of government *and* primary goal orientated entities at the same time. There is a strategic paradox here, something that is indeed common to all political parties (Elias and Tronconi, 2011a) in the form of the trade-off between policy, office and vote-seeking behaviour (Strøm and Müller, 1999). Because both parties entered government for the first time in 2007, they were both potentially subject to 'vulnerabilities' common to many parties who take the step into government for the first time in their histories. Although the form of both governments was different (Plaid entered into coalition whilst the SNP governed as a single-party minority), the pressure to at least show progress on primary goals for members and core voters, while at the same time show competence to the wider electorate, was a very real one for both parties. Again, how both parties cope and adapt is closely intertwined with the theme of learning and adaptation.

The Aims and Objectives of the Thesis

The main aim of this thesis is to examine the theme of learning, change and adaptation in Plaid and the SNP to the opportunity structure of devolution. Chapter 2 will offer a detailed theoretical framework which will guide the research. This will entail, in an empirical sense, examining the latter two of the three points for comparisons above, namely organisational reform and the experience of governmental participation. Although the first point is important and will be referred to, often implicitly, it is well covered in existing literature (Elias, 2009b, 2009c; Lynch, 2002, 2009; McAllister, 2002; Mitchell et al, 2012) and so does not require further, in-depth empirical enquiry.

Both parties have had to come to terms with the changed opportunity structures that devolution has provided. The new structures have meant that

both parties have had the opportunity to enter into government and attempt to enact their autonomist programmes. As agents with histories, identities and objectives, governmental participation outlines a structural context within which Plaid and the SNP are forced to make decisions and trade-off objectives against each other. Furthermore, as agents with an organisational heritage and ethos adapted in the context of different structural conditions, namely the UK level, they are forced into decisions regarding their internal party structures in order to make them, at least potentially, more effective in the electoral marketplace.

This thesis, essentially, examines this relationship between the parties and the structure of devolution, focussing on how they learn and adapt to the structural pressures and political opportunities that were created as a result. Because, as Deschouwer (2008: 5-6) points out, a party that enters (or actively seeks to enter) government is effectively ending its 'old' status and identity, the process of becoming that party of government, adapting to the new status, and subsequently learning from the experience are therefore components of that wider process. Although there are similarities in the experiences of both parties, there are significant differences in terms of when substantial organisational reform was carried out and the electoral outcome following governmental participation.

The overarching question this thesis aims to answer is the following: how have Plaid and the SNP learned and adapted to the changed opportunity structure of devolution? By examining their response in organisational terms, as well as their strategies as parties of government, the thesis will offer a detailed examination of how these two autonomist parties have come to terms with devolution as agents. The two empirical strands, organisational reform and governmental participation, will be drawn together in the conclusion in order to assess not only the experiences of Plaid and the SNP, but to place their experiences in the wider literature of party adaptation.

Wider Implications of the Research

The fact that this thesis focuses on Plaid and the SNP means that its findings will be of relevant to those interested in these parties. The same logic applies to individuals interested in devolution and constitutional change in the UK more widely. The constitutional fabric of the UK is under more strain than perhaps any period in its history, and therefore research into two of the parties who are responsible for a great deal of that strain is both timely and welcome. Particularly in the case of Scotland, there is now a huge amount of academic attention being paid to the question of Scottish independence and the form that Scotland's economy, governance structures and political environment will look like in the coming decade, regardless of the outcome of the referendum in 2014. The findings of this research provide a platform on which, for example, how the SNP adapts to an independent Scotland might be explored. This possibility is not lost on Plaid: the future of Welsh devolution is a major talking point in Welsh public life and how Plaid adapts and adjusts to future constitutional arrangements is equally intriguing.

The research also has relevance to scholars interested in other party families, not just the autonomist party family. How Plaid and the SNP have adapted to governmental office, undergone organisational reform, and managed strategic trade-offs as parties of government is of wider bearing in the literature of political parties. In terms of comparisons with other party families, there are similarities between the experiences of the parties under investigation here and Green parties, in particular. Green parties have faced similar pressures in terms of enacting organisational reform, making difficult strategic trade-offs, and reconciling a radical, anti-establishment identity with that of a mainstream party capable of governmental participation. These points will be discussed in more length in the concluding chapter.

The thesis is also relevant to scholars who are interested in how political parties adapt, learn and alter their strategic profiles. Firstly, the way in which Plaid and the SNP coped with governmental office, handled strategic trade-offs and pursued their primary goals are relevant to researchers examining

parties in government for the first time, how parties handle and decide amongst often conflicting strategic priorities, and reconcile fundamental principles with the everyday business of governing. Secondly, analysing organisational reform opens up channels of interest between the thesis and scholars examining professionalization processes, the relationship between party elites and the wider membership, and the changes to the organisational structure of parties that occur during periods of reform and adaptation to changing political environments.

Structure of the Thesis

The thesis is structured into nine separate chapters, including the introduction and the conclusion. The empirical chapters (chapters 5 to 8) are organised thematically, namely governmental participation and organisational reform, and deal with each party in turn within each theme.

Chapter 2 presents the theoretical framework that will be used in this thesis. It begins by offering a brief overview of literature on autonomist parties in order to outline the main motivations and objectives of this party family, as well as the challenges and opportunities that sub-state political arenas create for these parties. The chapter then discusses the theoretical implications of governmental participation, examining the political opportunities and pitfalls, government formation and make-up, and the strategic trade-offs common to most parties of government. The chapter then outlines how parties change and adapt to structural contexts, outlining firstly how the electoral marketplace places pressures on parties to professionalize, while, at the same time, the nature of parties as institutions can act as a buffer on some potential changes. The focus then turns on to the possible organisational reforms themselves, discussing how party elites attempt to redress the asset-liability balance in terms of the relationship between party leaders and party members. At this stage, a hypothesis will be offered, based on the literature, which will frame the empirical enquiry and the subsequent conclusion.

Chapter 3 offers a brief and mainly descriptive into the histories of both Plaid and the SNP. The chapter begins by discussing how Wales and Scotland

became part of the wider UK and why this is important in understanding Plaid and the SNP. The chapter then outlines the history of both parties in turn, looking at their origins, the period between 1945 and 1999, and then post-devolution developments. Chapter 4 presents the methodological approach that is adopted for this thesis. The chapter begins by outlining the comparative case study method and its limitations, the qualitative approach, and how the theoretical framework will be applied. The chapter then discusses the data used for the empirical analysis and some of the more practical aspects of the fieldwork process.

Chapters 5 and 6 explore Plaid and the SNP in government. Beginning with Plaid, chapter 5 begins by outlining Plaid's primary goals as a party, focussing on its commitment to an independent Wales and its affinity with the Welsh language. Next, the chapter looks at how these primary goals were applied in and reconciled with government. The party's experience in government is then outlined, looking at how the party balanced policy, office and vote-seeking behaviour. Chapter 6 follows a very similar pattern, exploring the SNP's primary goals, independence and the furtherance of all Scottish interests, followed by an examination of how the SNP used office in order to promote the party as competent and capable of government. As with Plaid, the chapter then goes on to assess the policy, office and votes trade-off.

Chapters 7 and 8 examine organisational change in Plaid and the SNP respectively, with both chapters following a very similar structural outline. Both chapters look at what was wrong with the previous organisational structures and why party elites believed that they needed to be reformed. The reforms themselves are assessed and analysed with regards to the theoretical framework. In the case of the SNP, the effect that these reforms have had on the party is discussed.[4]

[4] It is impossible to do this for Plaid as their organisation reforms were only finalised in February 2013. UK-wide elections are in 2015 and the next Welsh election is in 2016. It will be possible to assess the effectiveness of the reforms in far more detail then.

The thesis concludes by discussing the theoretical implications of the empirical findings and providing more direct comparison between the two parties. Firstly, governmental participation is discussed, looking specifically at the trade-offs made in government and how both parties used office to search for wider recognition as mainstream actors. The next section addresses organisational reform by outlining how both parties adapted and learned organisationally, how they legitimised reform and the manner in which they went about maintaining their ethos. The next section compares the experiences of Plaid and the SNP to Green parties, the German Greens being a particularly good example of a party from a different family that has faced similar kinds of pressures and has adapted in a similar way. A section dedicated to addressing and answering the research question is then offered, followed by a critical assessment of the recent literature on Plaid and the SNP and an overview of the thesis' place within that, and then a brief description of the future research agendas which can be built upon the work carried out in this thesis.

Chapter 2 - Theoretical Approach

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a discussion of the relevant theoretical literature which will guide the analysis of the empirical data. The aim of this thesis is to examine the theme of learning, change and adaptation in Plaid and the SNP to the opportunity structure that is devolution. Autonomist parties, broadly defined, are subject to challenges and afforded opportunities by the creation and strengthening of sub-state political arenas. In the case of the SNP and Plaid, this has meant that both parties have had to adapt to new opportunities and challenges in order to become more electorally effective and competent parties of government when the opportunity arose. How have Plaid and the SNP learned and adapted to the changed opportunity structure of devolution?

To provide an answer to the research question, two particular nuances will be explored. Firstly, the thesis will examine the governmental status of both parties, focussing mainly on the period from 2007 to 2011. Literature on autonomist parties, their goals, and the creation of sub-state arenas provide context for the discussion. Moreover, literature on coalition and minority government formation and theory relating to the different pressures felt by parties of government in terms of different behaviours and strategic direction is also outlined and discussed. The purpose is to provide a framework which, firstly, draws attention to the primary goals of both parties, what they intend to use government for, the constrains that are placed on them by the political environment, and the type of trade-offs that occurred in government between what can be considered 'everyday' strategic concerns and primary goals.

Secondly, the thesis will examine how the parties' organisational profiles have adapted to devolution. Theory (Mair et al, 2000b) suggests that parties adapt in a professionalising manner to evolving political marketplaces. Devolution for Plaid and the SNP is no different. Furthermore, the SNP carried out a fundamental review and reform of its organisational structure

back in 2004, whilst Plaid carried out a similar process after the 2011 Welsh election. Therefore, this thesis can draw comparisons about the role of organisational reform in both of these parties, the underlying motivations for reform and the affect it had (or not) on the party in government. The theoretical discussion for this section begins with examining the contradiction between a party under pressure to professionalize in the face of changing electoral markets (Mair et al, 2004a), and a party with traditions and an ethos which acts as a check on unbridled professionalization and centralisation. The discussion then shifts towards the types of organisational adaptations that occur in political parties such as Plaid and the SNP, the way in which party leaders will likely view the party's membership, and the process by which party leaders initiate reforms which redress the asset-liability relationship of party members.

Although both of these strands are treated here as conceptually separate, they are in fact closely intertwined. In order to provide structure to the empirical analysis, it is necessary to separate aspects of party organisation and governmental participation. Governmental status involves compromise and trade-offs between different objectives and goals, while organisational adaption requires a redressing of the balance between elite and member, a relationship that was largely defined outside the context of devolution. By exploring these two strands, a fuller appreciation of how Plaid and the SNP have adapted and learned in the context of new opportunity structures will be offered. The strands will be brought together in the concluding chapter.

Autonomist Parties – Goals and Strategic Development

Primary Goals

A significant body of literature exists that examines the 'autonomist party family' in a comparative manner (De Winter and Türsan 1998; De Winter et al. 2006), their relationship with European integration (Lynch 1996; Elias 2009a; De Winter and Gomez-Reino Cachafeiro: 2002) and more recently on the strategic challenges that new and regionalized political arenas (Carter and Pasquier, 2010) bring to this party type (Hepburn, 2009; Jeffrey 2009;

Elias and Tronconi, 2011a). Although doubts have been raised about the homogeneity of this particular 'party family' (Coakley, 1992; De Winter and Gomez-Reino Cachafeiro, 2002), there is enough resemblance across different political and social contexts in order to identify broadly similar 'primary goals' (Harmel and Janda, 1994). Indeed, Müller-Rommel (1998: 18) defines them as 'parties that refer to geographically concentrated minorities which challenge the working order, even the democratic order, by demanding recognition of their cultural identity'. However, this party type also exists to represent and promote discontent at the constitutional status quo, advocating anything from cultural autonJefomy to national independence (Rokkan and Urwin 1983: 141). In short, this party type may campaign and formulate policy on a range of 'nationalist' issues, from language rights to the transfer of fiscal powers from the state-wide government. Although other parties who are not members of this family may also promote the aforementioned concerns, it is because autonomist parties place these issues at the forefront of their aims, making them 'primary goals', that they can be said to be distinct.

Mair and Mudde (1998: 223-224) state that parties should be allocated a 'family' on the basis of shared origins and ideological profile. Broadly speaking, the autonomist 'family' is a relatively loose one considering that its ideological cohesiveness has historically been low (De Winter and Gomez-Reino Cachafeiro, 2002). Reliance on typologies can therefore lead to methodological pitfalls that can hinder the validity of comparative research (Montero & Gunther, 2002: 14). As stated in the introduction however, there is enough commonality between Plaid and the SNP to warrant a comparative case study. This will be discussed in more detail in chapter 4.

Sub-State Arenas and their Strategic Influence

For decades, Plaid and the SNP existed in a political space which was not electorally or politically conducive to their objectives as political parties. Indeed, the single member plurality system (colloquially known as First-Past-The-Post (FPTP)) used to elect Members of Parliament (MPs) to the UK

Parliament meant that electoral success and thus the opportunity to be politically influential were inconsistent occurrences. The history of the SNP (Lynch, 2002; Mitchell, 1996; 2009b; Mitchell et al, 2012) and Plaid (Davies, 1983; McAllister, 2002), as well as their relationship to devolution in the UK (Bogdanor, 1999; Mitchell, 2009a; Wyn Jones and Scully, 2012) will be discussed in chapter 2.

Both parties being investigated share a commitment to some sort of 'sub-state territorial empowerment' (Hepburn, 2009: 482). Indeed, as Hepburn (Ibid: 485-486) argues, parties such as these have undergone a change from 'niche' (Adams et al, 2006; Meguid, 2005; Wagner, 2012) to 'normal' politics in the context of the creation and strengthening of regional electoral arenas across Europe. This is contrast to so-called 'outsider parties' which have not entered into mainstream political competition to the same degree (McDonnell and Newell, 2011). In the case of the SNP and Plaid Cymru, the creation of the Scottish Parliament and the National Assembly of Wales in 1999 facilitates and institutionalizes this process. Such institutional developments usher in a new and regionalized 'space for politics' (Carter & Pasquier, 2010) that alters the strategic development of autonomist parties.

With the creation and strengthening of regional electoral arenas comes a change in the type of 'relevance' that autonomist parties have to come to terms with; moving from a position of having possible 'blackmail potential' to one of 'governing potential' (Deschouwer, 2008: 3; Sartori, 1976: 108-109). Indeed, Jeffrey (2009) discusses the difficulties facing SNRPs due to these pressures. Although sub-state arenas do facilitate better prospects for office-seeking, four main difficulties arise. Firstly, there is a danger to the internal cohesion of the party because of the perceived dilution of the regionalist cause or the ideological commitments attached to the cause. In short, there is a danger of developing too much of a stake in the system (Ibid: 646). Bolleyer (2008: 21) also highlights this issue by stating that entry into government for 'small' parties inexperienced in governing complicates the challenge of intra-party organization and creates additional functional

pressures. Secondly, a blurring of the lines takes place between the autonomist party and the state-wide parties competing in the same space, with the autonomist party facing the challenge of keeping a distinct identity. Thirdly, and closely linked to the last point, state-wide parties regionalise themselves and move onto the same political turf, although this is a risk for the state-wide party too. Finally, the autonomist parties undergo a process of de-ideologizing which can potentially weaken its relationship with its core vote (Jeffrey, 2009: 646-647).

If, in strategic terms, autonomist parties wish to use new sub-state political arenas to seek governmental office (Strøm and Müller, 1999), then it is essential to 'thicken' their ideological profile (Freeden, 1998) in order to become electable to the mainstream electorate. However, this process was ongoing in Plaid and the SNP decades ago, particularly in the 1960s and 1970s (Evans, 2001; Evans; 2008; Lynch, 2002; 2009; McAllister, 2001; Mitchell, 1996; 2009b; Mitchell et al, 2012; Wilson, 2009) when, in the context of UK-wide elections and the First-Past-The-Post electoral system, credible vote-seeking behaviour (Strøm and Müller, 1999) was a strategic imperative in order to win a handful of seats and exhibit effective blackmail potential (Deschouwer, 2008; Sartori, 1976).

Becoming 'Mainstream' Political Parties

The creation of sub-state arenas encourages autonomist parties to further move from being 'niche' parties to being more 'mainstream' (Adams et al, 2006; Elias and Tronconi, 2011; Meguid, 2005; Wagner, 2012) or 'normal' (Hepburn, 2009). By being 'normal', autonomist parties have to broaden their appeal beyond their 'niche' characteristics and appeal to voters across a wide spectrum of policy areas. Devolution in the UK has assisted this process, with research suggesting that voting on the basis of competence in running the devolved institutions is perhaps the overriding concern at elections (Johns et al, 2009; Scully and Wyn Jones, 2012). Indeed, it is on valence grounds that these parties have further facilitated their 'normal' development beyond, simply, ideological thickening (Freeden, 1998). The

establishment of office and vote-seeking potential (Strøm and Müller, 1999) through devolution facilitates the capacity to operate as a party that can promote its capacity to govern competently and campaign on the back of a governmental record. In this regard, autonomist parties can and have become just like any other political party, a point reiterated by Elias and Tronconi (2011).

According to Meguid (2005), 'niche parties [...] differentiate themselves by limiting their issue appeals. They eschew the comprehensive policy platforms common to their mainstream party peers, instead adopting positions only on a restricted set of issues.' Both Plaid and the SNP cannot be described as 'niche' parties. However, the two parties under investigation do value particular issues, namely independence and (in Plaid's case) cultural preservation, very highly. Indeed, if the leadership of each party were to eschew these important issues then it is likely there would be a devastating backlash from party members and core voters. Therefore, it is fair to suggest that, despite becoming 'mainstream', autonomist parties do indeed still have (at the very least) 'niche' or 'anti-political establishment' (Abedi, 2002, 2004; Abedi and Lundberg, 2009; 2012) traits and characteristics woven into their identities as political parties. Due to the importance and seemingly undividable nature of their primary goals, then their experience in office is likely to be one that is centred around and/or affected by these goals.

The second strand of this thesis, although closely related to the first, examines an aspect of autonomist party development that, although highly developed in the wider literature on political parties, has not been often applied to the study of autonomist parties: organisational adaptation and reform. Much scholarly attention has been given to the organisational adaptation of state-wide parties to multi-level governance structures (Convery, 2012; Deschouwer, 2003, Fabre, 2008, 2011; Hassan and Shaw, 2012; Hopkin, 2003, Hopkin and Bradbury, 2006; van Houten, 2009). Although there is a substantial amount of literature regarding the adaptation of autonomist parties in strategic and policy terms, little attention has been

paid to how they adapt in organisational terms. With regards to the parties being compared in this paper, there is little coverage of their organisational adaptation. Some notable exceptions include McAllister's (1981) examination of the relationship between the SNP and Plaid's (as well as the Northern Ireland Social Democratic and Labour Party's) electoral success and their organisational adaptation. A substantial recent contribution from Mitchell et al (2012) offers a detailed outline of the organisational history of the SNP, particularly their internal reforms in 2004. Fleeting mentions of Plaid's organisational development are made in McAllister's (2002) study of the party's history, with more mentions of the SNP's development appearing in Lynch's (2002) history of the party.

The process of becoming a more mainstream party, in the sense that Elias and Tronconi (2011a) refer, is one of fundamental change to a party's profile and organisational structure. The process of organisational change, however, is one that is underdeveloped in the literature on autonomist parties (see Elias and Tronconi, 2011b for an exception). For example, Jeffrey's (2009) contribution to the literature on the challenges faced by autonomist parties as a result of sub-state arenas, although useful, fails to take into account the organisational dimension of party adaptation. How a party (re)structures itself, defines the relationship between members and elites and makes decisions on strategy and policy is a crucial factor in understanding not just why they adapt and learn, but how that process is enacted and what it represents. This thesis will focus on the organisational reform processes that Plaid and the SNP underwent in 2011 to 2013 and 2003 to 2004 respectively. This aspect of the theoretical framework will be developed in the main section after the next.

Governmental Participation

Opportunities and Pressures

As mentioned previously, the newly created devolved institutions in the UK, like elsewhere in Europe, have facilitated a change in relevance for SNRPs. For the first time in their history, parties like these (in this case Plaid and the

SNP) have the opportunity to enter into government at the sub-state level. Given that these parties have a clearly defined primary goal that involves an inherent dissatisfaction with the current constitutional arrangements within their respective nations, government offers both opportunities and problems. On the one hand, governmental office provides the opportunity to pursue primary goals through agenda setting and legislation (Elias and Tronconi, 2011a; Toubeau, 2011). Elias and Tronconi (2011a: 507-508) refer to the 'core business' of autonomist parties being that of territorial reform, and governmental participation, although an opportunity to pursue other ends, is likely to be viewed as, first and foremost, an opportunity to pursue this 'core business', or primary goals. However, the fact that these parties have never been in government before makes them susceptible to so-called identity, organisational and electoral 'vulnerabilities' (Bolleyer, 2008; Deschouwer, 2008, Buelens and Hino, 2008), as well as continuing to have to deal with perceptions of having diluted the regionalist cause; 'blurring of the lines' between themselves and state-wide competitors; dealing with 'regionalised' state-wide parties; and a weakening of the relationship with core voters (Jeffrey, 2009).

Having decided to enter into government, an autonomist party faces choices about its governmental 'behaviour'. Indeed, according to Elias and Tronconi (2011a: 508), there is 'a strong incentive for parties with a tradition of anti-system opposition to established politics to play the role of 'opposition in government' in order to reassure grassroots that they have not 'sold-out' to the establishment'. On the other hand, 'autonomist parties that have sought to re-brand themselves as credible mainstream political actors are more likely to want to portray themselves as responsible political parties capable of undertaking the duties of government efficiently' (Ibid.). This choice will help define whether an autonomist party is to remain as an 'outsider' party (McDonnell and Newell, 2011) and continue its anti-political establishment status (Abedi, 2002, 2004; Abedi and Lundberg, 2009; 2012).

Regardless of the governmental strategy adopted, an autonomist party will seek to make progress on its primary goals, either by trying to achieve them outright or making tangible steps towards them. The perceived 'success' that an autonomist party has in government is more than likely going to be judged upon how well it has made strides towards the achievement of its primary goals. This is particularly true with regards to members and core voters. To quote Elias and Tronconi (2011a: 517);

> The success or failure of a party in government can be evaluated in at least two ways. First, the electoral consequences of government incumbency can be assessed, since parties can be rewarded or sanctioned by their electorates based on judgements made about the party's participation in government. Second, and bearing in mind that the majority of parties enter government in order to maximize their impact on policy-making, a party can be judged on its success in meeting its policy goals.

Similar language is used by McConnell (2010: 25-26), who states that policy considerations must be tied in to political considerations because it is naive to think that policy is devoid of political interest, and the achieving of political goals needs to be somehow factored into any assumptions of policy success. For the purposes of this thesis, the important section of McConnell's (Ibid: 40-51) work are on the three dimensions of policy success; process success, programme success, and political success. Firstly, process success refers to the preserving of government goals and instruments, ensuring policy legitimacy, building a substantial coalition, and symbolizing innovation and influence. Programmatic success refers to the meeting of objectives, producing desired outcomes, creating benefit for a target group and meeting policy domain criteria. Political success refers to enhancing the electoral prospects of the government and its leaders, controlling the policy agenda and thus easing the business of governing, and sustaining the broad values and direction of government.

The ability to pursue primary goals will depend on a number of factors, but one of the most important will be the composition of the government that the autonomist party finds itself in. Clearly, a single-party majority provides the most conducive legislative arrangement in the sense that aims can be

pursued without requiring the support of other, often unsupportive, parties in the chamber. The Alternative Member System (AMS) used in Scotland makes winning a majority difficult, something that the SNP sensationally and extraordinarily managed to do in 2011. However, the situation both parties found themselves in terms of legislative clout in 2007 was more in tune with what would normally be expected given the electoral system. The choice for both parties was whether or not to be in government or not, which parties to negotiate with in terms of forming a coalition, and, in the case of the SNP, whether to form a coalition or govern as a single-party minority government.

Forming a Government

It is important for autonomist parties that governmental status is worth the effort considering all the potential pitfalls outlined in the literature. The opportunity to be successful in policy terms, however, and play a key role in implementing territorial reform is a major attraction for autonomist parties. Nevertheless;

> [D]eciding to enter government is not an easy decision to take, since doing so might entail costs that outweigh the benefits of being in government. To begin with, there are often trade-offs between being in office, on the one hand, and policy-influence and/or future electoral performance, on the other; these trade-offs may be particularly complex in a multi-level political context. Thus, for example, political parties that do not have a sufficient majority to govern alone will have to decide which parties to engage in coalition talks with. Some parties will be more acceptable as coalition partners than others. Autonomist parties will be particularly susceptible to being reprimanded by their supporters for cooperating with state-wide parties, since this could be interpreted as a betrayal of their autonomist principles (Elias and Tronconi, 2011a: 508).

As this quote outlines, one of the potential downfalls of government for autonomist parties going into coalition with a larger, state-wide party. Because the state-wide party often takes on the role as the 'formateur' party it is often expected that it will exploit its position in order to extract more than its proportional share of policy concessions (Warwick, 2001: 1231). Formateur status is guided by three general factors: previous experience, large relative size in terms of parliamentary seats, and ideological centrality

(Warwick, 1996: 487). For an autonomist party which has decided on a mainstream strategy, policy considerations are likely to be the strongest motivation behind a coalition deal (Ştefuriuc, 2009), rather than more minimal winning and office-seeking reasons (Hindmoor, 2006: 53; Riker, 1962; Martin & Stevenson, 2001: 34, Warwick, 1996). Indeed, policy concerns are crucial and prevalent in coalition formation (De Swaan, 1973), and rational choice approaches overlook the fact that policy portfolios (or ministerial posts) will be viewed differently by different parties (Laver and Schofield, 1990: 39, Browne and Feste, 1975). According to Van Der Eijk and Franklin (2009: 75-76);

> Forming a coalition government requires finding two or more parties that can agree on a joint program of legislation. Such a program will certainly not include all the measures promised by each party at the election just past. So forming a coalition requires each party to decide on its priorities – often a strain on party unity in the immediate aftermath of an election. This is often a tricky judgement call, but a party may well decide that it is better off in opposition, making strident calls for the policies its voters want, than yoked to a government (and pledged to support a government) with a different agenda.

Both Plaid and the SNP sought coalition partners following the 2007 elections. Plaid went into coalition with Labour as a junior partner. In the case of the SNP, coalition with the Liberal Democrats was ruled out because they were unwilling to support an independence referendum (House of Commons Library, 2007). Because they were the biggest party in the Scottish Parliament, they went on to form a single-party minority government. Strøm's (1990) work attempted to prove that minority government is not some sort of political 'accident' (see Herman and Pope 1973: 195-197), but that it is indeed a rational form of government: 'Few parties would be interested in governing today, if it meant annihilation at the polls tomorrow' (Strøm, 1984: 211).

Governmental office means that 'hard choices' have to be made because '[party] leaders rarely have the opportunity to realize all of their goals simultaneously' (Strøm and Müller, 1999: 9). Indeed, Elias and Tronconi

(2011a) state that autonomist parties in government are faced with the same pressures that every other party in government is faced with. The 'rules of the game' (Baumgartner & Jones, 2009: xxiii) inherent in the devolved institutional framework have meant that both Plaid and the SNP have had to govern as part of a coalition and as a minority respectively. Although the aim of this thesis is not to use coalition theory and examine it empirically in any great depth, it is an important aspect of the theoretical framework because the type of government Plaid and the SNP resided in is crucial in understanding their behaviour and strategies. In order to do this, explicit reference will be made to Strøm and Müller's (1999) policy, office and votes (POV) framework so as to provide a heuristic guide for the examination of both parties' experiences in government.

Policy, Office and Vote-Seeking Behaviour

Becoming a party that has governing potential, or that enters government, creates tension between different types of party behaviour. A party wants to win votes, influence policy and gain governmental office. Indeed, Strøm and Müller (1999: 5-8) offer a framework for the analysis of the relationship between so-called office-seeking, policy-seeking and vote-seeking behaviour (POV). In order to construct their theory, they begin by outlining three individual models of party behaviour. Firstly, the 'office-seeking party' attempts to maximize control over political benefits. What parties fundamentally seek is to win and winning means political control such as the control over the executive branch of parliament. Office can have an intrinsic value, or it can have an instrumental, electoral or policy value. Office maximizing tends to pertain to potential coalition portfolio seekers (Harmel & Janda, 1994: 270). Second, the 'policy-seeking party' seeks to maximize the impact on public policy. This view rejects the notion that parties are indiscriminate to their potential coalition partners and that they look for congeniality in policy terms. The focus is therefore on whether leaders see their advocated and implemented policies as a success or a failure. Finally, the 'vote-seeking party' aims to maximize their electoral support in order to control government. Policies are formed for the purpose of winning elections,

not the other way around (Strøm and Müller, 1999: 5-8). Such models can have great heuristic value for the researcher but have their limits when used individually and it is this issue that Strøm and Müller have attempted to address.

Strøm and Müller's (1999) framework for analysis builds on the three models of party behaviour mentioned above. They criticize the single models on the basis that they are static, that they treat parties in too much of a unitary fashion, that behaviour is seen as unconstrained and ignoring the institutional environment, and that decisions are driven by politicians' preferences rather than by office benefits or policy opportunities. We must therefore assume that all three objectives are desired in part, and that they constitute individual forms of behaviour that are closely related to one another. The question is, where are the trade-offs (Ibid.: 11-12)?

Behaviour that is vote, office or policy seeking is intimately linked and does not occur in a vacuum. Indeed, as the above discussion has attempted to illustrate, behaviour that attempts to consolidate one strategic goal, such as the pursuit of policy, may have a detrimental (or a positive) effect on one or both of the others. In sum, Strøm and Müller's framework is emphasising the fact that a certain type of behaviour does not occur in isolation, and the decision to pursue one objective can have detrimental or positive effects on another.

The parliamentary strength of each party in each question will have significant bearing on how this trade-off manifests itself. In 2007, Plaid entered into coalition with Labour and acted as the junior partner in the One Wales Government, whilst the SNP became the largest party in the Scottish Parliament but governed as a minority administration until 2011. Both arrangements meant that the two parties had to cooperate with state-wide partners in the Welsh Assembly and the Scottish Parliament, albeit with Plaid doing so in a more formal manner. Despite the reliance on other parties to pass legislation due to the inability to command single-party majorities,

holding office in a coalition or as a minority are different experiences and will have an impact on a party's ability to deliver on its primary goals.

The POV framework provides an invaluable heuristic device for the study of party behaviour and strategy. It allows different types of behaviour to be recognised and, most importantly, analysed with regards to other behaviours in order to ascertain where trade-offs were made. To quote Strøm and Müller (Ibid: 11);

> We are not in the business of constructing a deductive model of party behaviour. Rather, we aim more modestly for a conceptual framework. This framework should serve three purposes. First, it should allow us analytically to describe different party objectives and relationships between them. Second, it should contain operationalizable terms that we can apply to concrete situations in which party leaders make their critical choices. Third, it should lend itself to more formal theoretical efforts by scholars who set themselves such goals.

In the context of this thesis, the POV framework is helpful for the analysis of the case studies because it allows for the identification and isolation (in theoretical terms) of policy-seeking behaviour in order to see how it interacts and affects other types of behaviour. Indeed, policy-seeking behaviour is incredibly important for autonomist parties because, firstly, it is often the primary motivator behind forming a coalition at the sub-state level (Ştefuriuc, 2009) and, secondly, because the primary goal(s) of an autonomist party are a component of their policy profile and, thus, integrated into their policy-seeking strategy. Because their primary goals are the most important aspect of their policy identity, it is even reasonable to suggest that, within their policy-seeking profile, they have a core 'primary goal-seeking' profile which influences, drives and shapes their behaviour as a party of government.

Analysing Plaid and the SNP's Governmental Participation

The theoretical discussion on governmental participation will be applied in chapters 4 and 5. The findings of these chapters, although (somewhat artificially) separated out from chapters 6 and 7, are part of the process of answering the research question set at the outset. Chapters 4 and 5 will be

split into three main sections. The first will outline what the primary goals of these parties are. Although it is widely known that both Plaid and the SNP both champion the cause of independence for Wales and Scotland respectively, with Plaid also heavily associated with the preservation and promotion of the Welsh language, providing a detailed insight into the nuances of these primary goals essential so that their often (falsely) assumed monolithic nature is not carried as an assumption.

The second will briefly describe what both parties actually expected to get out of government with regards to their primary goals. Understanding this allows for an appreciation of the varying levels of 'success' (McConnell, 2010) that both parties had in government, and also provides a more all-encompassing understanding of what primary goal-seeking behaviour actually consisted of. However, the empirical data highlights a further nuance to the expectations of government, namely that both parties indeed used governmental office as a deliberate attempt to be seen as more 'normal' (Hepburn, 2009), thus granting credence to Elias and Tronconi's (2011a) assertion that autonomist parties will deliberately use government as a 're-branding' exercise.

The third section will apply Strøm and Müller's (1999) framework in order to analyse the POV trade-offs that occurred in government for both Plaid and the SNP. This is crucial for the addressing of the research question because it allows for the aforementioned primary goal-seeking behaviour to be isolated and examined. How does this strategic element of governmental participation interact with and affect other types of behaviour? The analysis finds that Plaid was far more hamstrung by their primary goal-seeking behaviour than the SNP. Although the political circumstances leading into the 2011 Welsh election were very favourable to the Labour party in Wales, Plaid's electoral 'vulnerability' (Buelens and Hino, 2008) can be partly ascribed to their organisational 'vulnerability' (Bollyer, 2008; Deschouwer, 2008) and their failure to adapt organisationally to devolution as effectively as the SNP had.

Organisational Adaptation – Changing Contexts

Autonomist parties have a choice to make when presented with new opportunity structures: to remain as an oppositional party or become credible, mainstream and widely electable (Elias and Tronconi, 2011a). As mentioned previously, little attention has been paid to the organisational development of autonomist parties. On Plaid and the SNP, there is some coverage of organisational changes and adaptation, with Mitchell et al's (2012) contribution the most extensive and detailed. As has already been ascertained, policy-seeking behaviour (Strøm and Müller, 1999) is extremely important for autonomist parties considering the importance of their autonomist primary goals (Duncan, 2007; Harmel and Janda 1994). This means that any office-seeking behaviour will be largely informed by a functional sense of what government can be used for, namely the achievement, or significant steps towards, primary goals.

The triggers for organisational reform and adaptation are not uniform. Indeed, Bolleyer (2008: 26-27) picks up on the distinction over *when* a party adapts to the possibility or actuality of government. She states that parties can undergo 'anticipatory organizational adaptation' in response to particular 'shocks' which may strengthen their chances of successful governmental access. On the other hand, parties can adapt to government and use the experience as a legitimising mechanism to drive future reform in the direction of deeper and further professionalization. The two parties being investigated in this thesis conform to these two different triggers: Plaid began an internal review into their party structures after being in government and losing seats in the 2011 Welsh elections, while the SNP reformed their organisational structures back in 2004.

This section represents the theoretical framework of the second strand of the thesis. Whilst the first section dealt with governmental participation, this section considers organisational reform. This is crucial in understanding how the parties learned from their experiences of devolution and the types of adaptations they underwent. The ensuing theoretical discussion will be split

into two main parts. The first will deal with the external pressures to professionalize and reform the party's organisation, looking specifically at electoral marketplace conditions which were created as a result of devolution, and the subsequent pressure to professionalize in order to take advantage of rapidly changing electoral and political conditions. The second looks more specifically at the likely types of reforms and adaptations and the reasons for them. This section, and how it is applied in the empirical part of the thesis, takes an elite view of both parties because, although there has been a recent survey of the SNP's membership, no such corresponding data for Plaid exists and so direct comparison is impossible.

The Electoral 'Marketplace' and the Pressure to 'Professionalize'

With the creation and strengthening of regional electoral arenas, autonomist parties have had to come to terms with moving from a position of having possible 'blackmail potential' to one of 'governing potential' (Deschouwer, 2008: 3; Sartori, 1976: 108-109). The institutional environment, devolution in the case of Plaid and the SNP, provides new challenges and opportunities for these parties, much of which was discussed previously in this chapter. However, an often overlooked aspect of auontomist party development is the manner and the extent to which they reform their organisational structures in order to take advantage of the evolving political environment. Although the distinction between an organisation and the environment it operates in is often an arbitrary one (Hatch, 1997: 75), the institutional approach states that environments, firstly, make technical and economic demands that place certain requirements on organisations when competing in the marketplace, and secondly, they places social and cultural demands to play particular roles and maintain certain outward appearances (ibid.: 83). As a result of these pressures, organisations tend to adapt by either favouring efficiency and effectiveness or conforming to certain values, norms, rules and beliefs (ibid).

When it comes to the aforementioned 'marketplace', the market that political parties are usually assumed to operate in is the electoral one. In the face of ever-changing electoral markets, parties tend to seek to reform their internal

organisation to take advantage of and insulate from change (Mair et al, 2004b: 11). A common organisational response to change is centralisation and professionalization where the 'amateur' party member is curtailed and the weight and direction of party strategy rests more with the leadership (Mair et al, 2004a: 265). Scarrow (1996: 26) sums up the potential range of reforms that parties may have to adopt quite succinctly;

> Even if a party's long-term goals are stable, views about how best to reach these goals may be altered if election results indicate their current methods are not working. In the wake of lost elections, party planners may reassess the value of specific organizational features as they develop new tactics for securing victory. Party organizers may also alter their tactics in response to social or technological changes which make old approaches obsolete or if party leaders begin to seek support among new segments of the electorate. Whatever the underlying causes, when party leaders and professional party organizers adopt new strategies for attaining party goals, they may find it useful to attempt to restructure the party's extra-parliamentary organization.

Parties, like any organisation, exist in a state of almost constant warfare with their external environment, continuously attempting to forge out new frontiers whilst defending previous gains. Because organisations, including parties, aim to protect the internal operations of the organisation from environmental shocks, as well as monitor the environment and transfer information across boundaries into that environment (Hatch, 1997: 91), the information that is collected about the external environment must be seen from the point of view of the organisation itself (ibid.: 107): challenges are epistemological and thus the perception of the environment is all important (ibid.: 120). It therefore follows that internal changes will also be regulated and determined by organisational values; the social principles, goals and standards held within an organisation's culture that have intrinsic worth, as well the unwritten rules, or norms, that show what is expected of members (ibid.: 214).

In the case of both Plaid and the SNP, the existence and importance of their primary goals will be a crucial factor in the process of organisational adaptation. The decentralised and collective leadership ethos engrained in both parties' organisational history (Lynch, 2002; McAllister, 1981; McAllister,

2002; Mitchell et al, 2012) will also have a role to play in the epistemological assessment of the external environment. Overall, despite the pressure to professionalize in order to be a more effective office-seeking organisation (Strøm and Müller, 1999), the history, ethos and traditions of both parties will inform any organisational adaptations.

The Ethos and Traditions of Parties

Political parties are organisations (Anderson, 1968; Panebianco, 1988) which, like all organisations, encompass a so-called 'psychological contract' between different actors within that organisation (Handy, 1993: 45), particularly between different 'ranks'. Basically, this contract is composed of the expectations that both 'sides' have of each other. If the contract is not viewed identically by both sides then the potential for conflict is increased (ibid.) and no longer exists as a 'co-operative contract' (Ibid: 47).

Parties are not, as might be expected, a single homogenous unit. Traditional models of political parties (for example; Michels, 1962 [1911]) tended to view parties terms of a hierarchical pyramid ruled from the top by an oligarchic elite. Such models tended to see the contest for organizational power as a zero-sum game (Carty, 2004: 6). Rather, parties are groupings of people with similar beliefs, attitudes and values (Ware, 1996: 4-5), or a collection of communities (Duverger, 1959: 17). In addition to this, there exists a reciprocal relationship between parties and its members, resulting in the need for the volunteering activist to have a 'cause' into which they place all their efforts. This 'cause' acts as a potential reward which is utterly distinct from public office-seekers and professional staff who receive material rewards for their troubles. Therefore, a substantial discrepancy exists between the potential rewards of volunteering party members and those who are either seeking a government position or in a paid position (Epstein, 1967: 261) and tensions can build in the party's franchise model (Carty, 2004). Eldersveld (1964: 100) refers to this notion as the subjective 'meaning' that different groups and actors hold;

> The 'meaning' of an organization is in one sense, after all, in the minds of those who hold positions in the organization. And the image a person holds of the structure may condition in large part his relationship to it and his behaviour within it.

Restructuring the party's organisational profile, however, can potentially upset this perceived 'meaning'. The transformation from a party that has constructed its profile in the party system an anti-political establishment party (Abedi, 2002; 2004: Abedi and Lundberg, 2009), and a party focussed on political 'blackmail' tactics (Sartori, 1976: 108-109), towards a party that is potentially joining government is nothing less than a deep transformation that can signify almost a brand new party. Indeed, the final step to government is one that marks the end of the 'old' status and identity (Deschouwer, 2008: 5-6).

For Plaid and the SNP, those beliefs, attitudes and values are centred on their 'autonomist' primary goals (Harmel and Janda, 1994): discontent at the constitutional status quo (Rokkan and Urwin 1983: 141) alongside a commitment to national independence and, in the case of Plaid, recognition and protection of cultural identity (Müller-Rommel, 1998: 18) for their respective nations. The struggle for self-government is, for both parties, the overriding primary goal (Duncan, 2007) and, as such, represents an almost indivisible aspect of the 'psychological contract' (Handy, 1993) between members and elites. The parties' primary goals are thus the 'cause' into which members place their efforts (Epstein, 1967: 261).

However, the changing context requires a party that is more capable of exhibiting effective office-seeking behaviour. As Schlesinger (1994: 24) points out, 'the logic of office-seeking leads to an approach to organizing parties that is sharply different from that derived from a concern for policy.' In order to win votes outside the party's core electorate it is necessary to construct a policy profile and political message that resonates with these individuals and promote a more valence orientated (Johns et al, 2009; 2013; Scully and Wyn Jones, 2012) approach to vote-seeking (Strøm and Müller, 1999). This means that a watering or quieting down of the party's primary

goals is required in order for them to appear 'normal' (Hepburn, 2009) to the sceptical voter. Party leaders, keen to maximize their party's chances of winning political office alone or as part of a coalition, can see more 'policy-pure' members (Pedersen, 2010: 739-740) as 'liabilities' that can facilitate vote-losing strategies and thus hamper the party's vote-seeking ability (Scarrow, 1996: 40-41). To quote Hepburn (2009: 479);

> Whilst these parties were (perhaps) once able to focus on the single issue of self-determination, they have been forced to change their strategies, behaviour and, in some cases, to compromise some of their principles in order to succeed in an era of electoral volatility, partisan de-alignment, the erosion of traditional cleavages and the emergence of systems of multi-level governance.

Therefore, it is plausible to suggest that, using the 'principal-agent' approach, agents (party leaders) have interests and incentives that are not perfectly compatible with the principle (wider party and core support) and can thus giving rise to 'agency problems' or discrepancy (Keoble, 1996; Strøm, 2008: 270; Müller & Meyer, 2010). The activist or member (principal) will strive to maintain monitoring and screening devices on elected representatives (agent) who will seek as much freedom and autonomy over decision-making as possible (Keoble, 1996: 254). The institutional rules of a party are largely down to the settlement of the tension between ideological purity and office-seeking which, it is assumed, exists in all political parties (Ibid). This also assumes that it is the party's membership who is the bastion of the party's ethos. It therefore follows that for organisational adaptation and reform to be successful, any changes must take these issues into account.

Organisational Reforms

Elites and the Need to Reform

According to Scarrow (1996: 35), the strength and interests of competing party elites largely determines the direction of party development. For autonomist parties, these 'competing' elites correspond to those who wish to create a more 'normal' (Hepburn, 2009) and mainstream (Elias and Tronconi, 2011a), valence-orientated (Johns et al, 2009; 2013; Scully and Wyn Jones, 2012) organisation, as opposedhang to those who wish for the party to

remain as a purely oppositional (Elias and Tronconi, 2011a), anti-establishment (Abedi, 2002, 2004; Abedi and Lundberg, 2009; 2012) actor. The journey towards a more professional party structure inevitably involves the restructuring of the party in such a way that removes the liabilities that particular members pose and amplifies the asset value of the wider membership (Scarrow, 1996). Party leaders, will thus look to those areas of the party's organisation which allows the more active and policy-pure a forum to potentially champion a vote-losing strategy. Generally, such individuals will reside in the middle of the party's 'opinion continuum' (May, 1973) and will have access to fairly loosely controlled party mechanisms and have the capacity to use party conference as a platform (Kitschelt, 1989: 409-410). Furthermore, the extent to which these active members have control over how electoral candidates are chosen (Cross and Blais, 2012; Hazan & Rahat, 2006) will affect to what extent parties can pursue more 'electoralist' strategies (Kitschelt, 1989: 402).

Although adaptation to environmental conditions is crucial, the subsequent (and related) responses to internal conditions are equally crucial. Indeed, Scarrow (1996: 33) states that party leaders have a vital role to play in any process of change. Party leaders often have more than once choice about how and whether to change and respond. Furthermore, parties may also anticipate environmental change and thus act (ibid., Bolleyer, 2008). The strength and interests of competing party elites help determine the direction of party development (Scarrow, 1996: 35). Indeed, one of the decisions that leaders will have to make regards the assessment of the utility of party membership; are party members a liability or an asset? (ibid.: 40) Any reorganisation or reform will mean a rebalancing of power and influence between three organisational 'faces': the party in public office, the party in central office, and the party on the ground (Mair, 1994: 4).

May's (1973) Law of Curvilinear Disparity which focuses on the 'hierarchical contrasts in substantive opinions [within parties].' (ibid.: 135) May's 'law' is based on two key assumptions: (1) parties are stratified, and its adherents

belong to different echelons that are unequal to one another in political weight, and (2) opinions are more or less congruent; individual opinions within a party can be located on a continuum and that the median point is the 'centre of gravity' of the group (Ibid). May's theory suggests three uniformities within political parties: (1) 'top-leaders' and 'non-leaders' are nearly aligned with one another along the opinion continuum whilst, (2) 'sub-leaders' are substantive extremists, and (3) 'top-leaders' thus take an intermediate position (not necessarily the middle position) between 'sub-leaders' and 'non-leaders' (Ibid: 139).

Since May's influential article was published, scholars have paid considerable attention to the law of curvilinear disparity and its predictive vigour. Kitschelt (1989) provides one such attempt to provide qualification and further theoretical depth. In appraisal of the law of curvilinear disparity, Kitschelt claims it is an effective method of bridging the gap between the organizational and systemic party studies in that it conceptualises the links concerning incentives and preferences between votes, party activists and party leaders (ibid.: 401). Furthermore, he offers a clear outline of the 'law' worth quoting in full (ibid.: 402);

> Voters in general are moderate, tend to support the status quo and endorse only marginal social reforms. Party leaders, keen on capturing votes and political offices, will cater to these views. Rank-and-file activists, however, insist on far more radical ideological programmes and strategies than most voters would support. Hence, parties pursue electoralist strategies only as long as leaders can control rank-and-file activists.

Kitschelt outlines a number of extensions to May's 'law'. Of particular interest is the third extension which deals with party organization (ibid.: 409-410). In a loosely coupled organization radicals are able to concentrate in the 'middle', whilst it is very difficult for radicals to penetrate the 'middle' in a tightly run organization. Furthermore, the key middle-level position in a contemporary party is that of a participant in regional or national party conferences. So, when a party's leadership chooses delegates there is a level of high constraint, contrasted with low constraint where all interested

members can attend and vote on policy. Medium constraint is found when parties' basic organizations nominate delegates. In short, the less restricted the access to the middle-level is, the more probable the existence of actors holding extreme views, known as 'ideologues' (as opposed to 'pragmatists'). Such considerations are appreciated by Duverger (1959: 4), who states that the way a party is organised explains the strength and efficiency of some parties, and the weakness and inefficiency of others. Furthermore, the methods through which electoral candidates are chosen can indicate the way a party organization is run (Hazan & Rahat, 2006). Research by Norris (1995) also shows that, despite empirical qualification in many regards, the law of curvilinear disparity is not falsified out of hand.

Because data on Plaid's membership does not exist to test May's law, this thesis will not consider this aspect of empirical enquiry. However, even if May's law cannot be tested in this way, it is still a useful heuristic device in the sense that, according to the literature, it appears that a party's leadership may actually think about and view its own membership along these lines. Therefore, the law is a useful theoretical device in, firstly, assessing how party elites think about their membership and, secondly, why particular reforms are proposed. The next part considers how party leaders see members in more detail, and considers how this theoretical literature can be applied to the parties under investigation in this thesis.

Reforms – Redressing the Asset-Liability Balance

Plaid and the SNP, like most autonomist parties, have historically relied heavily on their membership. In this sense, they resemble the 'mass party' as described by Katz and Mair (1995: 18). However, because active party members are likely to be more 'policy-pure' than the party elite (Pedersen, 2010), party leaders may deem it necessary to reform the structure of the party so as to reduce the influence of the most committed and zealous members. A useful way to view this relationship and how it can change is through Scarrow's (1996) distinction between members as assets and members as liabilities.

In terms of party members being assets, Scarrow (ibid.: 42-45) offers eight common benefits that members bring to parties, namely legitimacy benefits, direct electoral benefits, outreach benefits, financial benefits, labour benefits, linkage benefits, innovation benefits and personnel benefits. What is important however are top-down relationships; in other words, how do leaders view party members? Party members do not have a fixed utility. If, for example, a party seeks to portray its cause as more legitimate and thus seek legitimacy benefits, 'passive' members will suffice. However, if the aim is to seek outreach benefits, then more active members will be sought out (ibid.: 48). In terms of the overall balance between liabilities and benefits, members will never be one or the other. Rather, the balance will shift according to the needs of the party at a particular time according to its organizational strategy (ibid.: 49).

Of course, members can also be seen by party leaders as liabilities that must be curtailed through organisational changes and reforms. Party members are seen as potential liabilities for two reasons. Firstly, they represent programmatic costs in the sense that those who become members are potentially the most extreme of supporters who will likely support vote-losing strategies because they favour ideological purity. Party leaders who seek office may see members are hampering a party's vote-seeking ability. Secondly, the resources used to recruit and train members are often poorly invested and could be used to reach out to a broader base of electoral support (ibid.: 40-41).

Other research into political parties finds similar concepts to Scarrow (1996) couched in different language. For example Koelble (1996) adopts the principal-agent approach in the study of a number of European parties. The activist or member (principal) will strive to maintain monitoring and screening devices on elected representatives (agent) who will seek as much freedom and autonomy over decision-making as possible (Ibid: 254). The institutional rules of a party are largely down to the settlement of the tension between ideological purity and office-seeking which, it is assumed, exists in all political

parties (Ibid). How a party 'performs' is likely to influence bargaining over institutional rules (Ibid: 255). Koelble's model suggests that success legitimises claims made by the leadership, whilst failure legitimises more activist supervision (Ibid). Furthermore, evidence of the fit of this model is discovered in a number of parties, including the British Labour party (Ibid: 261). One point of reference for this process of institutional bargaining is the constitution of the political party under investigation. Smith and Gauja (2010: 756-757) state that this document will provide insight into a party's normative vision of its organisation and function and can also be seen as a response to internal and external challenges.

Whether a party tends to be dominated by its parliamentary group or its national organization is also a significant factor in determining policy motives and strategy (Pedersen, 2010: 741). In an analysis of how intra-party relations affect coalition behaviour, Pedersen (2010) states that parties who have powerful parliamentary groups tend to take part in legislative accommodations more often than those who's power lies in the national party organization (Ibid: 739). Furthermore, Pedersen makes the distinction between the policy-seeking parliamentary group and the policy purity of the activist base in the national organization (Ibid: 740).

Heidar and Seglie (2003: 222) outline three dimensions of organisational change in political parties; the organization and activities of party members, decision-making mechanisms, and communications. Party leaders seeking to tailor the organisational profile of their party will therefore attempt to change and reform these three aspects, although the manifestation of such changes will vary according to what the environment requires and the traditions and ethos of the party in question. What is also of great relevance is when these reforms occur. As mentioned previously, parties can either reform their organisation profile in anticipation or as a result of external stimuli (Bolleyer, 2007). This directly applies to the parties under consideration in this thesis: the SNP reformed their organisational structures in 2004 after a poor Scottish election in 2003 whilst Plaid ratified their reforms

in 2013 following a poor Welsh election result in 2011 and coming out of government.

Indeed, parties that enter government for the first time are predicted to be susceptible to organisational vulnerability (Deschouwer, 2008). Although this means pressures brought about by actually being in government, it also takes into account the possibility of programmatic, strategic and organisational change (Bolleyer, 2008: 28). If a spell in government has been one which has resulted in some sort of setback, usually a bad election result, then a party is susceptible to undergoing a process of renewal and reflection. Often, this process takes the form of a party review which can be viewed as an attempt to find the ideal strategic 'fit' so that the party in question matches its organisational profile to the needs and demands of its environment (Hatch, 1997: 103). Because Plaid and the SNP differ in terms of when they enacted their reforms it is possible to consider whether the SNP was better prepared for government in organisational terms than Plaid was. The findings in chapters 6 and 7 do indeed give credence to this notion.

Keeping a hold of a distinct identity is therefore a potential problem for an autonomist party in government for two reasons. Firstly, governmental status might not sit easy with some party members because this 'new status' may be at odds with their vision of what the party stands for. Indeed, Panebianco (1988: 10) states that, to be successful, parties constantly have to strike a balance between selective and collective interests. Such a balancing throws up an acute organizational dilemma because both types of interests work against each other by definition. This brings up the second problem which is that, to be politically successful, the SNRP's 'primary goal' may not be possible to implement in its purest form. Indeed, Pedersen (2010) discusses such tension by distinguishing between the policy-seeking parliamentary group and the policy purity of the activist base in the national organization (Ibid: 740). Attempting to 'use' the system and 'change' the system at the same time might simply be an insurmountable discursive paradox. An example of this is Fairclough's (2000) analysis of New Labour rhetoric shows

that despite an attempt to marry seemingly incompatible social democratic and neo-liberal discourse, both discourses cannot maintain equality of importance in the overall message.

It is clear therefore that some members of the party might not identify with this 'brand new party' and its 'meaning' and may feel that core values and goals are being undervalued by the elite of the party who take up. One route to conceptualising this tension would be to adopt the 'principal-agent' approach which would view the agent (party leaders) as having interests and incentives that are not perfectly compatible with the principle (wider party and core support) and thus giving rise to 'agency problems' or discrepancy (Strøm, 2008: 270; Müller & Meyer, 2010). In terms of organizational factors, it is possible that many of the party members pay their membership fees and campaign on the party's behalf due to their connection with the constitutional or cultural *raison d'être* (or 'primary goal') of the organization.

Analysing Plaid and the SNP's Organisational Adaptations

The theoretical discussion above will be applied to chapters 6 and 7. The findings of these chapters will feed into the overall theme of adaptation and learning which the thesis seeks to address and explore. By considering both parties' organisational adaptations and reforms, the thesis will provide a clear discussion and theoretically informed account of what these reforms mean in practice and, more importantly, what they mean for Plaid and the SNP as political parties.

The chapters will be split into two main sections, with the SNP chapter considering a third section on the effect of the reforms on the party.[5] After a brief background into both parties' reform processes, the first section outlines the deficiencies in the respective parties' structures according to party elites and leaders. What was wrong with the previous organisational structures and what solutions are there for improving and updating those structures?

[5] Due to the fact that Plaid's organisational reforms were only complete in 2013 and there has not been a major election to contest since, it is not possible to assess how effective these reforms have been 'on the ground'. However, this does not prevent their wider theoretical relevance being discussed

The second section examines the reforms themselves, outlining what they were and placing them in theoretical context. Do party leaders attempt to reduce the liability of party members? Do they view the party's membership in terms of May's law? Do the reforms signal the curtailing of the amateur activist and the centralisation of power and influence? The third, SNP-only section will examine what party leaders and elites think of organisational change and what they see as the positive and negative outcomes of any changes. Indeed, these findings point towards the SNP becoming more like any other political party, although offset somewhat by their primary goal.

Conclusion

This chapter has discusses the theoretical literature that will inform the analysis of the empirical data in this thesis. The two main theoretical strands, governmental status and organisation reform and adaptation, will correspond to the empirical chapters which examine both parties in turn according to theme. The framework is intended as a heuristic device to be applied as a theoretical lens to the empirical data. The guiding hypothesis that can surmised from the literature is that, in the context of changed opportunity structures, the need to adapt, change and learn in order to maintain and further political relevance is a likely response. The thesis will address this assumption, exploring how both parties have learned from their experiences and adapted to their new opportunity structures, as well as investigating how they attempt to use these structures for their own ends and benefit.

To give the theoretical discussion some context, a brief and mostly descriptive outline of both parties' historical development is required. This is the purpose of the next chapter. This thesis is aimed as much at those interested in both parties being examined as it is for those interested in parties more generally, and so it is vital to provide an element of perspective when it comes to the more theoretical aspect of the research. Furthermore, there are important differences between both parties that need to be made clear. Some of these differences are down to differing philosophical and ideological roots, but some are also down to the respective histories of both

Wales and Scotland and, in particular, their relationship to the UK as a political, historical and economic entity, and the British state in a constitutional and national sense. It is these issues that the next chapter will address.

Chapter 3 – The History of Plaid Cymru and the SNP

Introduction

This chapter serves as a descriptive and historical account of both the SNP and Plaid Cymru in order to provide some context for the theoretical framework outline in chapter one and the empirical chapters to follow. The first section briefly explains how Scotland and Wales respectively came to be part of the UK as we know it today, as well as providing a broad comparison between the experiences of both of these nations. The second section outlines the history and development of both parties up to the present day, starting with the SNP followed by Plaid.

The UK Constitution and its Relationship to Nationalism in Scotland and Wales

The 'Unions' of Wales and Scotland

The UK today is made up of four distinct national territories; England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Due to its larger size and relative wealth, England has played the role of lynchpin in the constitutional evolution of the UK. However, this is not to say that each of these nations has experienced identical processes of assimilation or 'union'. To understand Scotland and Wales, and thus the SNP and Plaid Cymru, it is important to grasp the way in which both nations became part of the UK. Mitchell (2009a: 4) highlights the importance of understanding these constitutional origins;

> The creation of the UK, like any other state, came about through the amalgamation of previously autonomous or separate entities. The manner in which these amalgamations occurred and the nature of the new political entities *influenced future developments*. Significantly, the creation of the UK *did not mean the eradication of its constituent elements*. (emphasis added)

Mitchell's quote outlines two major points. Firstly, the way 'union' occurred is highly significant with regards to the political make-up of Scotland and Wales today, including the forms that their respective 'nationalisms' take. Secondly, although Wales and Scotland obviously lost a significant element of

independence by becoming part of the UK, the reality is that a loss of independence does not mean a loss of 'difference'.

The 'Act of Union' which incorporated Wales into England became law in 1536 during the reign of King Henry VIII. However, it was not know as an Act of 'Union' until 1901 and does misrepresent the nature of the statute. On the one hand, it is argued that Wales was merely incorporated into England. On the other, it is claimed that because the Principality of Wales was incorporated into England in 1284 after being conquered by Edward I, 'Union' was not between England and Wales but between the Principality and the Welsh March.[6] Nevertheless, the incorporation was legislated for solely by representatives of the parliament of England without any Welsh members whatsoever (Davies, 1993: 232). On the face of it, it would seem that to speak of Wales might be nothing more than geographic convenience. Henry VIII's policy had managed to officially snuff out any legal distinctions or peculiarities that Wales might formerly possessed, leaving a mere component of England behind. Yet the Welsh language prevailed remarkably well through the political changes of the 16th and 17th centuries and provided a sense of unity. Indeed, Wales entered the industrial era with possibly as much as 90 per cent of its population using Welsh as a normal medium of communication (Jenkins, 1992: 2). The idea of Wales as an 'imagined community' (Anderson, 2006 [1983]) has survived through the use of a language which is both ancient and distinct from English. It is indeed language and religion rather than the apparatus of the state that has made Wales 'different' (Mitchell, 2009a: 8).

Scotland's union with England occurred almost 200 years later than Wales' and in different circumstances, leaving behind a much different legacy. In 1603, James VI of Scotland became James I of England by virtue of him being the Great-Grandson of King Henry VIII's sister, Margaret Tudor. This

[6] The Welsh March refers to an area of Wales that was run by feudal lords of Norman descent who appropriated lands after the Norman Conquest in 1066. These lords remained largely outside the jurisdiction of England until the 'Union' of 1536 (see Davies, 1993: 80-162).

event is famously known as the 'Union of the Crowns'[7], but it was not until 1707 until the two countries would 'merge' their parliaments and become the United Kingdom of Great Britain. According to Devine (1999: 6-10), Scottish legislation passed in 1703 opened up English doubts over Scotland's commitment to the 1689 revolution which saw the overthrow of the Stuarts from the thrones of Scotland and England. Moves were then made towards parliamentary union in order to prevent the threat of a pro-Jacobite movement which might have allowed France to use Scotland as a second-front against England and reinstall a Stuart on the throne of Scotland. Kidd (2008: 81) describes the terms of the union;

> In the summer of 1706 two sets of commissioners acting on behalf of Queen Anne in her two distinct regal personalities as Queen Anne of England and Queen Anne of Scotland negotiated the terms of a Union agreement. These twenty-five Articles of Union – which dealt with the Hanoverian succession, the union of the two parliaments, fiscal matters, trade and the continuation of a separate system of Scots law, but wisely avoided the contentious issue of religion – were sent to the Scottish parliament for ratification. With some modest amendments and the addition of an Act – integral to the Union settlement – which guaranteed the privileges and autonomy of the established Presbyterian Church of Scotland in perpetuity, the Articles of Union were embodied in an Act of the Scottish parliament.

The union of the two parliaments officially came into being on the 1st of May 1707, an event which saw the dissolution of both the English and Scottish parliaments and the creation of a 'new' UK parliament in London. The union was avidly supported by Queen Anne, the last monarch of the Stewart dynasty, which helped its acceptance in England (Meikle, 2001: 226). The initial years of union were economically tough for Scotland and brought few benefits, and it wasn't until the 1740's onwards that union really began to bring tangible economic benefits, even though they only came in certain sectors of the economy (Lynch, 1992: 323). What union did do, unlike in

[7] Although this event did have significant knock-on effects that would eventually lead to union, it is not the first time that Scotland and England might have possibly entered such a situation. Indeed, the death of King Alexander III of Scotland in 1286 led to the proposed marriage between Edward of Caernarfon (son of Edward I of England) and the granddaughter of Alexander III, Margaret the 'Maid of Norway'. Such a marriage would have led to a much earlier regal union between the two countries, an event only stopped by the death of Margaret in 1290 before she even made it to Scotland (see Morris, 2008: 231-237).

Wales, was left Scotland with a distinct sense of institutional separateness. Although integration meant the loss of parliament, fiscal matters and public law, the rights of the Kirk and privileges of the royal burghs and their merchant elites were protected along with Scottish private law (Devine, 1999: 12). In short, the union of Scotland and England involved the creation of a new state without the eradication of pre-existing nations (Mitchell, 2009a: 9).

The Role of the Union in Plaid and the SNP

The two paragraphs above give an exceedingly brief overview and comparison of the terms of both Wales and Scotland's respective 'unions'. It is important to understand both of these events because they go some way to understanding and explaining aspects of Scottish and Welsh nationalism today; in particular the constitutional grievances and political goals of Plaid Cymru and the SNP. What is clear from the discussion above is the different experiences of the two nations and the political and social effects that this has had up to the present day. In the case of Wales, 'union' with England brought no significant administrative independence, at least in comparison to Scotland. However, the Welsh language was to play a central part in aspects of Welsh identity, something that Gaelic was prevented from doing to anywhere near the same degree. While radical 19th century Welsh political nationalism was being fuelled by more than 8,500 titles being published in Welsh, Gaelic was allowed to wither whilst an English-speaking Scottish culture embraced many of its central tenants with the linguistic teeth pulled away (Lynch, 1992: 355). In short, the basis of a sense of difference in Wales and Scotland stem largely from the different contexts and circumstances surrounding their respective 'unions'. Davies (1993: 168) sums up the difference;

> As the Law of Hywel[8] became increasingly moribund, an element which had been central to Welsh identity was lost. In Scotland, the indigenous Law was (and is) the corner-stone of the principle of the common citizenship of the entire population. That principle did not

[8] Hywel ap Cadell ap Rhodri (commonly known as Hywel Dda, or Hywel the Good) was a 10th century Welsh King and 'statebuilder' who is credited with consolidating the Law of Wales (see Davies, 1993: 85-88).

> develop in Wales. As a consequence, language came to be viewed as the touchstone of Welsh nationality [...]

It is therefore of little surprise that the two parties differ in many key respects; the SNP has been historically committed to Scotland becoming an independent state and appeals to Scotland's civic autonomy over cultural aspects (Lynch, 2002; Mitchell, 1996: 172-254), while Plaid Cymru has traditionally been seen as the political protector of the Welsh language and advocator of some sort of self-government (Davies, 1983; McAllister, 2001). This is a simplistic overview however, something that the next two sections will aim to alleviate.

The Scottish National Party

Origins and Early Life

The SNP began its life in April 1934, the result of an amalgamation between the National Party of Scotland (NPS) and the Scottish Party which were themselves the products of a patchwork of pre-existing political organisations, such as the Scottish Home Rule Association and the Scots National League (Finlay, 1994; 2009). Although all of these movements and organisations were failures, the SNP was definitely born out of them to some extent or another (Lynch, 2002: 25). Indeed the various founding groups of the SNP were divided on strategy and differences over the meaning of self-government (Mitchell, 1996: 180). This led to the eventual SNP being decidedly non-ideological, vague on self-government and possessing few clear policies (Lynch, 2002: 44-45). However, supporters of both parties did see enough common ground between them to seek a merger (Mitchell, 1996: 182). From the birth of the party, the 1930's represented a period of basic survival for the SNP as Finlay (2009: 24) outlines;

> By the mid-1930's, the ideological bickering, poor electoral performance and a dwindling membership meant that the party was barely capable of functioning as a credible political organisation. The inability to find the funds to contest elections prompted a re-emergence of the question of tactics and strategy as to whether it might be better to act as an umbrella organisation and pressure group for the cause of home rule. The party had already conceded that

> members could belong to other political parties and that contesting elections was beyond the means of the organisation.

In 1942, John MacCormick, one of the co-founders of the SNP, split from the party to set up the cross-party 'Scottish Convention' in an attempt to achieve home rule for Scotland through working with other parties almost as a pressure group (Finlay, 1994: 230-231). By leaving the party, MacCormick solved a major and divisive strategic debate within the party's leadership and allowed the SNP to begin its development into a more modern party organisation under the guidance of the party's new Secretary, Robert MacIntyre (Ibid.: 234). The SNP's policy at the time of allowing membership of other parties, eventually ended in 1948, allowed many SNP members to join and take an active role in the Convention. Despite the SNP winning its first seat in Motherwell at a by-election in 1945,[9] the momentum in the nationalist movement in the immediate post-war years was with MacCormick's pressure-group politics. The Convention eventually failed, however, leaving the SNP as the sole flag bearers of political nationalism and vindicated in the idea that the only way to achieve Scottish self-government (in whatever form) was via a dedicated political party seeking an electoral mandate (Finlay, 2009: 26-27).

Becoming a Credible Electoral Force – 1945 to 1970

Seeking this electoral mandate was not going to be an easy task. According to Lynch (2002: 89), the period from 1945 to 1959 was one of continuous struggle for survival and growth due the dual problem of weak organisation and limited finance. However, the party was beginning to build a political profile at the local level in the 1950's and its leadership was largely united and effective. This coincided with a professionalising organisation that was still learning how to be a professional political party, as Mitchell (1996: 204) describes;

[9] There was an electoral truce between Labour, the Conservatives and the Liberal Party and the National Liberals during the war, and so the only opponent for the Labour candidate, Alexander Anderson, came in the form of the SNP. For this reason, the SNP's victory in 1945 is widely discounted as having no real political significance, unlike Winnie Ewing's victory at the Hamilton by-election in 1967.

> A much more professional organisation emerged in the 1960s as more Scots, often well-educated, joined the party for the first time. This combination of expertise and political inexperience was double-edged. High expectations of victory within a short period of time and frequent political blunders went along with the production of detailed, often highly impressive policy documents.

The party overhauled its organisational structures in 1964 in a process overseen by future leader Gordon Wilson (Wilson, 2009 11-13). Wilson led a review of the party's decision making structures in 1963 which ushered in an organisational structure that, on the whole, is still in place to this day (Mitchell et al, 2011: 20). This period also saw a broadening of the SNP's policy base, with the 1968 conference paying considerable attention to financial and economic matters, as well as debating a written Scottish constitution, all in an effort to strengthen the credibility of the party (Mitchell, 1996: 207). The reforms are described by Lynch (2002: 106);

> The rationale for the reorganisation was the malfunctioning of the peak institutions within the party, the National Executive and National Council... Wilson's reforms were therefore intended to release the National Executive from administrative tasks so as to enable it to spend more time on policy, strategy, and co-ordinating the work of the party. Administrative matters were removed from the remit of the National Council, which was left with a general oversight of the National Executive and party office-bearers, as well as an extended role in policymaking. A more dynamic, modernised and professional party organisation was the outcome of these reforms, which aided the party's development and growth from 1964 onwards.

The breakthrough came in the Hamilton by-election of 1967 which saw the SNP candidate Winnie Ewing receive 46% of the vote and gain a 'safe' Labour seat. Although not the first time an SNP candidate had won a by-election, Hamilton represented an important electoral breakthrough and marked the start of a continuous SNP presence in the House of Commons (Mitchell, 2009b: 31). Indeed, the Hamilton by-election has led Mitchell (ibid.) to suggest that this event signalled the beginning of modern Scottish politics. Hutchison (2001: 122) suggests the most important factor which led to increased support for the SNP was 'the loss of faith by the later 1960's and early 1970's in the ability of the two Westminster-focused parties to deliver social benefits.'

The other parties in Scotland now realised the threat that the SNP posed and subsequently responded. Edward Heath, leader of the Conservative party, made his famous 'Declaration of Perth' in 1968 which committed his party to the idea of devolution, while the Labour government set up a Royal Commission to look at the possibility of devolution as well. The 1970 general election saw the SNP take one seat and 11.4% of the vote, an increase of 6.4% over the 1966 election. In retrospect, the party went into the 1970 with unrealistic expectations and were disappointed with what was actually a reasonable result (Mitchell, 2009b: 31). It has also been suggested that it was the SNP's misfortune that the election took place two years after their support peaked; had the election been in 1968 they may have been able to capture a few more seats (Lynch, 2002: 118). However, despite future fluctuations in support, the SNP were now a permanent feature of Scottish politics and would play a major part in shaping its future. The Anglo-Scottish Union had shifted from being mere 'background noise' to one of the most defining features of Scottish politics: the era of 'banal unionism' was over (Kidd, 2008: 25).

Electoral Success and the Failure of the 1979 Referendum – the 1970's

The 1970's was a mixed bag for the SNP. On the one hand, their mere presence in the mainstream of Scottish politics resulted in the issue of devolution making its way back on to the political scene. The October 1974[10] general election also proved to be the high-watermark of the SNP's electoral performances at the UK level with eleven seats. From the point of view of the Labour party, the SNP had come second in 35 of its 41 seats, making the SNP the second strongest autonomist party in Western Europe at the time (Bogdanor, 1999: 122). Indeed, these successes in Labour heartlands led Michael Foot[11] to say to Winnie Ewing that it was these second-places that worried him more than the victories (Mitchell, 2009b: 32-33). The SNP's economic case for Scottish had also been given more credibility after the discovery of vast amounts of oil in the North Sea which, to the SNP, 'could

[10] There were two general elections in 1974, one in February and one in October.
[11] Michael Foot, who died in 2010, was a Labour MP who led the Labour party from 1980 to 1983.

alter the equation [*sic*] in favour of the economics of independence, and establish Scotland's international presence' (Harvie, 1994: 122). On the other hand, 1974 turned out to be something of a false dawn with the rest of the 1970's giving rise to internal party conflict and the 1979 election seeing the loss of nine of their eleven seats following the failed referendum on devolution.

The February 1974 election resulted in a hung parliament which meant another election was called for October of the same year. The SNP had managed to win 7 seats in the February election. Because the SNP were not a 'class' party as such, disillusioned Labour voters could back the SNP as an alternative to the London parties (Bognador, 1999: 124). After coming to power as a minority government in the February election, Labour had discovered through its own internal polling that, if it did not do something about devolution then it could potentially lose 13 seats to the SNP. Harold Wilson was promising a devolution White Paper during the Queen's Speech debate and by June 1974 his government had published it. Wilson had one major problem however: the Labour party leadership in Scotland was fiercely opposed (Marr, 1992: 138). Nevertheless, Labour campaigned for devolution in Scotland and managed to achieve a slim majority of 4 seats in the October election. The SNP also managed to improve their parliamentary presence with an extra four seats taking their grand total to 11 seats.

Although the 1974 general election brought unprecedented electoral success for a party that had spent much of its previous existence on the margins of Scottish politics, this success precipitated decline. The 1970's represented a period of ideological soul-searching for the SNP which brought about division and confusion between the centre-left, who were keen to loosen Labour's grasp on Western Scotland, and traditionalists, who emphasised nationalism above any ideology and wished to keep Scottish independence a fundamental goal (ibid.: 132). Nevertheless, and despite indiscipline on a range of issues, the SNP backed devolution at its 1976 conference in Motherwell (Mitchell, 2009b: 36).

The SNP suffered a major electoral setback in 1979, losing 9 of their 11 seats. More significant perhaps was the gaping wound caused by a fundamental debate between two visions of how independence was to be achieved; the independence or nothing approach gained by an electoral majority in Scotland, or the gradualist approach which would use devolution as a stepping stone. The failure of the 'Yes' campaign in the devolution referendum of 1979 left the SNP stunned and cemented feelings of resentment towards the Labour government who the SNP no longer felt obliged to support (Mitchell, 1996: 217). As a result, the SNP supported, along with the Liberals and the Conservatives, a motion of no-confidence in the Labour government which brought down the government and ushered in a Conservative government for the next 18 years.

The 1980's and the Response to Thatcherism

The 1980's, at least initially, proved to be a fairly stagnant decade for the SNP. According to Mitchell (ibid.: 221), the party continued to live 'in the shadow of '79' and the experience of the 1979 referendum continued to affect SNP thinking for the next two decades. The failure of devolution in 1979 led to perpetuation of internal conflicts, and wasn't until the adoption of 'Independence in Europe' in the late 1980's that internal unity was largely achieved and the SNP could finally appear as a realistic electoral option for voters once again (Lynch, 2002: 185-187). Progress towards the political mainstream was made at the 1983 conference which saw the dropping of the 'independence nothing less' approach, with Gordon Wilson also stating that the fundamentalist position was erecting a barrier between the party and the electorate (Mitchell, 1996: 237). The party had managed to revive itself, albeit slowly, with a truce between the fundamentalists and the devolutionists, as well as a clearly defined position on the centre-left (Lynch, 2009).

Meanwhile during the 1980's, the UK was undergoing a major economic and social transformation under the stewardship of a Conservative government led by Margaret Thatcher. Although 'Thatcherism' as a political term is

debated over and even refuted (Gamble, 1988), the economic policy it promoted led to the end of most of Scotland's heavy industries and a period of immense social and economic upheaval. Scotland, alongside Wales, did not follow England's electoral swing to the right and maintained a distinct consciousness of their own (Bogdanor, 1999: 194). The disillusionment with the Thatcher government was strengthened by its unwavering rejection of any form of legislative devolution for Scotland (Torrance, 2009). In the words of Bogdanor (1999: 195);

> The situation might conceivably have proved politically manageable had the Conservatives displayed the sensitivity to Scottish opinion of the Churchill or Macmillan governments of the 1950s, but it was made more intractable by the attitudes of Margaret Thatcher, an instinctive assimilationist, who saw little need to maintain the conventions of the union state. The Union with Scotland, she was to write in her memoirs, was 'inevitably dominated by England by reason of its greater population. The Scots, being an historic nation with a proud past, will inevitably resent some expressions of this fact from time to time.' Margaret Thatcher saw Scotland as an outpost of the dependency culture which she was determined to extirpate, while the 'very structure' of the Scottish Office 'added a layer of bureaucracy standing in the way of the reforms which were paying such dividends in England'.

The Thatcher era concentrated Scottish minds on whether there was life in devolution after the defeated 1979 referendum (Lynch, 1992: 449). On the first anniversary of the referendum, 1st March 1980, an all-party campaign for a Scottish Assembly was created. Eight years later it appointed a Constitutional Steering Committee which issued a 'Claim of Right' for Scotland, culminating in the 1989 Convention declaring that sovereignty in Scotland lay with the Scottish people. Labour and the Liberal Democrats were the main political driving forces behind the process, with the Conservatives and the SNP refusing to cooperate (Bogdanor, 1999: 196). Although the SNP were interested at first, some in the party took the view that devolution would impede independence. With hindsight, if the SNP had participated then Labour might not have made as many concessions as they ended up doing. Furthermore, Labour's involvement in the heart of the revived home rule movement meant that it would be politically unacceptable

for them to deny the Scottish electorate a parliament (Devine, 1999: 612). Labour had slowly began to unite behind the idea of a Scottish parliament, giving a 'cautious welcome' to 'A Claim of Right for Scotland' (Hassan and Shaw, 2012: 51). In the late 1980's, the unpopularity of the Conservative government meant that a Labour victory looked likely. Margaret Thatcher was ousted as leader of the Conservatives in 1990, with John Major taking her place as leader and Prime Minister. Labour held their advantage in the polls, only for the 1992 election to once again turn out a Conservative government and throw up another stumbling block for devolution.

The 1990's and the Creation of a Scottish Parliament

While the 1980's largely represented a period of stagnation for the SNP, the 1990's was a much more promising period if only because self-government was back on the agenda (Lynch, 2002: 191). Furthermore, the election of Alex Salmond to the position of party leader heralded the move back in the mainstream of Scottish politics. Salmond was at the centre of an internal transformation in terms of strategy, campaigning and organisational modernisation (ibid.: 191-192). Salmond initiated a professional fund-raising approach in order to adapt to new technological advances in political campaigning (ibid.: 198). For example, 'Challenge of the Nineties' was a drive to get members to pledge a monthly donation which would go towards initiatives like research, political communication and support staff (ibid.: 203). Furthermore, the new Chief Executive, Mike Russell[12], took the management of the election campaign out of the hands of MP's and candidates so they were free to focus on campaigning rather than strategy (ibid.: 205). Such developments were as a result of the muddled message of the 1992 election campaign which saw rhetoric being split between the two somewhat contradictory positions of the gradualists and fundamentalists in the party (ibid.: 198). Such developments can be viewed as an attempt to challenge Labour because, by 1992, SNP support was beginning to resemble Labour's

[12] Mike Russell is currently the MSP for Argyll and Bute and the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning.

and challenging Scotland's largest party was the main obstacle to electoral advancement (Hassan, 2009: 6).

Labour's crushing victory at the 1997 general election meant that devolution was practically inevitable. In contrast the 1970's, the SNP was more united and enthusiastic about the devolution project due to the lack of 'hardliner' opposition from within the party, much of which was down to Salmond's leadership and an understanding that devolution was popular with the electorate (Mitchell et al, 2012: 31-32). In September of that year, the Scottish electorate did indeed vote in a referendum and produced an unequivocal result. Of the 60.2% of voters who turned out, 74.3% voted in favour of a Scottish parliament. A second question was also posed which asked whether the parliament should have tax-varying powers, of which 63.5% voted in favour. According to Curtice (1999: 130-131), if the 39.8% of non-voters had turned-out then the 'yes' camp would have achieved an even higher 77% of the vote with regards to the first question. In short, Scotland overwhelmingly voted in favour of a devolved parliament and, after the passing of the 1998 Scotland Act, the Scottish parliament opened for business.

The SNP had supported the 'Yes, Yes'[13] position without, perhaps surprisingly, any internal conflict. Lynch (2002: 222) argues that the lack of internal resistance was due to four key factors: Alex Salmond's political strategy was working and was popular, there was a large amount of consensus across the political parties (apart from the Conservatives) on the need for devolution given Scotland's experiences in the 1980's, devolution was popular amongst the public and the SNP could not afford to miss out on tapping into that, and the party had learned from its own mistakes with regard to what had happened as a result of the 1970's devolution process. Ironically enough, it was Labour who talked about independence in the run-up to the 1999 elections with slogans like 'divorce is an expensive business'. The SNP on the other hand was relatively quiet on independence (ibid.: 225) and

[13] The 'Yes, Yes' position refers to support for a yes vote in both questions proposed in the 1997 referendum, namely agreeing to a parliament and its possession of tax-varying powers.

indeed attempted to separate themselves in policy terms from the other parties by proposing the use of the Scottish Parliament's ability to raise or lower income tax by 3%, drawing fierce criticism in the process (Mitchell, 2004: 19).

The SNP Since 1999

Devolution, quite simply, transformed the political opportunity structure for the SNP. However, the party had to be strategically careful in the sense that they had to preserve the integrity of independence and at the same time ensure the prospect of some power after 1999 (Lynch, 2002: 220). As Mitchell et al (2012: 33) put it: 'under devolution, [the SNP] would have a very different relevance as it would have the potential to become a party of government.'

The 1999 Scottish elections saw Labour take 56 seats and eventually form a coalition with the Liberal Democrats who took 17 seats, giving them an overall majority of 8 seats. SNP managed to win an impressive 35 seats making them the largest opposition party in the parliament ahead of the Conservatives with 18 seats. It is worth noting that of the SNP's 35 seats, 28 of them were achieved as a result of the regional list vote which existed to counterbalance the constituency seats. The next election in 2003 was rather disappointing for the SNP as they managed to only achieve 27 seats overall, losing over 6% of their share of the vote in the regional list and over 5% of the constituency vote.[14] In 2000, Alex Salmond[15] stood down as party leader to be replaced by John Swinney. Salmond also stood down from the Scottish Parliament in order to focus on leading the Westminster parliamentary group which was losing electoral ground at the UK-level as well (Mitchell, 2009b: 40). John Swinney's time as leader signalled some significant reforms in the organisational structure of the SNP which was meant to promote the party as a governing party and not just an outlet for protest (Mitchell et al, 2012: 38). This will be discussed at length in chapter 8.

[14] Ironically enough, this led to them winning 9 constituency seats, 2 more than in 1999.
[15] Salmond was eventually elected as party leader once again in 2004 after John Swinney's resignation.

The breakthrough was to come at the 2007 election with the SNP managing to win 47 seats overall and becoming the largest party in the Scottish parliament by a single seat over Labour. However, this election did not go hand-in-hand with an upsurge for support on independence. On the contrary, the SNP were elected largely as a result of their perceived competence over everyday policy concerns rather than on the constitutional situation of Scotland (Johns et al, 2009). Mitchell et al (2012: 124) sum up this strategic dilemma;

> The SNP's electoral success is, in part at least, owed to the perception that it has been 'good for Scotland' and likely to form a competent government. The pragmatism involved in this image has overwhelming support. However, a tension will always exist in a party that pursues radical goals: should it moderate its message in appealing for voters or appease members who join in pursuit of more radical objectives? While the members may have endorsed the leadership's pragmatic strategy, the bulk of them joined because they believe in Scottish independence. This objective is what brought them into the party and motivates them to give money and many hours of their time to the party. Managing that balance requires leadership but also electoral success and at least some progress towards the key aim. Questions are likely to be raised when a party appears to have stalled in advancing towards its main goal, the goal that brought members into the party. While the SNP appears to be a fairly conventional political party its raison d'être remains independence. There may not be another party home for disillusioned members to join but it is conceivable that many might drift away in the event that the party is perceived to have abandoned faith in independence.

Now that the SNP have been re-elected with an overall majority in the Scottish Parliament a referendum on independence is almost inevitable. However, support for Scottish independence has historically been lukewarm and the party faces a stiff challenge in realising their ultimate constitutional (or primary) goal. One period in the SNP's history that may provide parallels is that of the mid to late 1980's when the 'Independence in Europe' strategy was adopted as a key element in the argument for Scottish independence. Although the SNP was in completely different circumstances in terms of political success, an analogous debate ensued regarding what independence actually meant. From the 1970's which was characterised by ambivalence, even hostility, towards European integration, to the 1980's where Europe was

seen as an advantageous arena for the advancement of Scottish interests. Such a change is a fairly radical reassessment of primary goal interpretation, as Dardanelli (2003: 18) describes;

> On the ideological level, the party underwent a wide-ranging revision in respect of the conception of national sovereignty and the role of government in the economy. National sovereignty ceased to be conceptualised as a monolithic, zero-sum entity and the idea that could be pooled or vertically segmented without relinquishing it became widely accepted. This was seen as part of the process of 'mainstreaming' the party, which entailed the abandonment of the ideal of building a 19th century nation-state.

With electoral success after their first ever term in government, the SNP now, theoretically, face a similar type of challenge. In order to garner support for their constitutional objectives they will need to make sure that the proposal put to the public is something that the public are likely to support. The 'Independence in Europe' policy was designed to do just this by removing allegations of separatism and reduce the costs of secession (ibid: 12; Bartkus, 1999). Furthermore, the existence of widespread valence voting (Johns et al, 2009; 2013) means that the SNP has to create consensus between those who are supporters of the party's 'primary goal' and those who support the party due to valence reasons.

Plaid Cymru

Origins and Early Development

Plaid Cymru was formed in August 1925 by a complex aggregate of individuals representing different organisations with the common goal of establishing a Welsh government (McAllister, 2001: 23). The party was born into a Wales of political, industrial and social turmoil and was itself a by-product of that turmoil (Davies, 1983: 3). In the 19th century, Welsh nationalism had found a vehicle in the form of the Liberal party (ibid.: 3-4). The Liberals appeared to embody all the characteristics of religious dissent, language, culture and family that provided much of Wales with cohesion despite the forces of industrialisation (ibid.: 6). The decline of the Liberal party left a political vacuum that Welsh nationalism in the form of Plaid would

be able to exploit (ibid.: 49). Indeed, Jones and Fowler (2008: 52) argue that the Welsh Liberal tradition provided the fundamental idea that Wales was a political territory that had an incomplete set of modern institutions. These concerns can also be understood in the context of the Irish home rule debate of the late 19th century, which appeared to herald the future recognition of the other 'Celtic' nations of the British Isles (Jenkins, 1992: 389). The birth of Plaid Cymru can thus be interpreted as representing the political manifestation of these underlying driving forces.

Plaid Cymru did not begin life as an electoral fighting machine. On the contrary, the party was initially very culturally inspired. One of its most influential founders, Saunders Lewis, believed that nationalism was a distinct and separate ideology in itself (McAllister, 2001: 23). For Lewis, constitutional or political questions came a poor second to ensuring that the Welsh language survived in what he perceived as a humane society (Jenkins, 1992: 389). The need for a distinctly 'Welsh' party was crucial according to Lewis because British political parties were always going to treat Welsh political and cultural aspirations as subsidiary (Davies, 1983: 29). Lewis set out to stamp his vision on the party in 1925 which was based on two key principles: Welsh was absolutely the only language used in any official business; and links with all other political parties would be broken and Wales would be transformed from the bottom-up through activity in local government (ibid.: 41). Plaid Cymru fought its first election in Caernarfonshire in 1929 and received a paltry 1.6% of the vote, but more importantly (somewhat like the SNP) the event resulted in a leadership debate between those who believed in the party's 'boycott' potential[16] and those who advocated a more orthodox political approach, such as contesting elections. It was believed, by some, that an exclusive appeal to language protection would not be enough to succeed electorally (McAllister, 2001: 25-26). This fundamentalist-pragmatist debate, which has manifested itself in

[16] The boycott approach referred to a strategy that meant the party would contest elections but not take up the seats they managed to win.

the SNP as well, is still a contemporary issue for Plaid Cymru. McAllister (2001: 24) sums it up well;

> The circumstances in which the new party was formed and the early context in which it operated set the tone for many of the tensions that Plaid Cymru faced subsequently. The new organisation was forced to appease all its key members (many of whom had a very different approach to politics *per se*, as well as to the declared objectives of the new party) whilst trying simultaneously to appeal more broadly to Welsh voters. Again, this became a constant challenge for the party.

Becoming a Credible Electoral Force – 1945 to 1970

The immediate years after the conclusion of the Second World War are widely considered as the time when Plaid began transforming into a recognisable political party. However, the party at this time was still largely in its infancy and so this is a somewhat misleading assumption (ibid.: 62). Nevertheless, the years during the War did show the party that the orthodox route would have its benefits. Ironically, Lewis' determined campaign during the University of Wales by-election showed nationalists that they could conceivably win political representation and was capable of fighting on a wide front (Davies, 1983: 242). Furthermore, with a new president in the form of Gwynfor Evans by 1945, as well as Saunders Lewis' withdrawal from public life, the party had made a clear break from the pre-war leadership and style (Ibid: 250).

Evans' tenure as president lasted an impressive 37 years and spanned some of Plaid's most definitive shifts in terms of modernisation and party development (McAllister, 2001: 63). During this period, the dominant party in Wales was, without question, the Labour party. After 1945, the reconstruction of British industry was the primary goal of the UK Labour government. Atlee's government presided over a real revival in Welsh industry with continued investment in Welsh coal mining; by 1953 south Wales was still producing almost 21 million tons from 115 pits. However, the workforce was steadily contracting and by 1981 there were only 25,000 miners compared to 130,000 in the early 1950's (Jenkins, 1992: 373). With the majority of constituencies being in this area of the Wales, and

subsequently returning Labour MP's, any electoral advancement would inevitably lead Plaid into these areas in search of support. Furthermore, because of Plaid's affiliation with Welsh-speaking Wales, penetrating these areas of Wales which were now overwhelmingly English-speaking was going to be somewhat difficult and illustrate the paradox alluded to above. Although Plaid managed to find itself in a stronger position after the Second World War, contesting 7 seats compared to one in 1935 (Evans, 2001: 97), the party struggled to get its message across to the public, as Gwynfor Evans (ibid.: 101) explains in his memoirs;

> The British political parties went to enormous trouble over the years to gag Plaid Cymru on the media and to prevent the broadcasting of news about the party as far as they were able. Since a political party depends on being able to communicate with the people, it has always been important to them, just as it still is today, to keep Plaid Cymru out of the news as much as possible and to prevent it from putting its policies before the public. Our inability to communicate was the main obstacle to our growth.

Another problem for Plaid was creating a narrative that could resonate with all of Wales. The eminent Welsh historian, John Davies (1993: 500) claimed that defining a common Welsh experience in the 20th century was akin to an exercise in metaphysics. Gwynfor Evans was aware of this and promoted a gradual widening and deepening of policy formulation throughout his tenure. For example, 'An Economic Plan for Wales' was published in 1969 in an attempt to push away from the cultural to the economic (McAllister, 2001: 71). As Plaid began to pick up votes throughout the late 1950's and into the 1960's, the Labour party began to seriously consider the possibility of some form of administrative devolution similar to what Scotland had had since 1885. As Mitchell outlines (2009a: 53)

> In 1959, James Griffiths, deputy leader of the Labour Party and Welsh-speaking MP, was asked by Labour's National Executive Committee (NEC) to draw up a programme for Wales before that year's election. The NEC unanimously accepted the policy document, 'Forward with Labour', which promised to create the office of Secretary of State for Wales. This was carried through to the 1964 election. In line with developments in British central administration

> generally, Labour was renewing its interest in regional matters ahead of coming to power in the 1960s.

By this time, Plaid had managed to put up 20 candidates for the election and was beginning to garner support in the industrialised south-east (Davies, 1993: 663-664). According to Christiansen (1998: 126), the 1960's showed Plaid as a mature political organisation and as a regionalist party as opposed to being simply a cultural movement. Evans' strategy of, perhaps contradictorily, campaigning for Wales in the broad sense whilst attempting to gain footholds of influence and power (McAllister, 2001: 68) appears to have been paying off, albeit without any parliamentary returns. That was to change however in July 1966 with the capturing of Carmarthen in a by-election. Davies (1993: 667) outlines Plaid's progress;

> As the party was able to demonstrate its appeal in anglicized industrial districts as well as in Welsh-speaking rural districts, it is not surprising that James Griffiths[17] expressed fears that it might displace the Labour party as the leading party of Wales. As parallel, but more striking, political shifts were occurring in Scotland, the need to satisfy (or undermine) the national movements in Wales and Scotland became a matter of importance in British politics.

Although perhaps drawing parallels between Scotland and Wales is rather easy and obscures a more complex social, political and economic reality, it is nonetheless striking that both the SNP and Plaid Cymru had major political breakthroughs at almost the same time.

Electoral Success, Referendum Failure and 'the Death of Wales Itself' – The 1970s

Labour were caught in a quandary in the 1970's between maintaining their Scottish and Welsh MPs whilst staving off the possibility of losing voters to Plaid and the SNP (Bogdanor, 1999: 170-171). Nationalist by-election victories in Scotland and Wales, as well as a number of near-misses, indicated to Labour that having no policy on devolution was unsustainable (Wyn Jones and Scully, 2012: 30). In the 1970's, the debate over Welsh devolution had a different flavour to that of Scotland. While in Scotland the

[17] James Griffiths was a Labour MP and the first person to serve as the Secretary of State for Wales. He took up the role after labour's 1964 general election victory.

Labour party made grudging concessions to devolution proposals, the Welsh Council of Labour made a commitment to devolution as far back as the mid-1960's (Bogdanor, 1999: 162).

Plaid won a respectable 11.5% of the Welsh vote at the 1970 general election, but this did not translate into a single seat. At the February 1974 election, Plaid won 2 seats with a smaller share of the vote (10.7%). The party picked up another seat in the October election with a slight increase in their share of the Welsh vote (10.8%). This placed Labour, now with a working majority of 3, under enormous pressure to deliver some form of devolution to both Wales and Scotland. With the offer of devolution to Scotland by Labour in 1974, the Wales Trade Union Congress pressed for devolution (unsuccessfully) that would be on par with the level of power-transfer that was being proposed for Scotland. Furthermore, the success of the anti-devolution campaign in Labour managed to get the obstacle of a referendum in place (Ibid: 165).

Nevertheless, a devolution referendum was to take place in 1979 and Plaid opted to back a 'yes' vote. However, Plaid entered the campaign with a large amount of internal dissent. One key problem was the fact that the entire project was a Labour one and thus presented Plaid with an 'either-or' choice between some more autonomy for Wales and the status quo. Furthermore, the timid scheme presented was far removed from Plaid's own vision of Welsh autonomy and thus fears were raised that any assembly might simply assist Labour's appeasement of nationalist forces. In 1978, Plaid agreed to support the campaign for a 'yes' vote in 1979 despite suffering from deep internal schisms (McAllister, 2001: 132). According to Evans (2008: 376), the party's 1978 annual conference was a tense affair, with the 'referendum debate [raising] its ugly head again' and a motion being tabled called on Plaid to boycott the 'Wales for an Assembly' campaign. Only a 'barnstorming speech' by Emrys Roberts carried the day, but the party was deeply divided and riddled with misgivings.

The referendum was held on the 1st of March, 1979. Devolution in Wales was comprehensively rejected at the polls by the Welsh electorate: a meagre 20.2% voted 'yes' with an overall turnout of 58.8%. Gwynfor Evans (2001: 218) states in his memoirs that '[t]hat day, March 1st 1979, went down as the blackest in the history of Wales'. For Plaid, 'the referendum was more than a ballot on the administration of Wales; the referendum was a vote on the spiritual and existential question of whether Wales existed' (Evans, 2008: 382-383). In the words of historian and former vice-chair of Plaid, Gwyn Alf Williams, the result potentially 'warranted the death of Wales itself' (Williams, 1985: 295).

The 1980's – Revival and the Search for Relevance

The 1980's presented a period where Plaid had to seek relevance in the face of devolution being rejected. The presidency was taken over by Dafydd Wigley whose job was to pick the party back up after the morale shattering blow of 1979. McAllister (ibid.: 73) describes Wigley as a 'doer' rather than a talker, and as someone who was no great ideologue. This does not mean that he lacked success, as McAllister (ibid.: 74) describes;

> Throughout his first-term as president, Wigley was able to represent the image Plaid Cymru had always strived to convey, to the electorate and to its own members. He presented himself as a compassionate, honest, articulate, all-Wales leader, with popular appeal across the different linguistic, socio-economic, geographic and cultural divides.

At the same time, Wales, particularly the Valleys in the South, were experiencing severe economic decline. Between 1980 and 1985, the National Coal Board shed 112,000 jobs (Davies, 1993: 683). Such massive job losses had disproportionately negative effects on southern Wales due to its historical legacy as a coal mining area of the UK. By 1986, there were only sixteen pits left in Wales, employing 13,000 miners in South Wales (ibid.: 685). Like Scotland, the Conservative government's policies were dismantling the industries that had sustained the most populous areas for generations. Also like Scotland, economic damage appeared to result directly from a government programme of which overwhelmingly non-Tory Wales had no say (Jenkins, 1992: 402).

Plaid had a further change in president in 1984 with the election of Dafydd Elis-Thomas who led the party until 1991. Elected after a contest with the more 'tradionalist' Dafydd Iwan, Elis-Thomas was driven by a desire to reinvent Plaid and place the party on the left as an alternative to Labour (McAllister, 2001: 76-77). Elis-Thomas was convinced that, for Plaid to succeed, the party needed to 'escape the dead hand of Gwynfor and his cautious successor, Dafydd Wigley' and create nothing less than a 'new political tradition' in Wales (Evans, 2008: 440). Elis-Thomas' presidency, summarised as that which pursued a gradualist strategy, proposed the changing of the name of the party to 'Plaid Cymru: The Party of Wales' and attempted the embracement of the New-Left politics which saw Plaid becoming the most popular political option for feminist, gay, environmental and other radical elements in Welsh society (McAllister, 2001: 79-81, Van Atta, 2003). He realised the direction Plaid would need to move in so as to take votes from the British parties, particularly Labour. McAllister (ibid.: 76-77) sums up such the process;

> [...] Plaid Cymru was a party caught between identities; its electoral base in north west Wales was relatively secure and founded on a rather straightforward correlation between the traditional components of Welsh identity (cultural, linguistic and political) and Plaid as a party most likely to represent them. However, to achieve its wider objectives, Plaid needed not only to broaden its appeal beyond this identification with things traditionally Welsh, but also to secure electoral footholds in the Labour-voting south.

The 1990's and Devolution

Dafydd Wigley took over the party's presidency for a second time between 1991 and 2000, a period which represented one of the fastest periods of growth in Plaid's history. Coupled with the positioning of Plaid as the party of protest where disaffected voters (particularly Labour ones) turn to, there was a large growth at the local level (ibid.: 83-84). Presumably, with the Conservatives struggling and the prospect of a pro-devolution Labour government, Plaid's strategy was to show itself as a party of good governance that could run a local authority and perhaps, one day, a devolved government. Such a strategy appeared to pay-off in the 1997 general

election which saw Plaid hold all of their parliamentary seats in the face of soaring Labour popularity and gains.

As in Scotland, the Welsh people received the chance to vote for the creation of a devolved government in a referendum in 1997. There was only one question in the Welsh referendum which asked in principle whether the voter was in favour of creating a Welsh assembly. Indeed, the fact that there was only one question reflects the fact that the proposed Welsh assembly was to have fewer powers than that of the Scottish parliament in the sense that it could not initiate primary legislation. The referendum campaigns in 1997 were very different to 1979. The 'No' campaign in 1979 was far better run than the 'Yes' campaign, in contrast with 1997 when Labour were in their honeymoon period and far more united behind the scheme (Evans & Trystan, 1999: 97). However, Wales very nearly voted 'No' with only 50.3% of those who turned out electing to favour the creation of the National Assembly for Wales (NAW). The vote in Wales was even held a week after Scotland's so as to perhaps influence opinion via a favourable Scottish result (Bogdanor, 1999: 199).

Curtice (1999) offers some explanations as to why the Welsh result was not nearly as comprehensive as the Scottish one. Firstly, Scottish devolution had come about after extensive public deliberation whilst in Wales it was an internal Labour debate and had only been amended a year before Labour came to power in 1997 (Ibid.: 121). Secondly, although strength of national feeling was positively correlated with a desire for devolution in both nations, those who had a greater sense of British national identity were likely to vote against devolution in Wales. In Scotland, British affiliation did not mean a 'No' vote (ibid.: 128). Thirdly, non-voters in Scotland largely reflected the proportion of those who did vote either way, whilst in Wales those who did not vote were mostly against. Taking this into account, if those voters had taken part in the referendum then the 'Yes' vote in Wales would have slipped to 46% (Ibid.: 130-131). As a result, the Scottish Parliament began life as the 'settled will' of the Scottish people while the NAW did not command the same

level of popular legitimacy (Ibid: 142). Finally, Scots on the whole do have a stronger sense of national identity. Although this does not explain the result in itself, it might help explain why the debate in Wales was less intense and inclusive (Ibid: 142-143).

The Government of Wales Act 1998 which brought the NAW into existence was, as Mitchell (2009: 160) describes, 'a compromise with few real friends'. Unlike the devolution proposed for Scotland, what was proposed in Wales did not significantly differ to what was proposed in the 1970s. The central principle behind Welsh devolution was the notion of executive devolution: an assembly with powers to alter only secondary legislation. To quote Bogdanor (1999: 209);

> The Government of Wales Act [1998] differs fundamentally from the Scotland Act [1998] in that it proposes a novel form of devolution, one hitherto untried in the United Kingdom. It confers executive but not primary legislative functions on a National Assembly for Wales – not a parliament as with Scotland. The assembly will have the power, transferred from ministers, primarily the Secretary of State for Wales, to make subordinate legislation in any areas within its competence.

As consequence of the 1998 act the assembly was 'a corporate body combining the roles and responsibilities of a legislature with those of an executive.' (Shortridge, 2010: 87) In short, it had no separation of the executive and legislative branches.

Plaid Cymru since 1999

The National Assembly for Wales (NAW) threw up some strategic issues for Plaid. Although its traditional Welsh speaking support were largely in favour of the NAW (McAllister, 2001.: 135), the party has historically shown a lack of confidence in opting for one political role at the expense of the other in its strategic plans. The debate over Plaid's status also reflects membership priorities, many of whom interpret membership as an extension of a general, cultural commitment to Wales (Ibid.: 122). Devolution has forced Plaid's hand in that the creation of the NAW has forced the transition towards a practical, policy-orientated role which allows it to put long-standing commitments into practice through devolution (ibid.: 123). That practical role

also sees a shift in the balance of policy, office and vote-seeking behaviour which naturally involves a balancing act between Plaid as the defender and promoter of Welsh language and culture, and between a political entity run by elites that seeks office either as a means to an end or an end in itself.

The 'quiet earthquake' during the first NAW elections in 1999 which saw Labour voters in their droves turn to Plaid (ibid.: 140; Trystan et al, 2003) is a good example of this. Indeed, Plaid won 17 seats at the inaugural Welsh Assembly elections which scuppered presumptions that Labour might win an overall majority. After the surprisingly good electoral result in 1999, 'the party would deliberately play down its long-term constitutional aspirations for Wales during the Assembly's first term, preferring to focus on the bread and butter issues of governing Wales' (Elias, 2009c: 123). However, the 2003 election saw Plaid fall back to 12 seats while Labour and the Conservatives managed to gain two seats each (Wyn Jones & Scully, 2004a). McAllister (2004) attributes Labour's gains to it become more 'Welsh' in outlook as well as moving further to the left and thus squeezing the Plaid vote. Plaid bounced back in 2007 however, winning 15 seats and eventually going into coalition with Labour. This result led Scully and Elias (2008: 108) to claim that this election marked the end of one-party dominance in Wales. However, Plaid lost four seats at the 2011 election and Labour managed to take 30 seats, representing the most disappointing electoral result for Plaid so far under devolution.

The 2003 setback meant a period of reflection and reversion for Plaid, with the identity of the party becoming markedly more 'traditional' in focus (Elias, 2009b: 543). This transformation turned out to be temporary and in 2006 the party launched a policy consultation with the Welsh public in order to find a more 'voter-friendly' set of policies and provide a more pragmatic and widely electable programme (Ibid: 544). After moderate gains in the 2007 Welsh elections, the decision was taken to enter into the 'One Wales' coalition with Labour and Plaid ministers have sought to decontaminate the view that the party is out of touch with the mainstream of Welsh voters. However, this has

meant that the party has had to focus on the issues that can realistically be achieved and this has been strongly criticized by party members (Ibid).

Since the 2011 election, Plaid has begun a process of renewal in the form of a leadership contest and an internal enquiry. The overall aim of these changes is to challenge Labour in its heartlands more effectively. Indeed, not only does Plaid have to represent its own traditional support base, but it also has to appeal to those who might have traditionally voted Labour (or another party) and have decided to switch to Plaid by virtue of the electoral system. In doing so however, it has to balance the needs of different groups of voters, a balancing-act which may throw-up challenges both externally and internally in the future.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided a brief and mainly descriptive account of the history of both Plaid and the SNP. Although both parties have very different histories and philosophical roots, both parties have had to seek relevance and vote-seeking potential in the context of the FPTP electoral system at the UK level, deal with the disappointment of the failure of devolution in 1979, and adapt to new opportunity structures in the shape of devolution. Both parties have also had to cope with different interpretations of how best to achieve their goals, with both parties becoming more and more 'gradualist' over time. Their overall strategies since 1999 further testify to this fact, with both parties realising that maintaining a broad electoral appeal is the key to preserving a strong electoral presence. Furthermore, both parties have accepted that governmental participation is the best way to achieve their primary goals.

Chapter 4 - Methodology

Introduction

The following chapter outlines the methodological approach used in this thesis. The thesis adopts, on the whole, a qualitative approach although some statistical findings in the form of tables and graphs are included as part of the analysis. The thesis uses the comparative case study approach as its underlying research design. The chapter begins with assessing the overall methodological approach by justifying the use of the comparative case study approach, outlining how the theoretical framework will be applied to the empirical research, and discussing the use of semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis. The next section discusses how respondents were selected for interview and how documents were utilised for triangulation purposes. The chapter then discusses some of the logistical issues encountered during the data collection phase of the research, and finishes by discussing the limitations of the data that was collected and the subsequent findings.

The Comparative Case Study Approach

According to Yin (2009: 18), the definition of a case-study can be separated into two aspects. Firstly, the '[...] case study is an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundary between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.' Secondly, 'the case study enquiry copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result relies on multiple sources of evidence with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion, and as another result benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis.'

The case study relies on many of the same techniques as history, but adds two sources of evidence that historians do not (normally) have access to, namely direct observation of events and interviews of the people involved in events (ibid.: 11). Furthermore, the approach aims to, like history, answer 'how' and 'why' questions (ibid.: 8). As mentioned above, the case study will focus on

contemporary events and does not require the control of behavioural events as an experiment does (ibid.). In terms of a multiple case study, the logic behind the choice of cases is the same behind that of multiple experiments where an experiment will be carried out multiple times in different circumstances in order to test the robustness of the initial findings (ibid.: 54). For the purposes of this particular study, the cases have been chosen because it is anticipated that they will display similar results; in Yin's (ibid.) terms, a literal replication. Yin (ibid.) also goes on to state that the procedure of replication requires a rich analytical framework which will guide the research and allow for cross-case comparisons and theory modification.[18]

The overriding objective of this study is to use the theoretical framework as a tool to compare for the sake of understanding and explaining, which involves beginning with a case and then using theory to understand why something is the way that it is (Lim, 2006: 23). Such an approach certainly lends itself to qualitative analysis because it requires interpretation and sensitivity to context (ibid.: 19-20).

Applying the theoretical framework

It is often assumed that a piece of research must be driven by either deductive or inductive reasoning. However, if one takes the pragmatic position, this need not be the case as theoretical application exists on a spectrum. Indeed, as Creswell (2009: 62) points out, qualitative researchers increasingly adopt a 'theoretical lens' in that shapes the types of questions asked, how data is collected, and can even promote change to a particular aspect of societal relations. The point is also outlined by Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009: 118) who claim that a "...theory (or conceptual framework) has high heuristic value if it is capable of generating ideas or questions that can lead to interesting, valuable and informative research studies."

Using theory in this way appears to be consistent with constructivism in international relations and new institutionalism (Hay, 2002: 28). Both of these sub-disciplines perform similar roles in that they draw attention to the role of institutions and ideas in the understanding of complex political change; the

[18] See page 57 of Yin, 2009 for a graphical representation

analytical approach is sensitising and informative because the theory guides the analysis and highlights the complexity of the processes at work (ibid.: 28-29). The question of how 'an object' came into being is important and the narrative will make reference to numerous, interacting causal mechanisms at work and coming into play at different times in the narrative (Benton & Craib, 2001: 38). In short, the aim is to create a dialogue between the theory and the evidence as Hay (2002: 46-47) eloquently outlines;

> [...] theory is about simplifying a complex reality, but not as a means of modelling it, nor of drawing predictive inferences on the basis of observed regularities. Rather, theory is a guide to empirical exploration, a means of reflecting more or less abstractly upon complex processes of institutional evolution and transformation in order to highlight key periods or phases of change which warrant closer empirical scrutiny. Theory sensitises the analyst to the causal processes being elucidated, selecting from the rich complexity of events the underlying mechanisms and processes of change.

Tashakkori and Teddlie (2008: 101) state that both exploratory and confirmatory questions can be dealt with simultaneously in the hunt for 'meta-inferences'. This study aims to work towards that goal by using the theoretical framework to guide both the analysis of the empirical data and explore some of the assumptions outlined in the literature. The following section will briefly discuss the specific methods being used in this thesis.

Methods of Data-Collection

This section will outline the two methods that were used to gather empirical data for the purposes of this thesis. Each method is briefly outlined and considered with regards to how they are utilised and the type of data that can be expected.

Semi-Structured Elite Interviews

As Weiss (1994: 1) points out, "[i]nterviewing gives us access to the observations of others. Through interviewing we can learn about places we have not been and could not go and about setting in which we have not lived." The experiences of individuals involved in a particular process is only partially available through documentary sources; to find out more it is often prudent to simply ask them. Unlike survey (or structured) interviewing, the

emphasis is not on standardization (Burnham et al, 2004: 205) or the collating of variables, but rather the eliciting of interviewees accounts of aspects of their experience (King & Horrocks, 2010: 37).

Bryman's (2008: 437) list of what differentiates qualitative interviewing from quantitative interviewing also reads as list of general rules to follow when using the method; having an interest in the interviewee's point of view, encouragement of the interviewee 'going off on a tangent' to yield unexpected answers, flexibility on the part of the researcher, and a desire for rich and detailed answers. The interviews that were carried out adhered to these principles. The interviews had a schedule in the sense that there were a number of questions used to keep the conversation on track, but interesting and relevant tangents that were brought up by the interviewees were encouraged and welcomed. The interplay between attempting to confirm assertions in the literature whilst using the literature to explore interviewees' experiences was fruitful and worthwhile.

Documentary Analysis

According to Scott (1990: 12), a document in its most general sense is a written text. Documents differ according to how public they are (from private collections to government bills available on the internet) and how restricted they are (from open access to classified or secret) (Ibid: 14). However, regardless which type of document is under investigation, four key criteria need to be considered in order to assess their quality; authenticity (is the document genuine?), credibility (is the document free from error and distortion?), representativeness (is the document typical of its kind?), and meaning (is the document clear and comprehensible?) (Ibid: 6). If treated with care, documentary sources offer political scientists excellent opportunities to develop novel accounts and interpretations of significant events (Burnhman et al, 2004: 184).

Assuming that the document scores highly on the four quality criteria set out above, the great difficulty for the researcher in then in developing a good interpretative understanding of the material; on what grounds do we accept one reading as 'correct' and another as 'incorrect' (Scott, 1990: 32). Scott (ibid.: 34) states that any text must be studied as a socially situated product. Furthermore, he argues that as a text 'moves', it passes through three distinct phases;

intended content, internal meaning, and received content. The researcher is attempting to analyse phase two (internal meaning), but this phase is never independent of its reception by an audience;

> As soon as a researcher approaches a text to interpret its meaning, he or she becomes a part of its audience. The most that can be achieved by a researcher is an analysis which shows how the informed internal meaning of the text opens up some possibilities for interpretation by its audience and closes off others. (ibid.: 34-35)

The documents have to undergo a process of qualitative interpretation in order to grasp their 'internal meaning': qualitative content analysis, semiotics, hermeneutics and discourse analysis are among the most common options (Bryman, 2008: 528). However, Peräkylä (2008: 352) alludes to a less rigidly defined option;

> In many cases, qualitative researchers who use written texts as their materials do not try to follow any predefined protocol in executing their analysis. By reading and rereading their empirical materials, they try to pin down their key themes and, thereby, to draw a picture of the presuppositions and meanings that constitute the cultural world of which the textual material is a specimen.

The method of documentary analysis in this study will be a type of qualitative content analysis. Although traditionally thought of as more of a quantitative method (Holsti, 1969; Krippendorff, 2004), one of content analysis' inherent features, regardless of the underlying methodological approach, is the reduction and simplification of data (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996: 28). This inevitably involves coding; the process of condensing the bulk of data sets into analysable units (Ibid: 26; Bryman, 2008: 691-692). Qualitative content analysis, unlike its quantitative counterpart, is not concerned only with counting codes. On the contrary, it uses coding as a way of identifying and reordering data and thus allows the data to be thought of in new and different ways (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996: 29). However, coding is not a substitute for analysis (ibid.: 26), and so the coded data needs to be retrieved and organised, critically evaluated, and then transformed from coded data into meaningful data and thus analysis (ibid.: 46-47).

Selection procedure

Semi-structured interviews with elected representatives and party staff are a crucial component of the empirical research. In total, 44 individuals were interviewed, with 20 from Plaid and 24 from the SNP. The vast majority of respondents were interviewed once, although three individuals from Plaid were interviewed again briefly at a later date. The final total of interviews conducted is therefore 47, with 23 of those from Plaid. All interviewees were granted anonymity and so, apart from one respondent who gave permission to their quote being associated with their name, interviewees are referenced by their position in the party and the date that they were interviewed. Multiple interviewees were sometimes carried out on the same day. Respondents were chosen for interview because they were deemed to be able to shed light on the key aims of the thesis. A list of all interview respondents can be found in Appendix A.

The process of choosing and targeting respondents was slightly different for each party. Because the SNP is a larger party and has a much bigger parliamentary presence than Plaid, it was more crucial to target and approach respondents deemed crucial for the aims of the thesis, and then interviewee other individuals who could be considered more supplementary. The 'crucial' respondents were granted such importance because of their position within the Scottish Government, their membership or proximity to the Scottish Cabinet, their role in the organisational reform process and the length of time they had been an elected representative. The 'supplementary' respondents were approached to provide a more cross-sectional picture of the party in order to make sure that there was a good mix of new MSP's, more experienced MSP's and a better gender and geographical spread. Although the targeting approach cannot be considered as a sample in the scientific sense, collecting and analysing a greater number of interviews than might have been necessary has provided for deeper and richer empirical data, as well as theoretical saturation.

The targeting process was easier in the case of Plaid because it is a smaller party and has less elected representatives. Indeed, all of Plaid's 11 sitting AM's were interviewed, as well as party staff, Cardiff councillors, party advisors and

former AM's. Like the SNP, certain interviewees were categorised as 'crucial' because of their role in the One Wales Government, proximity to the organisational reform process and the length of time they had been AM's. As with the SNP, the 'supplementary' interviews added extra depth and also provided theoretical saturation.

The documentary evidence used in this thesis is wide-ranging and includes speeches, conference motions, manifestos, campaign materials, press releases and government documents, amongst others. Where possible, this thesis uses documentary and interview evidence in tandem in order to build a more complete picture and provide more wholesome empirical analysis. The documentary data is used, when feasible, for triangulation purposes with regards to the interview data. Much interview data cannot be triangulated as a corresponding record does not exist or is not freely available.

Logistical Issues

SNP interviews were conducted over a period of 19 months between August 2011 and March 2013. The majority of these were conducted between August 2011 and January 2012. Most were conducted in the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh, but others were conducted in SNP Headquarters and St Andrews House in Edinburgh, and in various constituency offices in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Livingston, Cumbernauld, East Kilbride, Perth and Paisley, as well as at the University of West Scotland in Hamilton and at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow. All Plaid interviews, apart from three conducted at a later date, were carried out between the 25th of September and 7th of October 2011. One of these interviews was carried out in a constituency office in Pontypridd, while the rest were carried out in a range of locations in Cardiff, including the National Assembly for Wales, Plaid Cymru Headquarters, County Hall, Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol and private residences. Two follow-up interviews were carried out at a later date at Plaid's 2012 spring conference at Ffos Las Racecourse, and a third via telephone in 2013. Two of the follow-up interviews were carried out in order to gather data on the process of organisational reform which was occurring throughout 2012, and the third to enquire about proceedings at a special conference in Aberystwyth in February 2013.

The process of collecting SNP interviews was invariably easier for two reasons. Firstly, the thesis was conducted from the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow and so travelling to meet with interview respondents was straightforward and not subject to strict time constraints. Secondly, the author had a more intimate knowledge of the SNP on beginning the PhD thesis, and so networking with staff and potential interviewees was a simple process. The process of interviewing Plaid respondents was more complicated. A field trip had to be arranged for the two-week period stated in the previous paragraph. Furthermore, there was the business of networking with a party that, from the point of view of the author, was not a familiar one. Contact was made with a member of staff at Plaid HQ who proved to be very helpful in helping arrange interviews. In the case of both parties, there were respondents who were unwilling to be interviewed. In other cases, it was simply not possible to conduct an interview for a number of personal reasons on the party of the potential interviewee. However, none of those who were unable or unwilling to be interviewed were of such great importance that it undermined the findings in the thesis.

Documentary evidence is also used in this thesis. The majority of the documentary data is freely available on the internet. Some of the Plaid speeches used are in Welsh, but Google Translate was used to translate this material into English. Some of the material used is not freely available online. However, access was granted to some documents and other party materials by Plaid and SNP staff. For example, the minutes and proceedings of Plaid's national council meetings and documents from 2003 and 2004 in the case of the SNP were given to the author by party staff. Attempts were made to gather previously unseen material in the form of internal party correspondence from during the SNP's reform process, but in the end access was not granted.

Limitations of the Data and Findings

Invariably, the thesis will have some limitations and shortcomings, both in terms of the approach taken but also as a result of the data that was collected for the empirical analysis. All steps were taken to ensure that the data that was gathered, particularly the interview data, was coded and utilised in an unbiased

and critical fashion. This section will outline some of the potential limitations of the data that was gathered.

Interview data presents a particular challenge for researchers. Although a rich source of data, the trade-off with interview data is that interviewees will interpret the questions in their own way and provide an answer which will undoubtedly be biased. This was a consistent note of caution during the process of researching and writing this thesis. Particularly in the case of Plaid, as mentioned previously, the author was inevitably more susceptible to adopting the biased opinion of interviewees than was the case with the SNP given the level of familiarity with the party and Scottish politics in general at the beginning of the PhD process. Furthermore, because of the investment of time, money and travel in order to gather data from Plaid elites, it was crucial to make sure that the questioning was as thorough as it could be at the outset as it was clearly easier to 'experiment' when it came to SNP interviewees. In other words, it was far more important to develop a comprehensive interview schedule and arrange interviews carefully in the case of Plaid because of the very narrow, two-week window in which the data would be collected.

The author, at the outset at least, had a less comprehensive understanding of Plaid as a party. This situation was compounded by the fact that there is not as much literature on Plaid's history written in English as would have been hoped for when carrying out a study of this magnitude. Trying to get 'under the skin' of the party was therefore a challenge that was further compounded by the lack of literature covering the entire history of the party. The author was therefore careful not to allow interview data to 'fill in the blanks'. The biased nature of interview data may have resulted in the thesis being skewed towards this bias considering the lack of knowledge of Plaid at the outset, but the author took every precaution to make sure that this was not the case. Triangulation of interview data with documentary data, where possible, was carried out in order to ensure that findings were as robust as possible. This process was also rigorously carried out with data on the SNP. Nevertheless, the drawbacks of interview data are not wholly insurmountable, and the thesis will nevertheless share this weakness. For example, the analysis of both parties' periods in office will have become skewed due to the temporal distance between the events

being described by respondents and when they actually happened. For example, the data suggesting that the SNP were happy to go into government as a single-party minority will most likely have been skewed this way by the passage of time and the benefit of hindsight. Also, the party's organisational reforms occurred about seven years before the data on this period of the party's history occurred. However, documentary evidence was used to triangulate and temper the interview data to make sure that the event was analysed as honestly as possible. Similarly, the Plaid interviews that covered the early period of the One Wales Government also had to be treated with an extra amount of caution, although this period did not, in the end, become as relevant as more recent events. This relevance was indeed driven by the theoretical framework rather than the author's personal interest.

The author has used direct quotations extensively, sometimes lengthy ones but more usually the author has paraphrased interviewees. The interview data was consistently treated with scepticism and used in a critical manner. The author has treated interview data as the opinion of the interviewee and the use of the data in this thesis is consistent with this treatment. In order to make some those paragraphs which have drawn heavily from interview data flow more clearly the author has avoided using phrases like ‘according to’ and ‘as stated by’ constantly. This use of interview data does not change the naturally sceptical way in which the data has been treated.

The thesis also makes use of statistical survey data in order to supplement the qualitative analysis. The surveys used are the Scottish Social Attitudes Surveys 1999-2013, the 2007 and 2011 Scottish Election Studies, the 2011 Welsh Referendum and Election Study, and the SNP Membership Survey carried out by Mitchell et al (2012). It was felt that with such good quality survey data available it was worthwhile and helpful to draw upon it in order to put graphs and tables into the thesis where appropriate. The statistics used are descriptive only and no advanced statistical analysis was carried out. One limitation and imbalance that exists with regards to this data is that no membership study of Plaid has been carried out to date. There are two consequences because of this. Firstly, the chapter on organisation reform in Plaid does not contain any graphs or tables whilst the corresponding chapter on the SNP does. Secondly,

there was a possible opportunity to analyse some of the theoretical assumptions that were applied to both parties' organisational development using the SNP membership data. However, the decision not to do this was taken in order to provide a greater balance between the corresponding chapters considering that such analysis of Plaid was impossible.

As with any piece of research, the findings of this thesis are limited. As was alluded to above, the limitations regarding the timing of the interviews meant that it was impossible to be more detailed regarding certain aspects of previous history, particularly regarding both parties' entries into government and the SNP's organisational reforms which occurred a decade before this thesis was written up. Documentary evidence, academic commentary and newspaper reports were used where possible in such cases. The biggest limitation comes in the chapters on organisational reform. It would have been fruitful if a survey of Plaid's membership had been carried out. It was outside the scope of this thesis to undertake such a venture. Therefore, much of the theoretically driven analysis looks only at the elite perspective and thus tells half of the story. This is not to say that the findings are not useful in themselves, but they are essentially limited in the sense that there has not been extensive analysis of both parties' memberships carried out in a comparative manner.

Furthermore, much of the analysis of primary goals is done using interview data. In the case of the SNP some data analysis was carried out to supplement such analysis. Similar data does not exist for Plaid and so the findings here have to be treated with caution in the sense that they are certainly not definitive. Also, with regards to Plaid, analysis of the Labour party who shared government with plaid would have led to a more wholesome understanding of the workings of the One Wales Government. This thesis was always concerned with autonomist parties from the offset, but the presence of Labour as the senior coalition partner means that it played a key role in Plaid's term in office. It was outside the scope of the thesis to undertake such an endeavour, but the analysis of Plaid in government will undoubtedly be limited by the fact that this was not done. Similarly, some of

the analysis of the SNP in government is concerned with how they used governmental office to pursue agenda setting. Of course, the civil service in Scotland played a crucial role here but this thesis, also for reasons of scope, has not brought this aspect into the analysis.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the research design and the methods that will be used in this thesis. The way in which the literature is used it also discussed, stating that the theoretical approach is similar to that used in new institutionalism. The more practical business of data collection is then discussed, highlighting the strategy adopted when it came to approaching interview respondent, the type of documents consulted, and the datasets used for statistical analysis. Finally, an overview of the logistical issues and the limitations of the data are discussed along with the limitations surrounding the findings.

Chapter 5 - Plaid Cymru in Government

Introduction

As argued in chapter one, governmental status is an opportunity for an autonomist party to make strides towards achieving its primary goals. However, for Plaid, they entered into government for the first time in 2007, a transition that Deschouwer (2008: 5-6) claims signifies an end to the party's old status and identity. Regardless of how true that assertion is, governmental office is a learning process for a party that has never experienced it before and requires adaptation to the business of governing. Chapter one argued that the existence and continuing importance of primary goals adds a strategic imperative to everyday policy and strategy. In the case of Plaid, this meant party's commitment to the furtherance of the devolution settlement in Wales, as part of the journey towards independence, and a commitment to the protection and promotion of the Welsh language. The coalition agreement signed with Labour in the summer of 2007 laid down some key commitments towards both these ends. This chapter will explore how Plaid coped with adapting to governmental office.

The chapter is split into three sections which deal with the empirical aspect of the research. The first examines the primary goals of Plaid as an autonomist party, giving special focus to their constitutional aims and their attachment to the Welsh language. This section will also briefly outline how these goals were translated into targets to be achieved in government. The second section looks at how Plaid used and understood governmental office. The empirical data suggests that although the party was mostly concerned with using office as a means to achieving policy goals and targets, there was a significant strand of opinion which saw governmental office as, firstly, a chance to educate the party in the reality of having the responsibility of governmental office, and secondly, as an opportunity for the electorate to see the party as a competent, mature and normal party that was able to govern the country. The third examines how, despite mostly delivering on its policy commitments, Plaid was unable to formulate a coherent vote-seeking

strategy (Strøm and Müller, 1999) because of its insistence on delivering on its 'autonomist' primary goals, namely the referendum on primary law-making powers.

Primary Goals

As an autonomist party, Plaid's primary goals are crucial to its identity. Despite its constitution outlining fairly clear principles and goals, those goals are slightly more ambiguous in reality. Plaid is a party that is still unsure of its role with regards to the constitutional status of Wales, and despite still associating itself with the Welsh language, continues to struggle with the strategic problems that it faces as a result of this attachment.

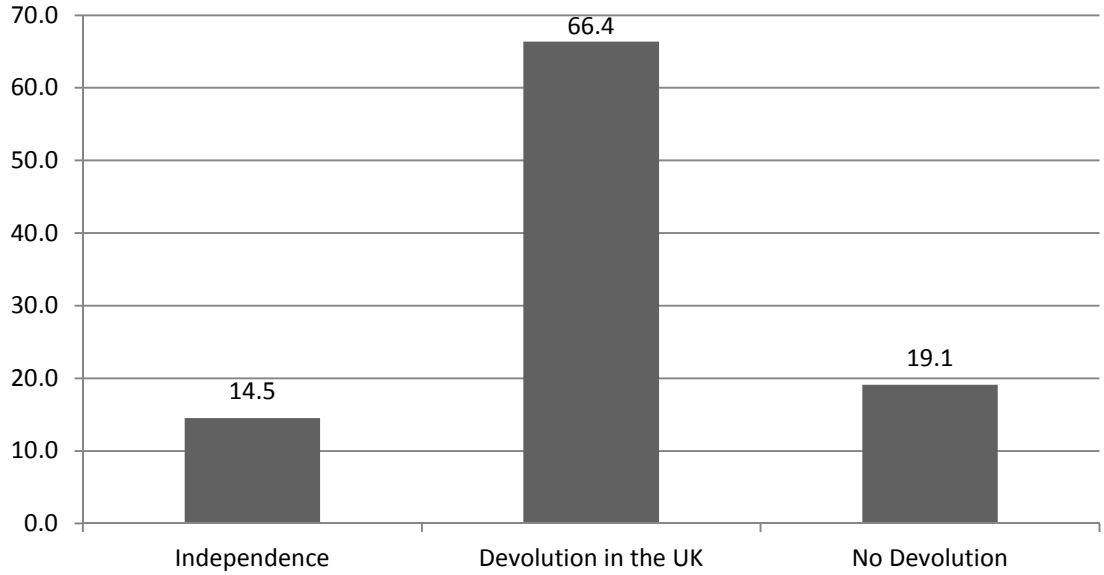
Welsh Independence

Plaid has been far from unambiguous about its primary goals since the advent of devolution in Wales. In 2001, the party ruled out seeking 'independence' in the context of heated debates over the at its annual conference (BBC News, 22nd September 2001), arguing that, in the context of European integration, national independence was no longer needed (Keating, 2004: 370). In 2003, the party did commit to independence as a 'long term aim' at its annual conference (Plaid Cymru, 2003: 30), although this commitment was not written in to the party's constitution which continued to state that Plaid's foremost objective was '[t]o promote the constitutional advancement of Wales with a view to attaining Full National Status for Wales within the European Union' (Plaid Cymru, 2011b: 3). After the backing of a motion at the party's annual 2011 conference (Plaid Cymru, 2011f: 53), Plaid's current top primary goal according to its constitution is to '[s]ecure independence for Wales in Europe' (Plaid Cymru, 2011a: 3).

Elite opinion strongly reflects Plaid's constitutional ambiguity. Broadly speaking, there is a divide between those of the opinion that Plaid exists to achieve an independent Wales, and those who see Plaid's role as more ambiguously pushing the current constitutional settlement with less emphasis on a set, long-term objective. The latter do not necessarily shun the idea of independence, but see it as less immediate and use different language to talk

about Plaid's constitutional aims. For example, the term 'self-government' is commonly used to describe what Plaid stands for, and is a concept that is linked closely to the promotion of the economy, the achievement of social justice (Interview, 5th October 2011) and the protection of the environment (Interview, 3rd October 2011).

Figure 1: Percentage of the Welsh Public Supporting Different Constitutional Scenarios in Wales (Source: Welsh Election Study 2011 Pre-Election Wave) N= 1807



Self-government means different things to different people: it can be conflated with independence (Interview, 3rd October 2011), more historical concepts like 'dominion status' (Interview, 28th September 2011), and the idea that Wales should be 'set free' and be governed according to 'a set of values' that are 'more Scandinavian' and 'significantly different' from 'hierarchical, English ones' (Interview, 6th October 2011). There is also a significant strand of opinion in Plaid that believes the party exists to push the boundaries of the devolved settlement (Interview, 5th October 2011) and allow the people of Wales to self-determine how they wish to be governed (Interview, 29th September, 2011). This view reflects that the majority view amongst the Welsh public (who have an opinion on the matter) is that Wales should have a devolved assembly within the UK (see figure 1). One interviewee emphasised the gradual nature of Plaid's constitutional goals;

> The interesting question is: what does self-government actually mean? Does it precisely mean independence in a given period? Or does it mean achieving a 'proper parliament for Wales'? So it's moving towards greater and greater self-government, towards independence... it's always been understood as a gradualist approach. (Interview, 27th September 2011)

This 'gradualism' has heavily influenced Plaid's constitutional strategy since 1999 (Elias, 2009c). At Plaid's 2002 annual conference, Ieuan Wyn Jones' keynote speech outlined the importance of turning the NAW into a parliament with law-making powers, contrasting the limited devolution that had been granted to Wales in 1999 with the primary legislative powers given to the Scottish Parliament. In his speech, Wyn Jones stated;

> Backed by the people's mandate we will demand the establishment of a Welsh parliament; a proper parliament to do a real job for Wales. And that parliament has to be in place by the 2007 election. The parliament must have full legislative control over all devolved areas, and the same tax-varying powers as the Scottish Parliament. (Wyn Jones, 2002)

The objectives laid out in this quote have been partly fulfilled through gaining a 'Yes' vote in the 2011 referendum. However, devolution has not provided Plaid with a context within which its long-term term constitutional aims have been pinned down and fixed for a significant period of time, although this is reflective of party throughout its history (McAllister, 2001: 127-154). After the surprisingly good electoral result in 1999, 'the party would deliberately play down its long-term constitutional aspirations for Wales during the Assembly's first term, preferring to focus on the bread and butter issues of governing Wales' (Elias, 2009c: 123).

There are, on the other hand, those within the party who are much more comfortable with stating, in absolute terms, the idea that Plaid is a party that exists to achieve Welsh independence. Rather than talk at length about notions of self-government, a number of interviewees stated that Plaid existed to achieve independence. One interviewee went into more detail about why Plaid stands for independence;

> Plaid Cymru's goal is for Wales to be an independent state within the European Union. Why do we want that? We believe Wales is a nation and that is the right of every nation, and indeed the obligation of every nation... Secondly, we believe, as a party, in decentralisation of power. We take it beyond that because this could mean devolution in the United Kingdom. We say also that sovereignty comes from the people, unlike the English model [...], and when Wales achieves independence, based on the sovereignty of the people of Wales, we might be prepared then to give up some of that independence, certainly within the European Union. (Interview, 28th September 2011)

Despite the differing emphasis placed on either short-term or long-term goals, Plaid is nevertheless united behind the general direction constitutional reforms should take. Indeed, it is believed that it is the constitution that unites most within the party and represents the party's most important primary goal.

The Welsh Language

Another key part of Plaid's identity as a party is its historical connection to Welsh culture, heritage and, in particular, the Welsh language. Plaid's constitution clearly states its continuing commitment to the language, one of its aims being '[t]o create a bilingual society by promoting the revival of the Welsh language.' (Plaid Cymru, 2011a: 3) Although the establishment of *Cymdethias yr Iaith Gymraeg* (Welsh Language Society) in 1962 took some of the responsibility for language campaigning away from Plaid (McAllister, 2001: 213; Sandry, 2011: 182), the Welsh language is still, self-admittedly, an important element of Plaid's identity as a party. Indeed, some go as far as saying that the language is integral to a Wales that can be confident in itself (Interview, 6th October 2011) and that it can help to insulate a distinctly Welsh political culture (Interview, 29th September 2011). Despite the broadly held view that the constitution is Plaid's top priority, this does not necessarily translate into a zero-sum game with regards to the language;

> Well, [the constitution is the most important issue] in some peoples' books, but my view if you win the constitutional argument you can still lose your soul as a nation. If you take, for example, the Irish situation: they got home rule... but they've lost their language, it's not really spoken in day-to-day life, nowhere near as much as Welsh is.

> So, what profit a country if it loses its soul? Politicians will always compromise, it's in their nature and it's part of the game, and I can understand all that, but if you're going to be moving towards an independent Wales and it's going to be without the culture that goes back thousands of years... then you're throwing it all away, you're throwing the baby out with the bathwater. (Interview, 30th September 2011)

It is clear that, despite the constitution being the most important objective for the party, the type of constitutional advancement is crucial, with cultural and linguistic concerns playing a key role. Of course, there are some in Plaid who believe that the Welsh language is the number one objective for the party (Interview, 29th September 2011), although this certainly appears to be a minority view. Nevertheless, one senior interviewee remarked that there are elements in the party that would like everyone in Wales to be Welsh speakers (Interview, 6th October 2011).

The Welsh language as a strategic problem

Despite the obvious importance of the Welsh language for Plaid Cymru, it is an aspect of the party's identity that causes strategic problems for the party. In the opinion of a number of prominent party elites, there remains a perception amongst non-Welsh speaking voters that the ability to speak Welsh is a prerequisite for voting Plaid. This problem is apparently particularly prevalent in the Valleys, where it is strongly believed that many think that the language doesn't belong to them and thus Plaid, being associated with the language, exists on the fringe and thus allows other parties, particularly Labour, to 'perpetuate the myth' (Interview, 6th October 2011) that this is indeed the case. The party also 'does not help itself' by creating 'a rod for its own back' over the Welsh language (Interview, 3rd October 2011), as one AM explains further;

> We don't help ourselves too often. We spend too much time, sometimes, agonising or creating angst amongst ourselves and some of our natural supporters who are Welsh-speaking or in the Welsh language movements [by] having too much of a dialogue within Plaid Cymru on the issues around the Welsh language. The last year or two years has been an example of this where we spent too much time discussing and arguing over the content of the Welsh language legislation and we were seen, then, to be talking only about the Welsh

> language. However, it was only a little bit really of what we were doing, but it seemed to perpetuate the myth that Plaid Cymru is only concerned with the Welsh language, and we have to not allow ourselves, as a political party, to have our agenda hijacked by movements or organisations that are naturally close to us. They are very often the same people, such as the Welsh Language Society. We have to focus on the big picture which is an independent Wales. (Interview, 4th October 2011)

There is a widely held perception within the party that the media gives a disproportionate amount of coverage to the party when it debates the Welsh language. However, there is an awareness that the party plays its part by providing the ammunition for the media to use in its coverage of Plaid. The party also believes that perceptions of the party exist as one that is populated by Northern, Welsh speakers who do not resonate with non-Welsh speakers, particularly in the Labour-voting valleys in the south (Interview, 6th October 2011). This strategic issue is something that is covered in the literature on Plaid (Lynch, 1995; McAllister, 2001; Elias, 2011) and the findings here further confirm it. Figure 2 below shows that there is some truth in these perceptions;

Figure 2: Perceptions of Care Towards 'people like you' by Plaid Depending on Ability to Speak Welsh (Source: Welsh Election Study Pre-Election Wave) N=1625

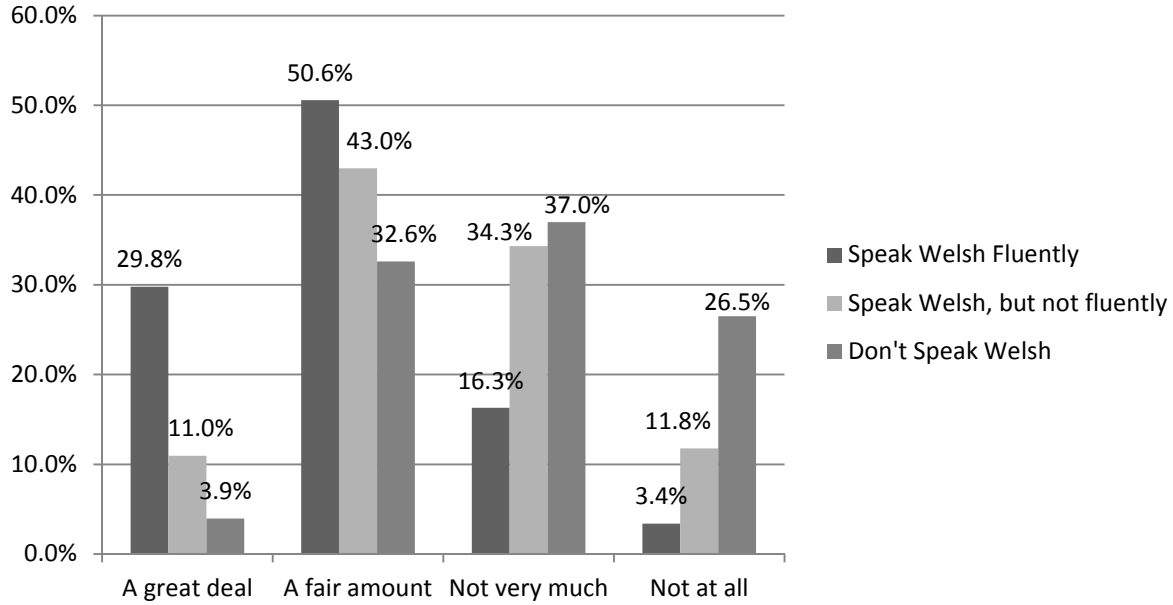


Figure 2 is fairly unequivocal and clearly shows that there is a link between whether the party cares about 'people like you' and the ability to speak Welsh. Over 80% of fluent Welsh speakers believe Plaid cares about people like them at least to a degree. On the other hand, the majority of non-Welsh speakers (63.5%) believe Plaid either does not care very much or not at all. A significant minority however (36.5%) do think the party cares at least 'a fair amount'. Figure 3 below shows the same graph except for this time respondents were asked about their perceptions of care from Labour;

Figure 3: Perceptions of Care Towards 'people like you' by Labour Depending on Ability to Speak Welsh (Source: Welsh Election Study pre-election wave)

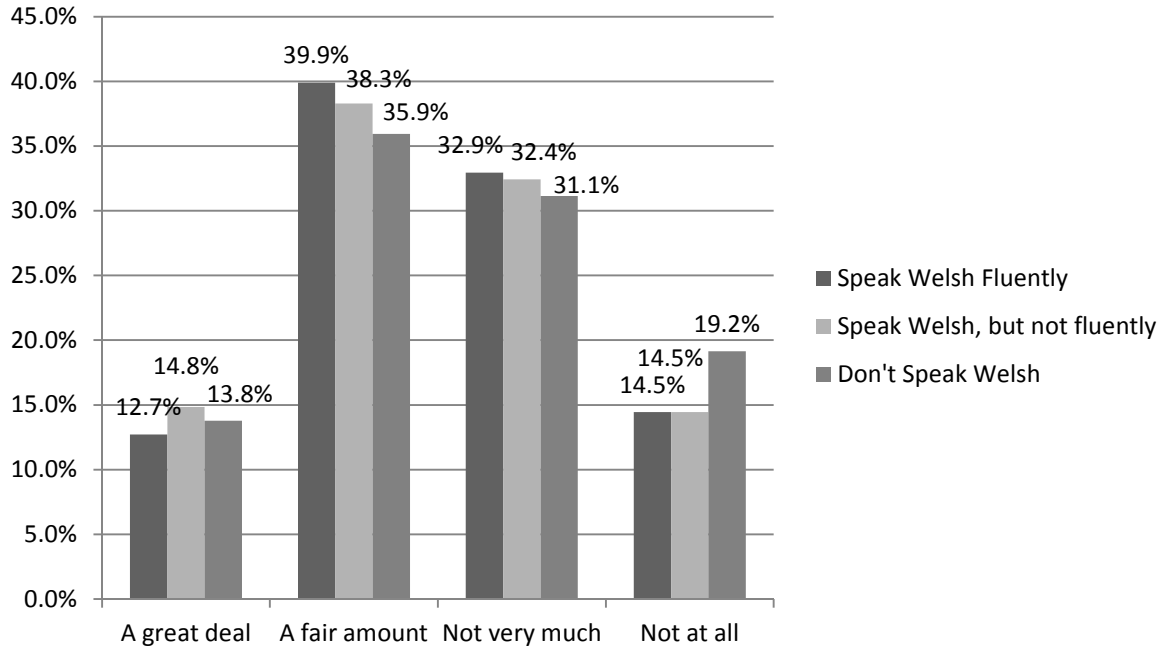


Figure 3 shows that there is a far less binary relationship between the ability to speak Welsh and perceptions of how much Labour cares. Different to Plaid, language does not seem to be a good indicator of perceptions about Labour. Indeed, there is no real pattern that on the basis of Welsh-speaking ability that can be drawn about perceptions of care when it comes to Labour.

Despite these stereotypes, Alun Ffred Jones AM in his capacity at Heritage Minister in government attempted to take a more cross-party and collective approach when talking about the Welsh language;

> The Welsh language is part of the social and cultural inheritance of those of us who live in Wales. It is a matter of pride to the citizens of Wales, regardless of whether or not they speak Welsh. We have to treasure and share the language, and promote its use for the future. It is our responsibility in the Assembly to do so. (National Assembly for Wales, 2009)

This type of rhetoric is fairly commonplace in Plaid. Indeed, the party's website states that '[the] Welsh language belongs to all the people of Wales, wherever they live, whichever language they speak' (Plaid Cymru, 2012b). However, the party has faced negative publicity in the media in issues surrounding the Welsh language, the most prominent being back in 2001 when a Plaid councillor in Gwynedd made comments about the 'immigration' of non-Welsh speakers to Welsh-speaking areas at the supposed detriment of the language (Guardian, 2001). This particular incident was given even more publicity after Ieuan Wyn Jones AM, the then leader of Plaid, refused to condemn the councillor on BBC Television for his remarks.[19] Nevertheless, the party still continues to propose reforms in order to protect Welsh language communities;

> Housing has to be planned carefully in a way which is sensitive to the linguistic profile of the communities affected. Population growth figures in many areas are based on unsustainable assumptions that undermine Welsh-speaking communities... A system driven by the investment interests of private developers will always prioritise profit margins over social considerations. That is what has to change. Council Tax on second homes should be increased to discourage holiday-home ownership in Welsh-speaking communities. (Plaid Cymru, 2012c)

As will be discussed in chapter 7, party leaders within Plaid are trying to bring the party to the point where it understands that the Welsh language is no longer its own issue. Indeed, some influential figures within the party are attempting to deliberately 'blur the lines' between the major political parties in Wales regarding the language (Jeffrey, 2009). However, it is reasonable to suggest that many within Plaid perhaps do not trust other parties with the protection of the Welsh language.

[19] For a transcript of the BBC Question Time in question (15th February 2001): http://www.newswales.co.uk/index.cfm?F=1&id=3048&section=Politics

Primary Goals to be Achieved in Government

In order to satisfy the party's membership and continue to appeal to core voters, making steps towards primary goals in government is crucial for a party like Plaid. Although the party had a number of objectives in government, the objectives that can be described as primary goal, or autonomist, objectives are particularly important. Plaid was successful in making strides towards its primary goals by having related policy objectives recognised and codified in the One Wales Agreement.

The Welsh Language Measure

During negotiations with Labour regarding the formation of a cabinet, Plaid ensured that they would control the Heritage portfolio. The post was initially taken up by Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM but he was eventually replaced by Alun Ffred Jones AM in July 2008. A statement was made by Glyn Thomas in October 2007 relating to the priorities of the Heritage portfolio for the governmental term;

> There is an opportunity over the next few years to use the Assembly's new powers to strengthen the position of the language. Among our commitments are to confirm the official status of the Welsh language, to establish a language commissioner, to secure rights in relation to service provision, to increase our efforts to secure an agreement on the use of the Welsh language in European Union institutions, to increase the funding for Welsh-language newspapers and magazines, and to continue research into population movement. (Welsh Government, 2007a)

The priorities set out by the Heritage Minister are in line with what was documented in the One Wales Agreement between Labour and Plaid. The One Wales document set out these as follows;

> We will be seeking enhanced legislative competence on the Welsh Language. Jointly we will work to extend the scope of the Welsh Language Legislative Competence Order included in the Assembly government's first year legislative programme, with a view to a new Assembly Measure to confirm official status for both Welsh and English, linguistic rights in the provision of services and the establishment of the post of Language Commissioner." (Labour and Plaid Cymru, 2007: 34)

As a result of the commitment above, the Welsh Language Measure (2011) was passed which gave the Welsh language official status. This proved to be a big challenge for the One Wales government in terms of negotiating the Legislative Competence Order (LCO)[20] with the UK government according to one AM (Interview, 28th September 2011), and led to much 'debate and heartache' in the form of heated exchanges between members and elites and conference and other meetings (Interview, 27th September 2011; see also Elias, 2009b) Helen Mary Jones AM alluded to these internal tensions when she stated in plenary that '[s]ome of us would have liked it to go further, but given the constraints of the current system we should congratulate the Minister on a comprehensive piece of legislation' (National Assembly for Wales, 2009). Indeed, more was expected of the language measure from the wider party, and the Minister responsible for the measure, Alun Ffred Jones AM, allegedly became frustrated by expectations heaped upon him (Interview, 6th October 2011). Many of these difficulties were down to the issue of negotiating the LCO system, as one interview explained;

> We didn't have trouble with Labour [in the NAW], but we had trouble with Labour in the Welsh Office and in Westminster. Because of the convoluted way we had to do the measure in first getting [the LCO defined], it became a protracted struggle... Just as we thought we had come to the end of the line, they started throwing in lots of other demands... I think they were heavily influenced by lobbying from business... We would have liked to have brought banks into the remit of the measure, possibly the supermarkets too. (Interview, 19th September 2011)

Much of this frustration was caused by the protracted struggle with the UK government over the conditions of the LCO causing a policy outcome that was 'less than optimum'; for example, not being able to bring banks and supermarkets into the policy remit (Interview, 28th September 2011; see also National Assembly for Wales, 2011). The feeling amongst Plaid's assembly group at the time was to 'play the game' because; if they had demanded

[20] A Legislative Competence Order (LCO) was a piece of constitutional legislation in the form of an Order in Council which formed part of the Government of Wales Act (2006). It transferred legislative authority from the Parliament of the United Kingdom to the National Assembly for Wales. The LCO had to be approved by the Assembly, the Secretary of State for Wales, both Houses of Parliament, and then the Queen in Council.

things that were never going to be granted then the measure might never have made it at all (Interview, 3rd October 2011).

The language measure gave the One Wales Government, and Plaid in particular, problems during in the lead-up to its passing in 2011. The policy was poorly communicated with Plaid's core vote in terms of what could realistically be achieved (Interview, 6th October 2011), something that is commented upon by Elias (2009b), and left many in the wider language movement disillusioned, particularly because of the lack of relation to the English language in the draft legislation in terms of equality (Interview, 6th May 2013). At the last minute, Bethan Jenkins AM managed to force the government to adopt amendments that she would have brought to the assembly regarding the strengthening of the official status of Welsh (Jenkins, 2010; Western Mail, 8th December 2010). Indeed, the final measure was changed to state, unequivocally, that '[the] Welsh language has official status in Wales' (Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, 2011: 1). The stage one committee report (National Assembly for Wales, 2010: 13) did not incorporate this crucial aspect, stating that the proposed measure makes no change to the status of the language, but acts '...merely as a signpost to provisions in this and other legislation which relate to the Welsh language.' Bethan Jenkins was allegedly under a lot of pressure to withdraw her amendment, mainly because ministers were 'willing to cave in' and not push through a 'brave measure' (Interview, 29th September 2011).

The Referendum on Law-Making Powers

For Plaid, the fact that the One Wales Agreement with Labour promised that both parties would campaign in 'good faith' for a 'successful outcome' in a referendum on primary law-making powers (Labour and Plaid Cymru, 2007: 6) was of huge importance. It was believed in the party that a successful outcome in the referendum would represent a step towards the party's main goals (Interview, 3rd October 2011) and was the only realistic way to continue the 'national project' (Interview, 4th October 2011). The referendum became a line in the sand for Plaid that would define their relationship with Labour

and underpin the motivations for the party agreeing to be part of the One Wales Government. Despite the obvious importance of the Welsh language to Plaid (Elias, 2009b), it was not deemed as vital as the referendum. The referendum represented the main reason for going into government with Labour, so much so that it acted as the overriding primary goal (Duncan, 2007: 71; Harmel and Janda, 1994). One interviewee succinctly sums this up;

> There was one red line which was the referendum, and then there were some less deep red lines such as the language measure, roads, and hospital closures on which we'd campaigned on, and the Welsh language daily newspaper. The referendum was the clincher which dispelled doubts within the party. (Interview, 4th October 2011)

Despite the assurances given in the One Wales Agreement, there were deep suspicions of Labour as a coalition partner. One AM stated that it did not matter what one wrote down with Labour because they would try and 'wriggle out of the referendum' by attempting to 'fix' the All Wales Convention process, for example, which would have potentially delayed the referendum until after the 2011 Welsh election (Interview, 6th October 2011). Plaid's scepticism of Labour's commitment to the timing of the referendum was justified when Labour looked like going back on the One Wales Agreement in November, 2009. However, tensions calmed after Rhodri Morgan reaffirmed his support and were further subdued by the election of his successor, Carwyn Jones, who was less afraid of upsetting the generally more devolution-sceptic Labour MPs. (Osmond, 2012; Wyn Jones & Scully, 2012: 84-88). The referendum went ahead on the 3rd of March 2011 and was an unprecedented success, with 63.5% voting for the NAW to be given primary law-making powers.

Office – A means to an end or an end in itself?

According to Strøm and Müller (1999: 6), political office has two sources of value. On the one hand, office can have intrinsic value in the sense that it can bestow certain benefits on those who hold it. On the other hand, it can have an instrumental, electoral or policy value. Empirically, it is difficult to

separate out these theoretically different motivations for holding governmental office. Nevertheless, two broad considerations for Plaid going into government are apparent; the notion that Plaid being in government had an educational value that would, firstly, benefit and mature the party as a whole and, secondly, show the electorate that Plaid was a credible party of government, and, secondly, the notion that government was a mechanism to achieve policy goals.

Office as an Educating the Party

Office can be an important and powerful mechanism to show the benefits of governmental participation to some of the party's membership who may be somewhat sceptical. There is strong evidence to suggest that a significant strand of the party elite was of the opinion that going into government was a good thing in itself for these reasons. Governmental status would help Plaid mature as an organisation and provide sceptical elements in the party with an understanding of what government entailed (Interview, 5th September 2011). Plaid's leadership sought governmental office partly for the achievement of such ends;

> The truth is, we did seek [office] because the party needed to be in a position it had never been in before in order to make it realise that, actually, being in government is a good thing. Eventually of course the party voted overwhelmingly to go into government, but the party needed that period in government simply to understand what it meant. Of course you fight the good political fight, but in the end if you are not in the position to do anything about it then it's all pretty irrelevant. (Interview, 5th September 2011)

The decision to enter government as a junior coalition partner was strongly supported and ratified by a special conference (Plaid Cymru, 2007a).[21] Despite the potential policy opportunities that such an arrangement represented, the notion that simply possessing governmental status was positive for Plaid as a learning experience still persisted. The chance to simply sit at the cabinet table and undertake the business of governing Wales was perceived as vitally important for Plaid as a party (Interview, 29th

[21] The result of the vote was 225 (93%) 'for' and 18 (7%) 'against' going into coalition with Labour.

September 2011). According to Elias (2009c), Plaid reverted to more 'niche' oriented, pressure-group behaviour between 2003 and 2007, and the sentiments from a number of Plaid elites discussed here clearly allude to a desire to use governmental office to promote office-seeking, 'normal' political party behaviour.

The Functional Benefit of Office

The electoral circumstances after the 2007 election, coupled with the Liberal Democrats' not going into coalition with Labour again, meant that all potential coalitions involved Plaid in some shape or form. Indeed, it is testament to Plaid's office-seeking behaviour at this time that the leadership believed that the opportunity to enter government had to be 'seized' (Interview, 5th September 2011). Initially, Plaid had agreed to form a government with the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats, known as the 'Rainbow Coalition', after the 2007 election. Due to issues within the Liberal Democrats however, this option fell through and left Labour as the only credible coalition partner because the Liberal Democrats were perceived to be too unreliable (Interview, 6th October 2011). Despite this, it was the case that Plaid remained 'central to all coalition negotiations' which 'enabled Plaid effectively to choose between alternative coalition agreements' and thus maintain a strong hand in negotiations between other parties (Wyn Jones and Scully, 2007: 60).

One perceived benefit of the rainbow coalition was that Plaid would have gained the office of First Minister (FM). It was believed that it would be good for Plaid to have a First Minister because the office is a relatively powerful one (Lynch, 2006) and is far and above the most publicly recognisable (Interview, 4th October 2011; Interview, 3rd October 2011). Although Plaid appears, on the whole, pleased that it did enter coalition with Labour, rather than lead a rainbow coalition with the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats, there was still a belief that having a Plaid FM would have been beneficial to the party and that Wales would have benefited from Labour being out of power (Interview, 4th October 2011). Such notions are not

misplaced when one considers not only that the First Minister of Wales is the most well-known public figure in Wales, but that the majority of the Welsh electorate did not know who Ieuan Wyn Jones was in the 2011 election (Wyn Jones and Scully, 2012). Recent polling research by Scully (2013a) suggests that the Welsh FM is still, by far, the best known Welsh politician, a distinct advantage in modern electoral politics (Barisione, 2009)

The process of forming the One Wales Government with Labour was made easier after the collapse of the rainbow option because Plaid had been holding talks with Labour simultaneously, and by the time One Wales was formed Labour had already entered into government as a single-party minority in May, 2011. This meant that policy ideas that might have potentially ended up in a programme of government were scrutinised and deemed financially viable or not by the civil service (Interview, 6th October 2011). Important for Plaid was that the coalition possessed the numerical clout in the NAW to trigger a referendum on law-making powers for the Assembly, something that was particularly attractive to Plaid given its manifesto commitment to 'establish a Proper Parliament for Wales' (Plaid Cymru, 2007b: 36). This was not the case with the Rainbow coalition. This particular policy commitment proved crucial in securing Plaid's wider support for the One Wales Government.

Office as a Mechanism to Overcome Stereotypes

Plaid's leadership believed that governmental status would show the electorate that the party was mature, trustworthy and constructive. On his acceptance as Deputy First Minister (DFM), Ieaun Wyn Jones stated Plaid had moved from being an 'opposition party' that existed 'to place pressure on other parties to progress matters for Wales', to a partner in an 'innovative and stable Government that would serve the people of Wales for four years.' (Welsh Government, 2007b) Plaid was now a party that could no longer be 'accused of never being able to do anything' (Interview with Plaid Cymru AM, 5th October 2011) and could be 'trusted in government' (Interview, 28th September 2011).

> We had been an opposition party for 85 years, and one of the key perception problems [in the electorate] was that we weren't big enough or strong enough to run the country... Are you [*sic*] a credible party of government? People knew Labour were, because they were the party of government in Westminster... With Plaid it was uncharted territory, and one of the key things was for people to say 'actually, [Plaid] can run government and the sky doesn't fall in... and they can be trusted' and, to be honest, I think that will benefit us in four or five years' time because, although we didn't do too well [in 2011], nobody can throw the accusation that 'you can't trust [Plaid] in government.' (Interview, 3rd October 2011)

Plaid was keen to prove itself as a party of government, and show the electorate that it was competent, trustworthy and able. Research by Rahn (1993) suggests that stereotypes held by voters have an important function in determining voting behaviour: holding governmental office is an opportunity to overcome and refute those stereotypes. This desire took on added significance when, during the One Wales negotiations, a leaked Labour document described Plaid as 'leaderless, rudderless and hopeless' and 'a shambles which could not run a cockle stall, let alone a country' (Western Mail, 21st May 2007). Being a party in government for the very first time, coupled with some of the perceptions of the party in the Welsh electorate, and meant that governmental office was a unique opportunity to show the public that Plaid was indeed a normal, mainstream political party.

Stereotypes reinforced by portfolio choice?

Plaid ended up with three cabinet portfolios as a result of negotiations with Labour; Rural Affairs (Elin Jones AM), Economy and Transport (Ieuan Wyn Jones AM)[22] and Culture and Heritage (Alun Ffred Jones AM)[23], as well as a 'junior' housing minister role (Jocelyn Davies AM). It is widely considered amongst the Plaid AM group that, in terms of the outcome of the negotiations with Labour, the party did well. It was important that Plaid were engaged in multilateral talks; both with the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats (the so-called 'Rainbow Coalition') and Labour, enabling Plaid to keep a 'strong hand' in the negotiation process (Interview, 6th October 2011). Indeed, it has

[22] Ieuan Wyn Jones was also DFM.
[23] The post initially went to Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM but he stepped down from the position in 2008.

been claimed that by the time it came to working out the governmental agreement that Labour put up little resistance to Plaid's policy demands (Interview, 3rd October 2011). In particular, the controversy over badger culling to prevent the spread of tuberculosis (TB) in cattle was a controversial policy area that Labour was quite happy to backtrack on (Interview, 3rd October 2011). Elin Jones AM (Interview) outlines the experience she had negotiating policy terms with regard to her portfolio;

> [Labour] put up no resistance. In fact, I can recall a time sitting here when I was due to go and meet my counterparts in environmental and rural issues and Jocelyn [Davies], who was the lead negotiator, said 'have you got your list of policies that you want in the document?'. I had done my list and I thought it was a pretty impressive list and that there was no way that Labour were going to agree to some of the stuff on there. I went to the meeting with [three Labour ministers] and they agreed to it all. So me, coming from the point of view of wanting the rainbow really to work, I'm thinking 'right, I'll put up some really difficult ones for them to agree to.' TB eradication was one obvious one and they knew what that meant. They didn't bat an eyelid, and on most things they didn't bat an eyelid. It seemed to me that, at the time, Labour lacked ideas of their own and that they were more than happy to take on most of the ideas that we had for government

From Plaid's point of view, negotiating policy positions with Labour was not difficult. One AM claimed that the portfolios that Plaid eventually ended up with fell into place fairly naturally and that there was a feeling of satisfaction with the outcome of the negotiations (Interview, 28th September 2011). Furthermore, the portfolios that Plaid ended up with have been defended by another AM on the basis that two fairly large spending briefs (housing and the economy) were gained, particularly the economy one which controlled a budget of about £800 million (Interview, 5th October 2011), although this a fairly small amount compared the total amount of public spending in Wales.

However, a counter argument has been put forward that two portfolios (Culture and Heritage and Rural Affairs) simply reinforced certain stereotypes of Plaid. According to one AM, 'language and the countryside are Plaid in everyone's mind' and the party should have only accepted one of these 'stereotype reinforcing' portfolios (Interview, 6th October 2011). Another AM

reiterates this position, saying that the party was appealing to its core vote by taking these portfolios and that Health or Education should have been sought instead (Interview, 4th October 2011). However, the decision to take those particular portfolios has been defended;

> ...there was no way that we could allow [the Heritage] portfolio to go to Labour. There were real problems in the period between 2003 and 2007 with the minister then and the lack of commitment, not so much towards the language even, but certainly on a number of areas on culture and some on language where we weren't getting sufficient impetus. We had to have that [portfolio], and the [Welsh language] measure was something we wanted to control, obviously, and the rural affairs one is also important to us as it affects those areas where we have constituency seats in the Assembly and Westminster. (Interview, 5th October 2011)

Because of the history of the party, coupled with the (assumed) feelings and preferences of the party membership, Plaid was almost institutionally conditioned to take the stereotypical portfolios (namely Heritage, but also Rural Affairs). According to literature on the distribution of ministerial posts in coalition government, appointed ministers gain substantial control over agenda-setting and policy output (Austen-Smith and Banks, 1990; Laver & Shepsle, 1990: 874; Hindmoor, 2006: 62). At the expense of reinforcing stereotypes, it was obviously crucial that Plaid could have as much influence as possible over portfolios that would allow the party to deliver on primary goals. It must be stated that because Labour were already in government by the time the One Wales Government was negotiated then some hard decisions with regards to who would vacate ministerial posts had to be made by Labour. This also meant that, for Plaid, negotiating for portfolios was likely to have been more constrained because they did not start from a blank slate with Labour in terms of forming a government. However, the ease at which portfolios were chosen is stark, and chimes closely with literature discussing the strategic interests of Plaid as a party with regards to seeing the Welsh language and representing rural interests as important (Elias, 2009b, 2009c, 2011; Lynch, 1995; McAllister, 2001).

Policy - Using Government to achieve Primary Goals

Plaid's primary goals are teleological in nature in the sense that they have a discernible end point. Recent research has shown that coalitions at the sub-state level are dominated by policy considerations (Ştefuriuc, 2009), and so such teleological goals will presumably play a prominent role in any coalition agreement. Indeed, primary goals act as an 'overriding' policy goal (Duncan, 2007: 71). Political parties are organisations (Anderson, 1968; Panebianco, 1988) which, like all organisations, encompass a so-called 'psychological contract' between different actors within that organisation (Handy, 1993: 45). For autonomist parties, a key part of that psychological contract is the party's primary goal. Indeed, Jeffrey (2009: 646) states that autonomist parties run the risk of alienating members and core voters if they are not perceived to be striving to achieve the party's primary goal. Therefore, an autonomist party in government must show its core vote and its membership that it is making strides towards achieving that primary goal in government. The 'autonomist' policy pledges in the coalition agreement are thus very important.

Plaid indeed pushed for the inclusion of some commitments in the One Wales agreement that conform to its primary goals as a party, such as the official status of the Welsh language and, most importantly, a referendum on law-making powers. The manner in which Plaid would seek to achieve its aims was affected and shaped by the institutional set-up of Welsh devolution, as well as its relationship with its coalition partner in two ways. Firstly, because primary law-making powers were granted in the form of the much derided (Shipton, 2011; 276-278; Shortridge, 2010: 90) Legislative Competence Orders (LCOs) by the UK Government, having Labour in government at both the Welsh and UK level meant that the potential for obstruction was significantly less than it would have been if a rainbow coalition had been formed. However, the LCO still had to be applied for and negotiated which meant that Plaid did not always have the freedom to legislate as would have ideally wanted. Secondly, the Labour-Plaid coalition had adequate legislative presence in the NAW in order to activate a

referendum to 'unlock' the ability of the NAW to have a range of primary law-making powers devolved to it (Wyn Jones and Scully, 2012: 48).

Monitoring Labour in Government

Coalition partners will naturally wish to 'monitor' each other in government (Müller & Meyer, 2010) in order to guarantee that specific goals, targets are being met and policies are being delivered. The situation for Plaid with regards to Labour was no different, as one AM explained;

> Clearly we had the DFM role, one of the key things there was to make sure that the DFM could genuinely deputise for the FM... Everything was copied to the DFM so it wasn't possible for different reporting structures to be set up. For example, Labour ministers couldn't report directly to the FM; that wasn't allowed. Everything had to go through the proper channels. The civil service were very much brought in to these things too and, although some individuals may have tried to do it, it didn't really work. (Interview, 3rd October 2011)

Plaid's then leader and DFM, Ieuan Wyn Jones, acted as the central hub for the Plaid component of the government, with himself and his special advisors performing the 'monitoring' role. Because government was such a 'massive chance' for Plaid as a party, and something they could not 'turn down lightly' (Interview, 6th October 2011), it was important to use the opportunity of government to implement key parts of the One Wales Agreement, particularly the referendum. On the importance of Labour keeping to their end of the bargain;

> It was absolutely crucial. Two things were important, the first being that there was coherence from the Plaid end of the government and that's why the four [Plaid] ministers met regularly away from the cabinet. We felt this was vitally important because we didn't want to end up in a position where a minister in the Plaid team felt isolated and also for [Plaid's leadership] to understand what was going in Plaid's portfolios but also in Labour's portfolios because, on health for example, we didn't want to see the centralisation of services and so we wanted to make sure this was delivered because it was [one of our] key electoral pledges. (Interview, 5th October 2011)

Governmental status was thus taken as a serious opportunity to meet key policy targets. Plaid's leadership were keen to ensure that the party's coalition 'weight' (Bolleyer, 2007), relative to Labour, was maximized in order to get their policies into the coalition agreement in the first place and then insist on their delivery. However, and despite being successful in this regard, there were signs of tension between members of the parliamentary group;

> I don't believe that the general public knew that the One Wales Government had Plaid ministers. Within two weeks of the coalition, during our [Plaid] group meetings, the use of ministers' pronouns had changed. They started talking about 'us' as the cabinet and backbenchers, and 'you' as the backbenchers along with Labour backbenchers... I think we allowed Labour to get away with the idea that the One Wales Government was Labour-led. Yes, it was Labour-led in terms of numbers but in terms of ideas it was a Plaid-led coalition. (Interview, 6th October 2011)

The sentiments in the quote above are reiterated to a degree by a Plaid councillor in Cardiff, who suggested that the party 'bowed to the institution and the Labour establishment', got 'too cosy', and focussed too much on delivering 'good government' instead of using office to help the party benefit and 'grow' in the future by, for example, putting pressure on Labour to remove the ban on dual candidacy (Interview, 29th September 2011). Evidence such as this appears to suggest a perception from outside government that the party was not perhaps using government to benefit itself as much as it perhaps could. As one interviewee put it, Plaid is perhaps not as 'cutthroat' as it could be (Interview, 6th October 2011), while another stated that Plaid is a party that 'is committed to doing things' rather than focussing on electoral and political success (Interview, 27th September 2011). Plaid was prioritising being a competent and successful party of government rather than a party that prioritises electoral success.

Alongside the perception that the party became 'sucked in' to government is the idea that a fundamental organisational vulnerability (Bolleyer, 2008: Deschouwer, 2008) was exposed as a result of being in government.

According to Deschouwer (2008: 10), governmental participation 'introduces new roles in the party organization and these new roles are taken up by important people in the party.' In Plaid's case, Ieuan Wyn Jones' role as DFM coincided with his role as party leader which, although unsurprising, began to affect Plaid as a party. According to a senior interviewee;

> Most of us managed to get the balance right between being in charge of government departments and being hard-working Plaid Cymru members. I think most of us managed to do that quite well... I think Ieuan [Wyn Jones] got the balance a bit wrong, I think he was too much a Deputy First Minister and forgot the leader of Plaid Cymru part of his job. (Interview, 4th October 2011)

One explanation for Wyn Jones becoming immersed in government to perhaps a larger extent than his senior colleagues is that his role as Minister for Economy and Transport was particularly difficult and staffed by weak civil servants (Interview, 6th October 2011). However, another explanation points to the idea that his monitoring role over Labour as DFM, particularly with regards to the delivery of the referendum, meant that a leadership vacuum opened up in the party. According to a well-placed source;

> The focus was to prove that Plaid could be a competent party of government. I think that far too much priority was placed on this at the expense of the party. However, if the party wanted the referendum to be the red line, then it's understandable why this happened. I don't think that the party was structured in such a way that while its leader was keeping his eye on the ball in terms of the red line, that the party was keeping its eye on what would happen further down the road... I don't think that Ieuan [Wyn Jones] had people around him that could take on some of the duties of leading the party. (Interview, 6th October 2011)

This quote alludes to the deficiencies in Plaid's leadership structures as being somewhat inevitable given the priorities the party had in government. However, there are more critical opinions, with one interviewee remarking that too much focus was put into the NAW at the expense of the party which led to a poor campaign with poor leadership (Interview, 28th September 2011). Despite the differences in opinion, it is clear that Plaid suffered from a form of organisational vulnerability (Bolleyer, 2008; Deschouwer, 2008) in government. This point will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter.

Policy-seeking considerations were important for Plaid in government. The party made sure that it filled the ministerial posts that coincided with policy areas it was traditionally associated with, namely Heritage and Rural Affairs,[24] as well as constructing and managing the various communication channels which were essential when it came to monitoring Labour. The DFM role was pivotal in this regard. Uppermost in the leadership's strategic consideration was ensuring that Labour made good on their commitment to have a referendum before the end of the assembly term. However, this meant that time and resources were invested in government at the expense of the party organisation, particularly in the case of Ieuan Wyn Jones in his capacity as party leader. Although this strategy was successful in the sense that Plaid achieved a great deal of policy success (McConnell, 2010) as a party of government, it did mean that the party's ability to construct an effective vote-seeking strategy heading into the 2011 Welsh election was compromised.

Votes – The price of government

Strøm and Müller (1999: 8) state that vote-seeking is generally associated with the Downsian conception of vote maximizing. Despite potential criticisms of this position, they insist that vote-seeking models have 'great heuristic value' (Ibid.: 9) and that, generally, '[the] most preferred outcome for a party leader is one in which his or her party gets the greatest possible number of votes' (Ibid.: 8). It is therefore understood that an optimal vote-seeking strategy is one which has the potential to win a party the maximum amount of votes possible. Because the Welsh Assembly operates a Mixed Member Proportional system with a 60:40 bias towards First-Past-The-Post seats, then maximizing votes across Wales gives a party a good chance of capturing more seats, unlike at UK general elections where geographically dispersed support is not rewarded.

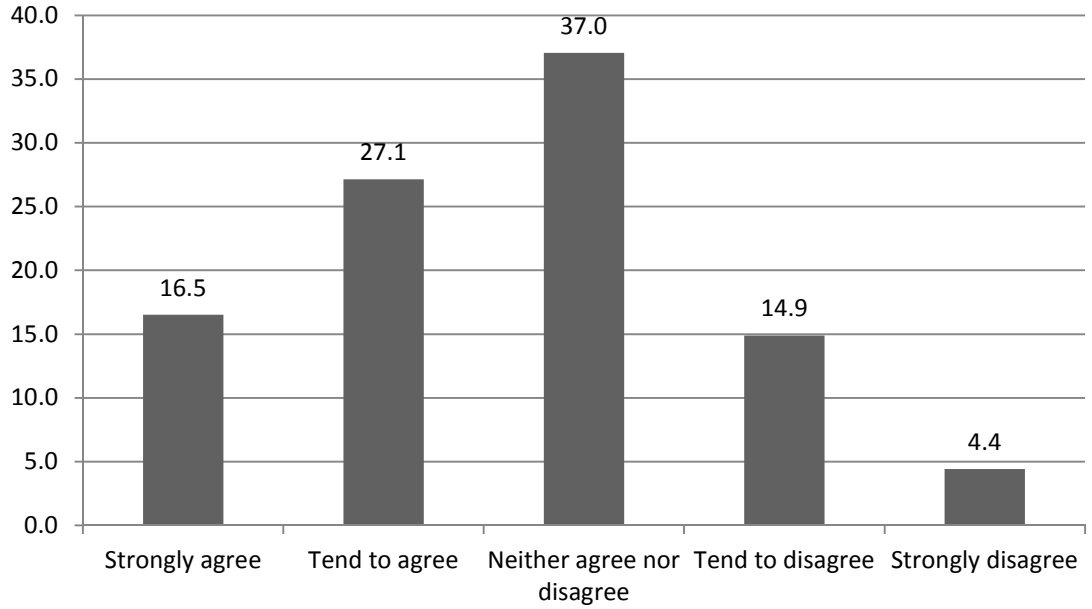
[24] Research by Browne and Feste (1975) found that parties do not view ministerial posts equally and certain parties will place emphasis on filling certain posts. Knowing the ideology of a party increases the chances of predicting the type of portfolios it will place emphasis on. For example, agrarian parties receive agricultural affairs 72% of the time (Browne and Feste, 1975: 546).

The Lack of a Vote-Seeking Strategy

The much coveted referendum was held on the 3rd March, 2011. The result was a very convincing endorsement of delivering law-making powers to Wales with 63.5% voting 'yes'. Perhaps more importantly was the fact the result was unlike the painfully narrow result in 1997 when only 50.3% voted in favour of the creation of the NAW. The result was hugely important to Plaid who saw the main reason they went into government with Labour come to fruition. Indeed, after the result there was a feeling within the party that they 'had won already' (Interview, 28th September 2011).

Plaid was unable to carry the success of the referendum into the election two months later where they lost four seats. Figure 4 below shows that over two-thirds of the public (37%) were neutral in terms of relating the referendum to their everyday lives. Nearly two-fifths (19.5%) disagreed with the idea that the referendum was relevant to them. Therefore, it is clear that basing an electoral strategy on the success of the referendum was always going to be problematic. Plaid's primary goals as a party, although important to the party's leadership and the membership, were simply not that relevant to a large enough proportion of society. On top of this, there is an argument that the election was affected by partial second order election characteristics (McAllister and Cole, 2012) which meant Welsh specific issues were marginalised and to the detriment of Plaid. Scully's (2013b) findings suggest that the election was more permeable to UK-level aspects than the 2011 Scottish election. Literature on parties in government for the first time also suggests electoral setbacks are common (Buelens and Hino, 2008). Despite this, the contextual factors do not explain the trade-offs that occurred in government as a result of strategic decisions made by Plaid's leadership.

Figure 4: Public Opinion on the Relevance of the Referendum to their Lives (Source: Welsh Referendum Study Post-Referendum Wave) N=1724



According to one interviewee, a shift in the balance of power in the coalition began to occur between the coalition partners after 'a year or so', with Labour becoming 'smart to [Plaid's] act': Plaid became a 'passenger' in a coalition that they should have been 'drivers' in and should have been 'more aggressive in the final [two years] of the government' (Interview, 4th October 2011). Furthermore, intra-party tensions began to manifest around the half-way point of the assembly term (between summer and winter 2009) with calls for Plaid's leadership to begin setting in motion a strategy for the 2011 election. According to one interviewee, the lack of an exit strategy directly impacted upon the party's election campaign;

> I remember two years into government there were calls for an exit strategy. At what point do [we] start fighting back? We never did until we were in the election campaign, and then we turned on [Labour], and then we looked ridiculous because we were attacking the government that we'd been part of... The fact that there was no exit strategy was a choice. The issue was raised in the National Executive; it is not as if the party wasn't asking for it... The party became, in my opinion, a nuisance when it wouldn't tow the government line. (Interview, 6th October 2011)

Table 1: Change in share of the vote for Plaid and Labour between 2007 and 2011

Plaid Cymru							
Constituency 2007		**Constituency 2011**		**List 2007**		**List 2011**	
N	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**
219,121	22.4	182,907	19.3	204,757	21	169,799	17.9
			(-3.1)				(-3.1)
Labour							
Constituency 2007		**Constituency 2011**		**List 2007**		**List 2011**	
N	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**
314,925	32.5	401,677	42.3	288,954	29.6	349,935	36.9
			(+10.1)				(+7.2)

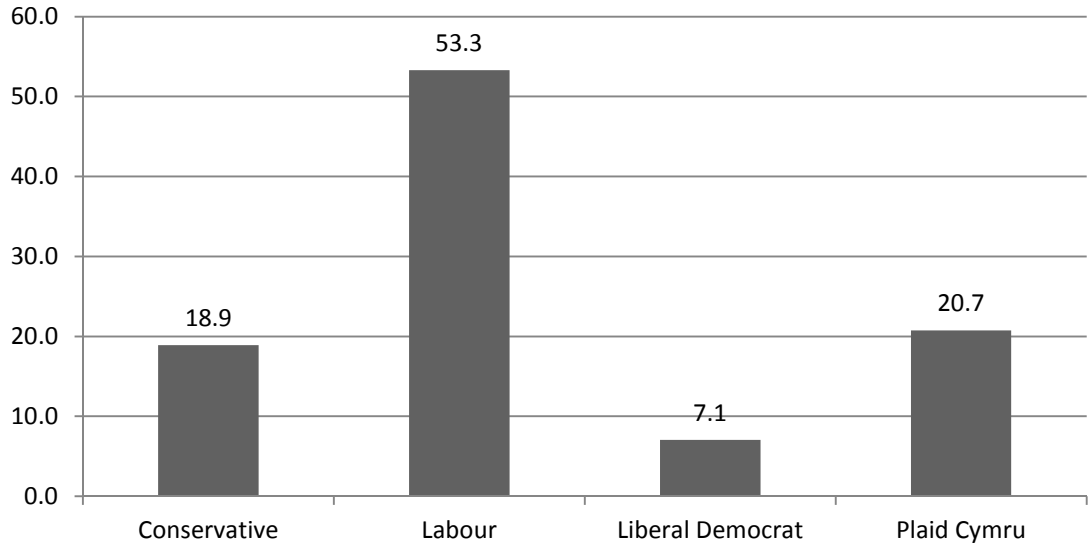
The evidence presented here suggests that it was a strategic choice not to formulate an exit strategy at this stage in the coalition. Considering the previous discussion on Plaid's policy-seeking strategy and the manner in which the party became 'sucked in' to government, this is not surprising. Although the party's leadership was performing well in policy-seeking terms by monitoring Labour and delivering on the commitments laid out in the One Wales Agreement, its vote-seeking capacity was subsequently compromised as a result due to a failure to successfully 'decouple' the party from the coalition early enough in the second half of the assembly term (see table 1 for an overview of the election result for Plaid in relation to Labour). This led to an element of uncertainty within the party about how to approach the election in 2011 throughout 2010. Despite a belief that Plaid brought a 'Welsh flavour' to the One Wales Government, an 'element of panic' about how to approach the election left a 'vacuum for Labour to exploit' (Interview, 3rd October 10) by campaigning on the basis that they were the party that was 'standing up for Wales' (Labour, 2011). This loss of identity in terms of a state-wide competitor adopting an unashamedly nationalist position with

regards to the defence of Wales' interests as a nation is something that began to occur after 1999 (Elias, 2009c) and has continued in government.

Trading Electoral Success for a Referendum Victory

One outcome of a meeting between senior Plaid figures in late 2010 resulted in the referendum being given top priority for 2011 (Interview, 28th September 2011). This is not to say that the election was not important, but it was behind the referendum in terms of priority (Plaid Cymru, 2011d; Plaid Cymru, 2011g). Because the referendum played a crucially important role as a primary goal for Plaid, the party was willing and eager to place a lot of resources and manpower behind the campaign.

Figure 5: Percentage of the Welsh Public Regarding Who They Thought Ran the Best Campaign (Source: Welsh Election Study Pre-Election Wave) N=696



It is widely believed within Plaid that they did most of the legwork when it came to campaigning in the run-up to the referendum in March 2011, an assertion that is backed up by Wyn Jones and Scully (2012: 93). By doing this however, the party compromised its ability to formulate an effective and constructive campaign heading into the 2011 Welsh election in May;

> We weren't really geared up for the election. I don't think we executed the election well at all, I think it was atrocious. We didn't fight a good election, and we didn't have the resources either... We thought that winning the referendum would give us some impetus...

> In a way, winning the referendum was our victory, but we were tired from pushing it. (Interview, 28th September 2011)

Plaid's widely acknowledged that their election campaign was poor, and was even described as 'mindless' by Lord Dafydd Elis-Thomas AM in the media. The same article in the Western Mail states that, privately, Plaid members were extremely critical of Ieaun Wyn Jones leadership at that time (Western Mail, 12th May 2011). One respondent commented on the campaign directly, stating that 'it was quite strange that the main thrust of our campaign revolved around attacking Labour because we were effectively attacking ourselves.' (Interview, 28th September 2011). Figure 5 above shows that over half of the Welsh public thought Labour ran the best election campaign, with Plaid in second place with just over 20%. Another respondent pointed to the process of putting together the party's election manifesto as indicative of the poor campaign, stating that the manifesto was 'awful', lacking of 'eye-catching ideas', 'too much interference by senior figures', and hurriedly put together over the space of 48 hours (Interview, 6th October 2011). Table 4 also points to a lack of contact between Plaid and the electorate.

Table 2: Level of Campaign Contact with the Welsh Electorate (Source: Welsh Election Study 2011 Post Election Wave)

Were you contacted by a political party during the election?	**Yes**	**No**	**N**
Labour	65.3	34.7	577
Plaid Cymru	38.5	61.5	577

Despite being in government and presiding over some key 'primary goal' successes, such as the referendum and the Welsh Language Measure, Plaid's share of the vote in 2011 was its worst since the NAW was created in 1999. Indeed, their share of the list vote has almost halved (from 30.5% to 17.9%) between 1999 and 2011. It cannot be said therefore that Plaid's period in government has directly led to this decline, although it certainly did nothing to stem the flow of voters away from the party. Indeed, table 4 below shows that there was no major difference in assessment of Plaid and Labour

ministers, and that a higher percentage of respondents thought Plaid ministers were either 'very good', 'good' or 'neither good nor bad'. Furthermore, the context of the 2011 election was unhelpful because of the Conservatives' return to government at the UK level which aided Welsh Labour. Nevertheless, these factors do not explain why the party's election campaign, or its vote-winning strategy, was so deficient. The evidence presented here points to a weakness in the party's leadership structures brought about by, firstly, an inability to delegate party business out of the leader's hands, and secondly, the overbearing emphasis that the party's leadership placed on the business of government. This 'detachment' of the party's leadership is further explained by the desire for Labour to make good on its commitment to holding a referendum before the end of the assembly term.

Table 3: Welsh Electorate's Assessment of Labour and Plaid Ministers in One Wales Government (Source: Welsh Election Study 2011 Pre-Election Wave)

Assessment of ministers in One Wales Government	Very good	Fairly good	Neither good nor bad	Fairly bad	Very bad	N
Labour %	5.3	36.9	30.0	17.2	10.5	1702.0
Plaid Cymru %	3.1	35.4	35.1	15.5	10.9	1620.0

After the 2011 election, Plaid began an internal consultation process which led to the party undergoing a process of organisational reform, culminating in changes to the party's constitution in February 2013, which are an attempt to professionalize the party's structures. Included in the review report is the position of 'Business Manager' (Plaid Cymru, 2012a: 44) who, appointed by the leader, would look after the everyday party business if and when Plaid entered government again, leaving the leader to focus on government. This particular organisational reform, as well as plenty others, are similar to those experienced by the SNP back in 2004. These reforms will be discussed in more detail in chapter 7.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined Plaid's experience as a junior partner in the One Wales Government, focussing mainly on how the party's primary goals interacted and affected its status as a party of government. Firstly, a brief description of Plaid's primary goals of Welsh constitutional advancement and protection and promotion of the Welsh language was offered. Next, the primary goals that were to be achieved in government, namely the referendum and the Welsh language measure, were discussed. Finally, the chapter analysed how the party fared in government using the POV framework as a heuristic guide.

Plaid experienced success and failure in government. On the one hand, they were very successful in policy terms. They were able to pass legislation on the Welsh language, succeed in achieving a positive result in the 2011 referendum on law-making powers, and they have helped to set the agenda in Wales regarding constitutional reform and further devolution. Furthermore, the Plaid's leadership was keen to use governmental status as mechanism to help the party's membership understand that being in government was a worthwhile and valuable exercise. However, the party struggled to adapt to government later on in the term. After a promising start, the party began to experience organisational vulnerabilities which meant that the party's leader and DFM, Ieuan Wyn Jones, became absorbed in government at the expense of effective leadership of the party. The party was unable to prevent Labour portraying itself as the party that fights for Welsh interests, a continuation of a process that has occurred under devolution generally (Elias, 2009c). The party's vote-seeking strategy suffered as a result, manifesting in a muddled and deficient election campaign which did not provide Plaid with the best chance heading into the election. Although it was always likely that Labour were going to prosper from the return of the Conservatives to government at the UK-level, it may have been possible for Plaid to offset their electoral difficulties at least somewhat.

A number of Plaid elites saw government as an opportunity to steer the party away from the resurgence of niche politics that occurred after the party's disappointing election in 2003 (Elias, 2009c). However, Plaid continued to be defined by the notion that it is a party that is overly concerned with the Welsh language and culture ((Elias, 2009b, 2009c, 2011; Lynch, 1995; McAllister, 2001). This occurred through the governmental portfolios it adopted, and laid bare the strategic tension in the party between the idea that Plaid is a party concerned with traditional issues such as language and culture, and a party that wishes to ultimately replace Labour as the dominant force in Welsh politics. Although elite opinion suggests that there were a number of figures who wished to use governmental status to do the latter, that desire was ultimately constrained by Plaid's historical legacy. The strategic tension at the heart of Plaid, described by a number of commentators, continued, and was not resolved, by being in government.

Plaid has learned from its experience in government by implementing substantial organisational changes to the party's internal structures. The poor electoral result legitimised this process. Therefore, the party has not only learned from its time in office, but has adapted more widely to the opportunity structure of devolution in order to try and maximise its future vote-seeking potential. Chapter 7 will explore this process in more detail.

Chapter 6 – The SNP in Government

Introduction

This chapter assesses the SNP in government. The SNP entered into government for the first time in 2007 as a single-party minority government. As chapter 1 discussed, autonomist parties in government are expected to face the same problems faced by other political parties (Elias and Tronconi, 2011a), as well as the challenges that sub-state political arenas present for autonomist parties (Jeffrey, 2009). Indeed, one of the challenges for the SNP has been to govern in a manner which is competent and encourages electoral success. In this regard they have been successful as their electoral victory at the 2011 Scottish election highlighted. At the same time, however, they must continue to press the case for Scotland to be an independent nation-state, despite having to make devolution work well in order to be in the position to do that. In 2007, the SNP could not have envisaged the electoral success that was to come their way, and so the process of adapting to their new role as a party of government was taken with a longer-term view in mind (Lynch, 2013). This chapter will explore how the SNP adapted to and coped with governmental office, focusing mainly, but not exclusively, on their first term in office (2007-2011).

The chapter begins by outlining the primary goals of the SNP. Although the party is famously associated with its belief that Scotland should be an independent nation-state, the party is also committed to the furtherance of all Scottish interests. The second part of the chapter looks at how the SNP used governmental office to dispel stereotypes that were perceived to be held about the party by many voters. Government, for the SNP, was a way through which the party could dispel myths that it was a fringe party; incapable and too ill-disciplined for the responsibility of holding office. The third section looks at what role the party's primary goals played in government. Although the SNP is a party that is firmly committed to its primary goal of independence, the reality of governing as a single-party minority administration meant that, when viewed through Strøm and Müller's

(1999) theoretical framework, strategic primacy was placed on vote and office-seeking behaviour.

Primary Goals

The SNP is synonymous with its primary goal of Scottish independence. On entering into government it was crucial for its membership and core vote that progress was being made towards this end. The party is very united behind independence and it is a goal that is shared by party elites. However, the SNP also has a second objective to further all Scottish interests, and this goal is also an equally important aspect of the SNP's identity as a party.

Scottish Independence

The aim of the SNP that is listed first in the party's constitution is that of achieving independent statehood for Scotland. This aim, as constituted, is;

> Independence for Scotland; that is the restoration of Scottish national sovereignty by restoration of full powers to the Scottish Parliament, so that its authority is limited only by the sovereign power of the Scottish People to bind it with a written constitution and by such agreements as it may freely enter into with other nations or states or international organisations for the purpose of furthering international cooperation, world peace and the protection of the environment. (SNP, 2009a: 1)

Although the SNP's primary goal was somewhat ambiguous in its early years, the 1950's saw the beginning of a process of real consolidation with regards to the party's objectives (Finlay, 2009: 27). In contrast to then, the current SNP is extremely united around the common goal of independence. SNP elites share Scottish independence as their top priority for the party. However, this is not to say that independence is the only objective that the SNP are interested in. Indeed, independence is often seen as a mechanism through which a more socially just Scotland can be achieved. For example, one MSP stated that 'social justice' and 'equal opportunities' were very important objectives for the SNP, and these could only be achieved through independence (Interview, 23rd August 2011). The SNP is a party that, at an elite level at least, is unequivocal about its primary goal.

The goal of Scottish independence acts as a very strong motivational tool for the SNP. For a number of respondents asked what the SNP 'stood for', the answer was straightforwardly 'independence' without recourse to much justification as to why, other than it being the primary motivating factor behind their membership and activity in the party. To quote one interviewee;

> Independence [*sic*]. If it wasn't independence I wouldn't be in the party. To be honest, if there ever came a moment, and I don't think there will be, where I firmly believed that independence was no longer the principal aim of the SNP I would no longer be a member of the SNP. It's all or nothing. I haven't devoted 30 years of my life to the party for it to renege when we've come so close to achieving our aims. (Interview, 13th September 2011)

The idea that independence is the absolute goal of the SNP with 'everything else [being] secondary' (Interview, 18th August 2011) is one that exists as a strand of thought amongst elected officials and pertains to the more 'fundamentalist' (Mitchell, 1996) school of thought in the party. Furthermore, independence is clearly a major reason why people join the party in the first place (Interview, 8th September 2011) and exists as an overriding objective for the party despite the different understandings of what it might mean and reasons for supporting it (Interview, 16th November 2011). These sentiments are confirmed by Mitchell et al's (2012) analysis of the SNP's membership.

Indeed, a more nuanced[25] understanding of independence is also prevalent. Many interviewees were keen to stress that independence is the most important objective of the party but it holds this position for a purpose; that purpose being the creation of a Scotland that is more wealthy and socially just than it ever could be within the UK;

> Independence [is the SNP's most important objective], but independence for a purpose. It's not just independence for the sake of it but it's about making the country better. Scotland can be wealthier, it could be more socially just, and we can't achieve those things until we have the tools at our disposal. So, independence is the glib

[25] This not to say that those who have been referred to here as more 'fundamentalist' have a somehow simpler or shallower notion of what independence is, but that when asked about the priorities of the SNP as a party, they articulated much more 'end in itself' conception of what independence was without being prompted otherwise.

> answer, but it's independence for a purpose. (Interview, 13th September 2011)

This quote highlights a common strand in the SNP's constitutional thought: the idea that independence is a means to an end and not simply an end in itself. One cabinet minister succinctly sums up the 'means to an end' notion;

> Independence isn't just an end in itself, it's also about a means to an end, and that end is about higher economic growth, full employment, a fairer society and environmental sustainability. All of these things are important, and the reason why people like me are in the SNP and in favour of independence is because they don't think Scotland will reach anything like its full potential unless we have control over our own affairs. (Interview, 14th September 2011)

These sentiments are very much part of the SNP's public discourse. The party is keen to justify independence as the way by which a more positive future will be achieved, but also portraying independence as an almost natural state of affairs that Scotland, as a nation, should experience almost by right;

> The independence we propose for Scotland is exactly for this purpose. It is with independence – the natural state for nations like Scotland – that we will have the ability to determine our own destiny and build the best future for our country. We, the people of Scotland, have the greatest stake in our future. That is why we are best placed to govern ourselves. (SNP, 2011a: 3)

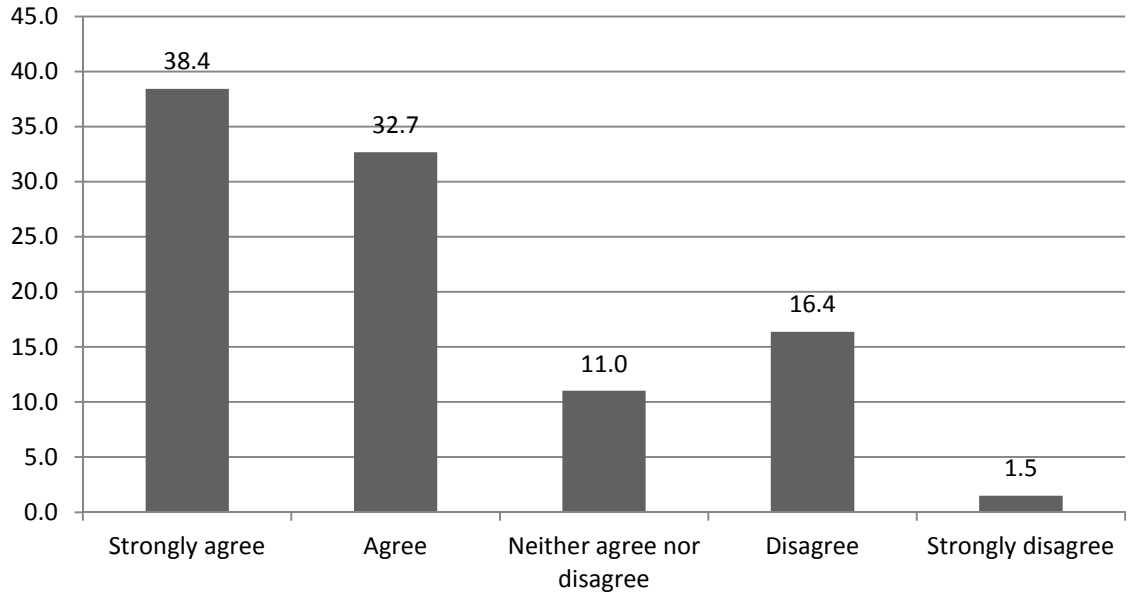
As well as existing as a political objective, independence also plays a role in differentiating the SNP from its political opponents and protecting the party from becoming just another party. This view is held particularly in relation to the Labour party who, despite having a social democratic outlook like the SNP, have given up at least some of their principles and beliefs by developing too much of a stake in the system. Independence acts almost as an article of faith that can keep the SNP pure despite the trappings of governmental office and establishment status;

> We must never become like the Labour party in Scotland. In fact, it's not possible for us to become like Labour because we still have independence as one of our two principles of membership. Incidentally, because we ran such a good campaign in the [2011] election, people want to be part of something positive and have come

> up to me and said 'I'd really like to join the party, but I don't believe in independence.' This question was asked at a group meeting, at which everyone unanimously said 'no', you have to believe in independence to be part of the SNP. (Interview, 16th September 2011)

This quote outlines the notion the importance of independence as a uniting principle that is almost omnipresent in the party. Indeed, there is evidence that strongly points towards the important role that independence plays in the party. Using survey data collected by Mitchell et al (2012) for their study of the membership of the SNP, figure 6 clearly shows the majority (71.3%) of members agreeing that independence is the primary goal of the party above all other potential alternatives;

Figure 6: Percentage of SNP Members Agreeing with the Statement that Independence is the Most Important Goal for the SNP (Source: SNP Membership Study) N=6707



This graph highlights the extent to which the party's wider membership reflects the views of the party's elite. Although this does not in any way suggest that independence is the only thing that party members care about, it is abundantly clear that independence is by far the SNP's most important objective. Despite this, the SNP also has a second aim written in its constitution which plays an important strategic role.

The Furtherance of all Scottish interests

The second aim of the SNP is 'the furtherance of all Scottish interests.' (SNP, 2009a: 1) This aim, at first glance, can be considered as secondary to that of independence as independence is what the SNP has been historically associated with. However, when examined more closely it becomes clear that this initial assertion is not wholly justified. Figure 7 below shows the opinion of SNP members with regards to independence taking 'second place' if other, pressing matters arise;

Figure 7: Percentage of SNP Member Agreeing that Independence Should Take Second Place if Other Matters Affecting Scotland Arise (Source: SNP Membership Study) N=6690

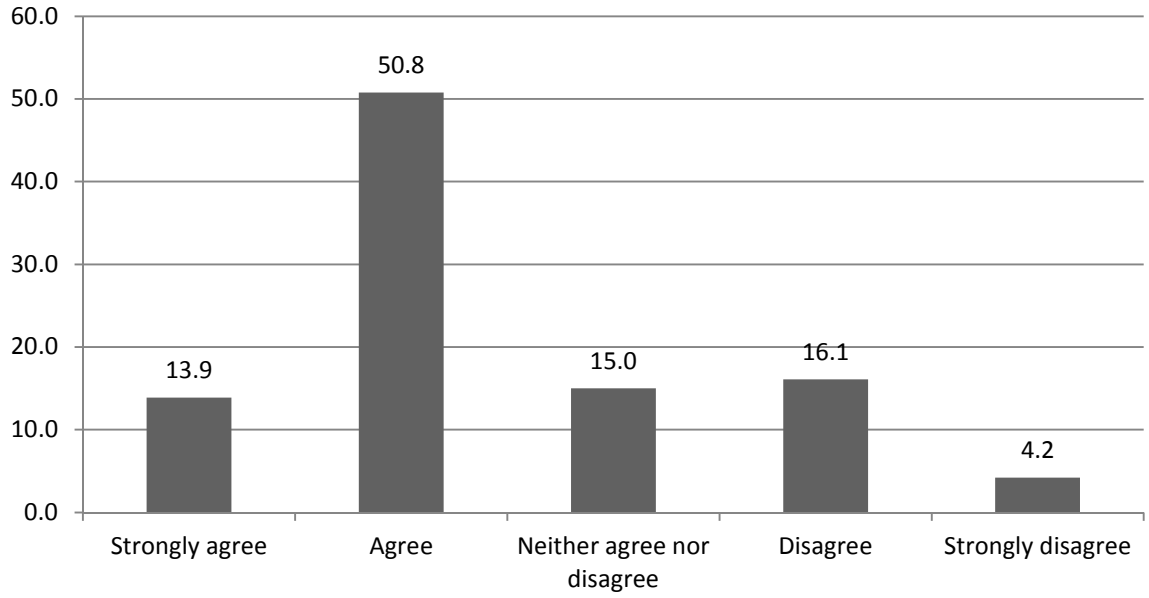


Figure 7 shows a level of pragmatism and flexibility within the SNP regarding its primary goal and its relative importance. Such pragmatism is indeed discussed in more depth by Mitchell et al (2012). According to this particular graph, over 60% of SNP members agree to some degree that independence has to take a back seat depending on circumstances.

There is a diversity of views within the SNP's elite about what the 'furtherance of all Scottish interests' means. On the one hand, there is a view that it is somewhat separate from independence and that the SNP has a responsibility to take action that is in the best interests of Scotland whenever that may be necessary. The existence of the aim provides reason and

legitimacy for other policy initiatives that are not directly related to independence, as one interviewee explained;

> We have two objectives... and I think it's something that the opposition parties don't understand about us when they try and pigeon us totally on the independence thing. We formally have these two objectives of independence and anything that will improve the lives of the people in Scotland, or whatever the wording is. [This aim] gives us free reign and reason to do everything else that we do and when [opposition parties] say 'well, that's not about independence' we say 'well, it doesn't matter' because it's about making Scotland better. (Interview, 24th September 2011)

An example of this in practice is the Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Scotland) Act 2012, more colloquially known as the sectarian bill. As one MSP explained, sectarianism in Scotland is a 'toxic mix of anti-immigrant and anti-Catholic sentiments' which is a 'push-to-the-side issue' considering how it is historically and culturally embedded in many communities in Scotland. Despite this, the SNP has a duty to deal with the issue because if a 'systemic indigenous problem' cannot be 'dealt with' then 'what hope is there?' (Interview, 13th January 2012) The SNP's second aim therefore has an ethical character in the sense that there is a desire to pursue a 'Scotland-as-it-could-be'. Furthermore, the SNP seems to believe that pursuing such policy ends is worthwhile, even if they have the potential to perhaps damage the cause of independence.

However, the furtherance of Scottish interests is also tied into independence. For example, 'on the route' to independence, it is believed to be the job of the SNP to 'further all Scottish interests' (Interview, 26th October 2011) by pursuing things such as the powers over broadcasting, the devolution of corporation tax (Interview, 13th September 2011), and borrowing powers (Interview, 14th September 2011). Clearly, these notions are tied into the gradualist idea that the SNP should campaign for powers on a case by case basis. As one cabinet minister remarked, 'we're all gradualists now' (Interview, 9th December 2011).

Furthermore, the SNP also understands the furtherance of Scottish interests as the everyday, 'valence' governing that has delivered them electoral success (Johns et al, 2009; 2013). To quote one MSP;

> When you are in government you are administering things like health and education. You have to show a level of competence with these things. Our enemies say we talk about independence all the time which is manifestly not the case and, rightly or wrongly, by being in government we have to demonstrate that we can use the existing levers of government and administration to bring about our case. (Interview, 13th September 2011)

There is also an argument that devolution has created the conditions whereby the furtherance of all Scottish interests became an essential pillar of SNP strategy. The party needed to show that it was a competent and normal political party that could use the existing devolution arrangement in order to demonstrate that it was interested in other policy areas apart from independence (Interview, 11th June 2012). These sentiments were apparent in a speech made by Alex Salmond in 2011;

> In reality the SNP does stand for two fundamental aims – and these are enshrined in our constitution - independence for Scotland and also the furtherance of all Scottish interests. These are our guiding lights and they are equally important because they reflect the reality that our politics are not just constitutional but also people based... We know that in building the new Scotland we must confront our demons from the past like sectarianism and our problems from the present like the abuse of alcohol. Some people say tackling these things is unpopular. But the election told us that the people respect and understand that sometimes it takes guts to govern. But we shall always govern for that common weal. (Salmond, 2011)

The 'furtherance of all Scottish interests' is a multi-faceted, complex and elusive primary goal in that it means different things to different SNP elites. Nevertheless, it exists as a vague yet powerful justification for legislating and campaigning for a whole range of things which are not, at first glance, intricately or strongly connected to independence. Mitchell et al (2012) come to a similar conclusion in the sense that to view the SNP with only Scottish independence in mind overlooks the more complex and nuanced aspects of the party's identity.

Office as a Mechanism to Overcome Stereotypes

Until 2007, the SNP had never held governmental office before at the national level. Although the party has a long history of involvement in local government, 2007 represented one of the most important milestones in the party's history. As chapter 8 will show, the journey towards electoral victory in 2007 required fundamental organisational change. These reforms encouraged the party to be more 'externally focussed' (Interview, 16th November 2011) rather than being more interested in 'fighting itself' as opposed to winning votes (Interview, 16th November 2011). The party understood that governmental office was an opportunity to cast the SNP in a different light and show the electorate that it was indeed a trustworthy political party that was capable of running a government.

Demonstrating Credibility and Competency

On entering government in May 2007, the SNP was keen to demonstrate that it was a credible party of government and a party that the electorate could depend upon and trust. According to one interviewee;

> I remember very clearly in 2006 [when Alex Salmond gave his keynote speech at conference], the key message was that if we got into government and governed well then the people would trust us as a party. [As a result], we would no longer been seen as a 'mickey mouse' party or a fringe party, but we'd be seen as a serious party that can take Scotland forward. I think the 2007 to 2011 period will prove to be the most important period in our party's history because it helped cement us as a real, serious contender. (Interview, 23rd August 2011)

The idea that government provided the SNP with 'hugely enhanced credibility' (Interview, 14th September) is a common one amongst SNP elites. For example, notions such as 'people build up faith in [the SNP]' when the party is seen as a competent government (Interview, 9th September 2011), and the 'purpose of power' is to 'establish our credentials' (Interview, 16th November 2011) are commonplace. More specifically, government allows the SNP to be seen as credible because it proves that it is not a 'single-issue party' (Interview, 19th September 2011). This credibility has been facilitated by devolution in general in the sense that it has allowed the party to be 'more

seen', with government highlighting 'how [the party] had changed' from how it was (or at least perceived to be) previously (Interview, 13th September 2011).

Although achieving a level of credibility was seen as important in itself, the search for credibility and competence was ultimately aimed at boosting the cause of independence through a 'piece-by-piece' approach. Obviously not knowing the electoral success that would come in 2011, the SNP was focussed on, according to Lynch (2013), playing a long, gradualist game over independence. This strategy is recognisable in interview data. According to an MSP, 'if you show that Scotland can run its own government' and 'manage resources, deliver policies and show ambition' then you can inspire confidence in Scotland's ability to run its own affairs (Interview, 12th September 2011). Furthermore, one cabinet minister remarked that being in government provides the ability to demonstrate that '[Scotland] can govern [itself] better than London' and find 'Scottish solutions for Scottish problems' (Interview, 14th September 2011). There is a sense within the SNP that overcoming much of the electorate's 'fear' of Scottish independence is one of the biggest issues facing the party, and emphasising competence is part of the strategy to show independence as less of a 'leap in the dark' and more of a 'natural progression from where [Scotland is] now.' (Interview, 13th September 2011) If the SNP could show that it could 'do well' with the powers it had then the electorate will 'trust you in saying that more are necessary' (Interview, 18th January 2012). Alex Salmond's 2007 conference speech highlights further;

> As a party new to government, our first task was to win credibility through our actions in office. And we have done so. This Government signs up to an age old precept - 'by your deeds you shall be known.' The next stage is to guide the Government and the Parliament through the next four years. Money will be tighter therefore we have to be smarter in the use of public resources. We will be. But government is not just about credibility and efficiency. It is also about vision. In everything we do we will signpost the way to a better future for our country. That is stage three - to build on the platform of achievement in government to forward the case for independence. (Salmond, 2007)

Indeed, rather than undermining and belittling the Scottish parliament for the powers that it does not have, the SNP's strategy was, on the contrary, to build on what was already there. According to one MSP, the SNP would previously have been inclined to highlight which powers the Scottish parliament lacked. However, the SNP has realised that 'this is not the way to get independence' and that 'people have got to respect the parliament' because, by 'talking it down', you dissuade people from taking 'the next step' (Interview, 16th September 2011). Furthermore, by instilling confidence in the existing institutions it is possible to show that 'independence isn't a major, radical step' compared to what currently exists (Interview, 16th September 2011). Using the existing powers in areas such as Health and Education to 'make [Scotland better]' and thus 'ready to be independent', the next 'step therefore becomes very small' (Interview, 24th September 2011). By showing the public 'what [Scotland] could do with more powers', the electorate has given '[the SNP] permission to persuade them about independence' remarked a cabinet minister (Interview, 18th January 2012).

Discipline, Unity and Becoming a Party of Government

The remarkable level of party discipline that the SNP displayed during the 2007-2011 government has been commented upon by commentators (Mitchell et al, 2012: 42). Indeed, Mitchell et al (Ibid.) state that, as well as changes to the selection process for SNP candidates, the relative discipline shown by the parliamentary group is also a result of 'the unity brought about by electoral success'. There is no doubt that electoral success breeds an element of harmony within political parties. However, there is evidence to

suggest that this unity within the SNP may, at least partly, be explained by the fact that the party has a very clearly defined primary goal in Scottish independence that acts, as one MSP phrased it, like 'glue' which binds a 'broad church' on other policy matters (Interview, 12th September 2011).

Independence, it is believed, gives the SNP a unique quality and asset which makes it different from other political parties in Scotland. As one MSP remarked, '[Scottish] independence is the 'Holy Grail' which 'keeps [the SNP] focussed' and provides the party with 'drive' (Interview, 8th September 2011). The existence of such a goal, absent in other parties, 'gives the activists an 'extra drive' when it comes to campaigning (Interview, 8th September 2011). Such sentiments were discussed previously when analysing the SNP's primary goal. Apart from simply acting as a primary goal, there is evidence to suggest that independence also acts as a disciplinary mechanism which was used to good effect in government. Although the presence and influence of such a mechanism must not be overstated due to the crucial requirement of party discipline during the SNP's period as a minority government, it nevertheless plays an important role in the minds of MSP's. There is an implicit awareness that MSP's not only represent the SNP, but they represent the most public face of the cause of independence. As one minister elaborated;

> Nobody will forgive the individual for [messing] this up, and nobody in the party would forgive them. Particularly from 2007 to 2011, [...] discipline was absolutely essential. And, all this stuff I read about [Alex Salmond] and his iron discipline over the party, he doesn't [*sic*] [...]. He doesn't impose any iron discipline over the party at all. If anybody is actually responsible for any kind of discipline it is Bruce Crawford, but even then it's not like that [*sic*], because most of it is a completely self-imposed discipline. I'm not pretending there haven't been any grumbles, of course there have, but I don't know anybody in the group that would take that outside [the parliamentary group]. (Interview, 13th January 2012)

Independence provides the party with a discipline that 'is not tightly enforced' and results in 'genuine harmony' (Interview, 12th September 2011), whilst another MSP stated that the 'focus on an objective' and the 'prize of independence' means that 'certain 'schisms are overlooked' (Interview, 23rd

August 2011). One cabinet minister commented that the discipline the SNP has had during its period in government is 'remarkable' and that unity will remain because '[the SNP isn't] at its end point yet' and so 'remains committed as a group and together' (Interview, 9th December 2011). Another cabinet minister said that this unity is 'implicit' amongst the parliamentary group (Interview, 18th January 2012), whilst a government minister suggested that, were an individual to do something that would jeopardise the independence cause, 'nobody would forgive the individual for messing it up.' (Interview, 13th January 2012) This view is not just shared amongst ministers and cabinet ministers, but is indeed an almost unanimously shared opinion amongst all interviewees.

Another theme that emerged from interview data was the collegiate nature of relations between members of the cabinet and other government ministers in particular. It is believed that '[the SNP's] strength is that the cabinet have been friends and colleagues for decades' which leads to them '[dealing] with issues in a collegiate manner' (Interview, 13th September 2011). Despite having to govern in financially challenging times, the cabinet worked as a collective whole rather than according to portfolios because, as a cabinet minister remarked, 'we've worked together for 25 years' (Interview, 18th January 2012). This was, allegedly, something of a culture shock for the Scottish civil service. One Minister claimed that, on one occasion, she was 'angry at [another minister] about something' and the civil servant who was dealing with the issue at the time 'wanted to write memos and other things', while the minister said that 'she'd just go and talk to [the minister] herself' (Interview, 19th September 2011). In her opinion, the civil service at first 'didn't understand that we could have robust debates and then go out for a drink afterwards' (Interview, 19th September 2011).

Figure 8: Opinion of Scottish Electorate (%) on how United or Divided the SNP and Labour are (Source: Scottish Election Study 2011 Pre-Election Wave)

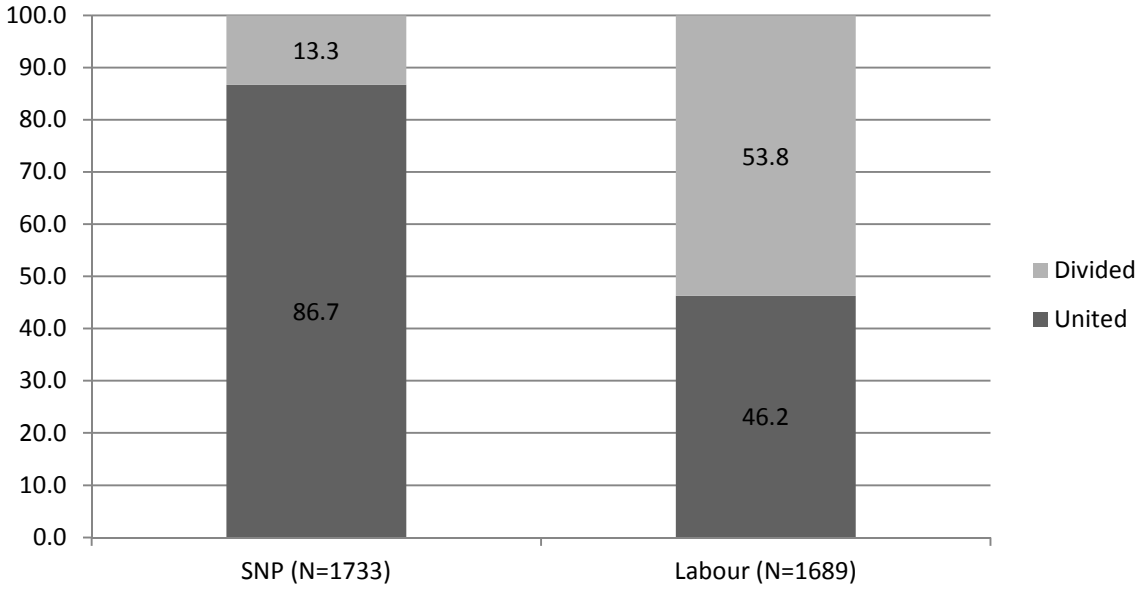


Figure 8 shows that the electorate believed that the SNP were, firstly, very united and, secondly, that they were far more united than Labour. For a party in government for the first time, this is a striking finding. Indeed, Bolleyer (2008) suggests that parties in government for the first time will be vulnerable from a purely functional point of view, there appears to be an absence of this in the SNP. Despite the fact that the SNP had never held governmental office before, coupled with the reality that most of the cabinet have never even been involved in local government, the apparent ease at which they seem to have adjusted to life in government is striking. This is in stark contrast to a party that struggled with internal conflict for the first five years of devolution (Lynch, 2013; Mitchell, 2002, 2009b; Mitchell et al, 2012). One MSP who worked for a cabinet member in 2007 maintained that the party had no major 'teething issues' going into government, but this was partly down to the SNP's 'long honeymoon period' (Interview, 23rd August 2011). A backbench MSP reiterates the lack of problems, claiming that they were too 'trivial' and 'insignificant' to remember (Interview, 18th October 2011). One party officer claimed that an engagement scheme with the civil service prior to 2007 called 'Governance', promoted heavily by John Swinney, helped the party when it entered office (Interview, 13th September

2011). As chapter 8 will discuss, the organisational reforms the SNP made to its internal structures in 2004 helped the party, firstly, win the 2007 election but also settle into government without major organisational issues arising.

Independence and Governmental Office

Unlike Plaid, the SNP were not part of a formal legislative majority in the Scottish Parliament, existing instead as a single-party minority government. There were coalition talks with the Liberal Democrats after the 2007 election which collapsed because 'the Liberal Democrats were unwilling to agree to a coalition [...] until plans for a referendum on independence were abandoned.' (House of Commons Library, 2007: 2) The SNP's 2007 election manifesto pledged the 'publication of a White Paper detailing the concept of Scottish independence' so that the Scottish electorate could have the 'opportunity to decide on independence in a referendum, with a likely date of 2010' (SNP, 2007: 15). In late August 2007, the Scottish Government released a report on the first 100 days of the parliamentary term, stating that they had 'published a White Paper on Independence and further responsibilities for the Scottish Parliament', as well as 'a draft Bill for a referendum' and had begun 'a national conversation about the future of Scotland's Parliament and Government.' (Scottish Government, 2007a) This document, entitled 'Choosing Scotland's Future – A National Conversation', outlined three choices for the future constitutional status of Scotland *vis-a-vis* the UK: the current devolution settlement as laid out in the Scotland Act 1998, 'redesigned' devolution involving the transfer of competencies from the UK, and independence (Scottish Government, 2007b: viii). Without the majority needed to pass a bill which would trigger a referendum on independence, the SNP aimed to use governmental office to promote its primary goal by relaying the impression of governmental competence which would boost support for the SNP and independence; and use governmental office as a 'direct institutional platform' to hold a referendum on Scottish independence (Harvey and Lynch, 2010: 1), although it turned out to be unsuccessful in achieving this second aim. The referendum was indeed shelved in late 2010.

As has been discussed, the SNP exists to deliver an independent Scotland via a successful mandate through a referendum. Achieving a majority in the Scottish Parliamentary elections in 2011 gives the SNP the opportunity to hold this referendum and begin negotiations with the UK government if a majority vote in favour of independence. However, election studies have shown that the SNP has not been elected to public office by virtue of its constitutional preferences but, rather, on the basis of its competency *vis-a-vis* its political opponents, particularly Labour (Johns et al, 2009; 2013). This leads to a curious dilemma for the SNP in that it has to be seen to be pushing the constitutional agenda by its core voters and members whilst, at the same time, making itself a credible party of government in the wider sense. Such a dilemma is particularly intriguing when Strøm and Müller's (1999) POV framework is considered. This section, using the aforementioned framework, will analyse the hypothesised trade-off to ascertain how the existence of a distinct primary goal affects the 'hard choices' of government.

Minority Government and the Lack of Primary Goal Legislation

According to Toubeau, (2011: 432-435) SNRPs can engage in agenda setting by either providing an electoral threat for state-wide parties or using the apparatus of sub-state government to bring particular policies and issues into the public domain. The SNP's presence in government prompted the largest parties who advocate Scotland staying part of the UK (Labour, the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats) to set up the Commission on Scottish Devolution (2009), known as the Calman Commission, which reported in 2009 and has largely informed the current Scotland Bill (UK Parliament, 2012). The fact that the main state-wide parties in Scotland saw it necessary to respond to the SNP is testament to the SNP's ability to set the agenda.

However, the SNP also used governmental office as a platform to pursue constitutional initiatives. Soon after entering office in 2007, the Scottish Government published a paper which proved to be the precursor to the so-called 'National Conversation' that the Government was going to have with

the Scottish electorate. In this paper, the Government outlined three choices for the future constitutional status of Scotland *vis-a-vis* the UK: the current devolution settlement as laid out in the Scotland Act 1998, 'redesigned' devolution involving the transfer of competencies from the UK, and independence (Scottish Government, 2007b: viii). Indeed, the Government's programme for Government stated the following; 'We published our national conversation on the future constitutional position of Scotland and, as part of that, we set out the benefits to Scotland's economy that we believe independence would bring' (Scottish Government, 2007a). The National Conversation process concluded in November 2009.

With the election in May 2007 and the programme for Government being published in the following September, the speed at which the SNP-led government began to utilise governmental office to suit the ends of their primary goal is remarkable. Although the SNP were governing Scotland with a minority having seen coalition talks with the Liberal Democrats collapse because 'the Liberal Democrats were unwilling to agree to a coalition [...] until plans for a referendum on independence were abandoned.' (House of Commons Library, 2007: 2) Despite being designed to enhance a consensual style of politics, the Scottish Parliament has retained much of the adversarial tendencies of politics in Westminster (Mitchell, 2010) and thus the challenge of passing legislation as a single-party minority government are elevated (Strøm, 1990). Cairney (2010: 20) states that '[the] drop in legislative activity from the Scottish Government [was] not [...] met with an equivalent rise from Parliament.' Indeed, the 2007-2011 period recorded the lowest legislative output from the Scottish parliament at 53 Acts passed (Scottish Parliament, 2011: 8), compared to 62 in 1999-2003 (Scottish Parliament, 2008a: 7) and 66 in 2003-2007 (Scottish Parliament, 2008b: 8). It is therefore clear that the SNP's ability to pursue a policy-seeking agenda in government was hampered by legislative circumstances.

Despite the apparent difficulty of passing legislation in a minority government situation, a number of individuals stated that they were very happy with the

fact that the SNP ended up as a minority government. Just after the 2007 election, many in the party had hoped to form a coalition with the Liberal Democrats (Interview, 9th September 2011), although an MSP stated that they were opposed to a coalition at the time because the Liberal Democrats 'so unionist' in their outlook (Interview, 19th November 2011). The same point was made by a minister who suggested that the 'hardcore' nature of the Liberal Democrat's unionism would have led her to feel 'uncomfortable' (Interview, 9th September 2011). The situation is different at the local level, but 'at national level you want a government that will steer towards independence' and that she did not 'think we could have done that with the Liberals' (Interview, 9th September 2011).

On the whole, coalition with the Liberal Democrats was something the SNP was entirely willing to embark on. One MSP remarked that a coalition with Liberal Democrats did not 'fill me [*sic*] with dread' at the time (Interview, 18th October 2011). However, the same respondent went on to state the benefit of minority government;

> It was clear that the [Liberal Democrats] were not up for [putting the question of independence to the people]. They weren't up for responding to that challenge, so minority administration it was. I think in the long-run it has actually benefitted the SNP [because] we have been able to be, insofar as presenting our own programme and our own initiatives, masters of our own destiny in that respect, albeit we were in minority and that comes into play. But, if you don't have a coalition partner who has certain demands for government then they can't say 'well, we've achieved things in government' and so everything that was achieved in government was achieved by the SNP. (Interview, 18th October 2011)

The SNP were clearly unwilling to go form a coalition with another party if that meant that a referendum on independence was not part of any coalition agreement. This is understandable given the nature of the party's primary goal and the likelihood that a coalition agreement without a promise of a referendum would have been deeply unpopular amongst party members. Nevertheless, being a minority government does make the passing of legislation and budgets difficult. Indeed, the SNP's 2009 budget was rejected by the Presiding Officer after a 64-64 tie in the chamber. Such occurrences

would have been largely avoidable under a coalition arrangement. The party did expect to go into a coalition, and the idea of being a minority was been described as being a 'bit scary' at the time (Interview, 13th January 2012). However, there is a sense that by being a minority government then the SNP was able to shape the agenda regarding constitutional change unhindered by a coalition partner who would have had a different agenda.

Holding Back the Referendum from Parliament

Despite this, the Scottish Government announced in 2009 that a referendum would be held in 2010 (SNP, 2009b). However, it was decided not to table the referendum bill (Scottish Government, 2010) due to a lack of support from opposition parties in the Scottish Parliament. The SNP leadership predictably blamed the opposition parties, with deputy leader Nicola Sturgeon absolving responsibility at the SNP's 2010 autumn conference by trying to connect with 'those who share our anger that Scotland has been denied the democratic right to choose [its] own future' (Sturgeon, 2010). Indeed, the failure to table a referendum bill was counted as a failed pledge because of it being 'blocked by opposition parties' (SNP, 2011c: 5). The decision not to put the referendum bill in front of parliament was a tactical decision taken by the SNP leadership. Rather than being formally introduced and effectively become the property of parliament, the bill was introduced in draft form for further public consultation (BBC News, 11th February 2010). Although the decision to not go ahead with the referendum bill was supported on the whole, there remained some individuals who were disappointed that the bill was not put before parliament.

Minority government is the governmental arrangement that the electorate finds it often most difficult to apportion blame because of the often unclear lines of accountability (Vowles, 2010). The decision to shelve the referendum was made easier because of this and it was believed that it made the opposition parties look unreasonable and undemocratic (Interview, 22nd August 2011; Interviewee, 8th September 2011). Furthermore, it is claimed that it was important not to table it because seeing it defeated would have

played on elements of 'self-doubt' that still exist within the SNP (Interview, 8th September 2011). The referendum has great symbolic value for the SNP (Interview, 22nd August 2011), and it had the potential to 'hurt many members [having] to see it [potentially] shot down': by '[keeping] it in the locker' it allows the 'holy grail' to remain 'untarnished' (Interview, 8th September 2011).

On the other hand, the decision to shelve the referendum has its critics. One MSP remarked that, had the SNP not won the 2011 election, then the decision would have 'looked bad' to the outside and had the potential to cause strife within the party (Interview, 12th September 2011). Another MSP admitted that he was disappointed by the shelving of the bill in 2010, but that the election result in 2011 provided huge credibility to the First Minister's strategy (Interview, 18th August 2011). Furthermore, the same MSP was careful not to criticise the First Minister but did state that, had he been in the same position, he might not have made the same decision (Interview, 18th August 2011).

In one sense, parliamentary arithmetic meant that the decision to shelve the referendum bill was a relatively easy one to make, and keeping the bill alive as a draft bill was a shrewd political tactic. However, an independence referendum is an extremely important symbolic aspect of what the SNP stands for as a political party. Interview evidence suggests that a mixture of pragmatism and a desire to keep the referendum politically clear were the main considerations at the time, but there is also evidence to suggest that there was disappointment at not seeing a crucial cornerstone of the SNPs primary goal at least being brought before parliament. Given the importance and centrality of primary goals to autonomist parties, it would not have been a surprise had the SNP decided to table such a bill despite knowing it would not have passed. However, rather than table it and see it defeated, the SNP was keen to blame the other parties for the failure of the bill and show that, unlike the opposition, the SNP that cares about the opinion of the electorate and values their democratic voice.

The fact that the referendum bill was not tabled anyway highlights an intriguing trade-off with regards to Strøm and Müller's (1999) framework. To have put the referendum bill before parliament, something that may have been to the SNPs detriment, would have been an example of policy-seeking behaviour, in the symbolic sense at least. As has been outlined earlier in this chapter, being in government was, for the SNP, part of the process of becoming a 'normal' political party (Hepburn, 2009). Although placing the bill before parliament may have pleased a number of SNP party members, it would probably not have aided the SNPs vote-seeking capacity. As the next section will show, the SNP is quite comfortable in 'detaching' its primary goal somewhat in order to maintain electability. In other words, the SNP was quite comfortable trading policy-seeking considerations for a more effective vote-seeking strategy. The shelving of the referendum also signifies how much more 'professionalised' the SNP has become in terms of important, strategic decisions now being taken solely by the party's leadership. This shift in the party is largely due to its organisational reforms which are commented upon at length by Mitchell et al (2012) and in chapter 8.

Using Governmental Office as an Agenda-Setting Mechanism

Literature on autonomist parties in government suggests that their very presence in office means a change in the narrative surrounding territorial reform and thus a change in the overall political agenda (Elias and Tronconi, 2011a; Toubeau, 2011). The SNP have, rather than just acting as an electoral 'reminder' to its state-wide competitors, been able to use the institution of the Scottish Government to explicitly set out a preliminary vision of an independent Scotland and the path on which that goal could be achieved. The state-wide parties have been forced to respond to this with their own proposals for territorial reform, culminating in the Calman Commission (Commission on Scottish Devolution, 2009) with was established by an opposition motion in the Scottish Parliament in December 2007 and delivered its final report in June 2009.

The Scotland Act 1998 maintains that any constitutional reform of Scotland's position with regards to the rest of the UK is a matter reserved to Westminster. Therefore, any attempt to alter the constitution cannot be considered as policy-seeking behaviour in the normal sense within the context of devolution in Scotland. However, the Scottish Government is free to carry out consultations, such as the National Conversation, and produce material related to independence in a direct, agenda-setting manner. Therefore, political office is highly valuable and the capturing of votes is necessary in order to allow the use of such an institutional platform. This makes the SNP value office and votes, and the value of policy is mostly instrumental in order to maximize both of these strategic considerations.

Once in office, the SNP has had the platform to begin discussing independence and producing information on the subject. Up until 1997, the SNP's approach to winning independence was based around winning a majority of Scottish seats in the UK parliament (Lynch, 2013). Nowadays, the SNP more or less dismisses its former strategy, with one minister stating that it is 'inconceivable' how you would achieve independence without being in government (Interview, 13th January 2012). The capacity of government has provided the SNP with the resources to 'bring independence on to the agenda' (Interview, 16th November 2011) and actually begin to define what independence means in practical terms, both to the public and the party itself (Interview, 23rd August 2011). Government allows the party to speak about independence in a different and pragmatic way by highlighting the possibilities and having the credibility of the office to back it up (Interview, 18th October 2011). The network of civil servants that the Scottish Government has at its disposal allows the SNP to pursue its aims (Interview, 13th January), primary goal related or otherwise, and bestows that pursuit with a credibility that would otherwise be absent.

According to Elias and Tronconi (2011a), the success of autonomist parties in government is often linked to their ability to force state-wide parties to commit to territorial reform. The SNP being in government has forced the

state-wide parties to question and reconsider the territorial status quo in Scotland, leading to the Calman Commission and the passing of the Scotland Act which received Royal Assent in May 2012 (UK Parliament, 2012). According to a cabinet minister, Scotland 'acts as a lobbyist in itself' in a sense because it has the institutional platform from which the UK Government's constitutional proposals can be challenged. To quote the Scottish Government's critical response to the Calman Commission;

> The messy 'fudge' of the Commission's proposals and their arbitrary nature are subject to a number of significant flaws which make them demonstrably inferior to the fiscal levers available to an independent country. The proposals indicate that the number of people who believe the current situation is acceptable is dwindling. But the suggested framework is unlikely to improve accountability or economic efficiency, and may instead be even worse than the status quo. Furthermore, by retaining Barnett while at the same time introducing a mix of devolved taxes, tax assignment, tax sharing, grant finance and reserved taxes, the system created will be bureaucratic, opaque and mired in complex and confusing uncertainty. (Scottish Government, 2009: 4)

The SNP is almost compelled to criticise proposals constitutional proposals from the state-wide parties. However, as well as 'fighting for independence', they also try and extract as much concessions out of the UK government as possible over things like borrowing powers and the Crown Estate, for example (Interview, 14th September 2011), in order to try and improve the current status quo. On being asked if that was a sensible strategy considering that the current devolved might be improved and thus lessen the apparent need for independence, an MSP remarked that the SNP 'has to be seen to be caring about Scotland's interests now' (Interview, 16th September 2011). The SNP's demanded amendments of the Scotland Act, of which there were six, were largely unsuccessful with some borrowing powers being partially granted (The Herald, 22nd March 2012). The SNP's attitude to this failure is, on the one hand, to regret, as they see it, proposals perceived as inadequate for dealing with Scotland's current problems (Interview, 14th September 2011), and on the other, a sense that they have to 'go off and do

it [themselves]' in terms of gaining more powers for the Scottish parliament (Interview, 16th September 2011).

Taking into consideration only the SNP's first term in office, the 'success' of the SNP has not been 'programmatic' but rather 'political' (McConnell, 2010) in the sense that primary goals may not have been achieved in an absolute sense, but rather that the conditions by which they may be achieved (shifting the agenda and the election of a majority SNP government) are realised.

Detaching Independence as a Vote-Seeking Strategy

The SNP used 'Record, Team, Vision' as a slogan in the 2011 election campaign. The scale of the SNP's victory in the 2011 Scottish election is proof that the message resonated with the electorate and brought electoral success to the party. By February 2011, the SNP had surged ahead of Labour in voting intentions, but it was basing its success in the opinion polls, and then at the ballot box, on a message that was careful to not overplay the issue of independence. The 'Record, Team, Vision' slogan represented the party's focus on its credentials as a competent party of government and not as an autonomist party, as the following quote illustrates;

> As voters look toward Scotland's election in May it is the SNP's strong record in office, our team of recognised and trusted ministers and MSPs, and the vision we have for Scotland's future that is winning the support of voters who want to re-elect a Scottish Government that is working for Scotland. (SNP, 2011b)

Research into why the SNP were electorally successful in 2007 and 2011 has consistently shown that the electorate perceived and judged the SNP as the most competent party, the party most likely to stand up for Scotland's interests, and possessing the most capable leadership (Johns et al, 2009; 2013). The SNP were consistent in highlighting what they had achieved in government and stood firmly on their legislative record, releasing a document which stated that the Scottish Government had achieved the vast majority of its pledges between 2007 and 2011 (SNP, 2011c).

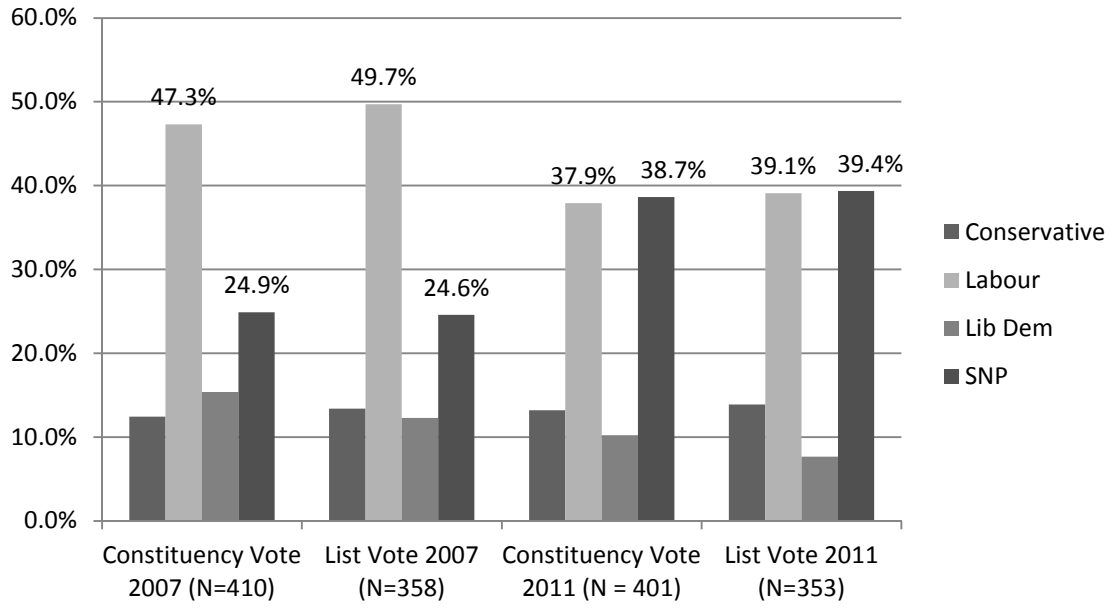
Many SNP elites felt that, when it came to independence, it was in the party's strategic interest to detach the issue when it came to campaigning on

peoples' doorsteps. On the one hand, the party and its activists are somewhat required to ask about the preferences of the electorate when it comes to independence for the purposes of the SNP's activate software and its subsequent databanks. On the other hand, there was not a unanimous drive to talk about independence and engage the public on the issue: the priority was very much to win votes and achieve electoral success. One MSP, for example, did not mention independence when asked about the issues he emphasised when campaigning in his constituency. Rather, he was keen to articulate the SNP's 'positive message', emphasise the achievements of the Scottish Government, and maintain a simple and coherent message that could be condensed into a 'few bullet points' (Interview, 13th September 2011). Another MSP suggested that, despite the independence message being 'there and not [hidden]', the election was about who governs Scotland and not about independence; with the referendum to be focussed on when it comes around (Interview, 22nd August 2011). The referendum, in short, acts as a safety device for those who might not support independence but wish to vote SNP and allows the SNP the freedom to promote their competence as a government and articulate their vision for government. It can also be understood in terms of the long-running, but now largely settled, 'fundamentalist-gradualist' divide in the party (Lynch, 2002; 2013; Mitchell, 1996) as well as the party's shift towards a more pragmatic and populist ideological identity and policy programme (Lynch, 2009).

The SNP clearly made an effort to be more than just a party of constitutional reform and Scottish independence. Although there were some interviewees who were adamant that that want to talk about independence 'all the time' and wish for people to 'think about [independence]' (Interview, 18th October 2011), others admitted that they were more reticent with the electorate. The term 'independence' is considered one that carries a lot of baggage, and thus an 'experienced communications person' is often required to formulate the correct form of words which, on the one hand, mobilises activists and the party's core vote and, on the other, puts the independence message across

'in terms of doing things differently from Westminster' (Interview, 16th November 2011). Independence, rather than being mentioned often, existed as 'coded language like releasing potential and resources, for example' (Interview, 12th September 2011). Although independence was not concealed, it did not appear at the forefront of the SNP's campaign (Interview, 13th September 2011) because talking about it constantly will mean the party will not receive the necessary coverage (Interview, 9th September 2011) and, according to the party's own research, independence is not the most important issue for the majority of people (Interview, 25th August 2011). Figure 9 below shows that the SNP's strategy worked, and that they made up a lot of ground on Labour from 2007. In both constituency and list votes in 2007, Labour won a far bigger share of the vote amongst those who wanted Scotland to remain in the UK in some shape or form. By 2011, the SNP had overtaken Labour in this group, highlighting their success at winning support from sections of the electorate who do not support their primary goal of independence.

Figure 9: Share of the Vote in 2007 and 2011 Election for Scotland's Major Parties by Voters who Believe that Scotland Should Remain in the UK (Source: Scottish Social Attitudes Study)



The 'Government to Independence' Paradox

In order to become the largest party in the Scottish parliament, the SNP had to ensure that its policy programme was popular with the electorate. In order to appeal to the median voter in Scotland, the SNP has used market research techniques in order to make sure that their policies were as popular as possible (Interview, 8th September 2011). Indeed, there is a clear vote-seeking and office-seeking strategy at play in the SNP's approach to elections and governance. In the party's first term in office, the strategy was not to convince people of the immediacy of a referendum, but rather to show the public that the party was competent, could 'manage the parliament' effectively, and as a result gain re-election (Interview, 12th September 2011). The party could then use the platform of government to begin 'talking about independence' (23rd August, 2011).

However, the idea that the party's policies in government are somehow separate from the notion of independence is somewhat disingenuous. For a number of SNP MSP's, the party's profile and performance in government is a critical link between the existing devolution settlement and independence. On the whole, the party believes that by being in government, the Scottish electorate will increase its confidence in the SNP and thus be more confident about Scotland as a whole. As a result of this confidence, the electorate will thus be more likely to vote for an independent Scotland. According to a cabinet minister, 'building trust' is an important aspect of this strategy because 'if you can do well with the powers you have then people will trust you in saying that more are necessary' (Interview, 18th January 2012). For example, 'people care about schooling their children, and the NHS, and cancer care' and so 'if people trust you in these areas they will be more likely to trust you in other things' (Interview, 16th September 2011). Crucial to this strategy is creating 'respect' for the Scottish parliament as it is because 'talking it down' for not having the powers the SNP would like it to have 'is not the way to get independence' (Interview, 16th September 2011). Furthermore, by doing this, independence no longer exists as the 'major, radical step' from what exists already (Interview, 16th September 2011).

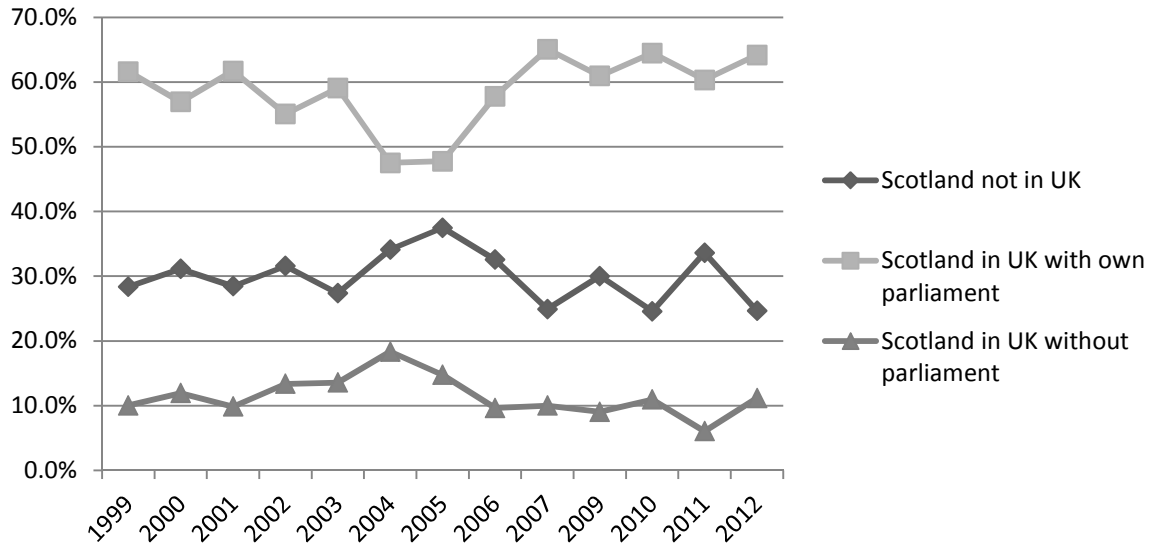
As a party that sees itself as being on the social democratic left (Interview, 14th September; Mitchell et al, 2012), the policy programme of the SNP, such as no tuition fees and free prescriptions, also helps to show a contrast to the right-wing policies pursued by the UK government and shows that the SNP is doing 'the right thing' (Interview, 26th October 2011). One government minister outlined the link between being in government and independence;

> The link is the need to be able to demonstrate to the people of Scotland that there is the capacity within Scotland to govern by the people arguing for independence. Labour governed here for eight years, but of course they never made the independence argument, and as a result governed in such a way that was very accepting of the existing settlement. We govern in a different context; we govern in a context of wanting to be a good government, but not letting that being in an end in itself. It is good government, but we also have that sense that good government has another purpose, and that purpose is to demonstrate to the people of Scotland that ambition can go hand in hand with good government. And, the party that is most ambitious for Scotland can also deliver the best government. (Interview, 13th January 2012)

However, research by Curtice and Ormston (2013: 1-2) finds that the SNP's time in government has actually meant that the gap between those who felt England benefits more from the Union compared to those who felt Scotland benefits more has narrowed. Furthermore, there has been no marked increase in support for independence since 2007. Therefore, as one minster was willing to admit, there appears to be a 'government to independence paradox' (Interview, 9th September 2011) at work. By being electorally successful on the back of a policy programme that is broadly popular, the SNP have actually become the party best placed to use devolution in the manner it was designed to. It is reasonable to suggest that the Scottish people, on the whole, feel that the Scottish parliament is providing an adequate policy buffer to public service reforms coming from the UK Government that did not exist previously, particularly during the 1980's. Figure 10 shows, firstly, that there has been no marked increase for support in independence (Scotland not in UK) since the SNP has come to power and secondly, support for Scotland remaining in the UK with a parliament has

increased since 2006 and has remained consistently at its highest level when the SNP has been in government.

Figure 10: Public Support for Different Constitutional Scenarios 1999-2012 (source: Scottish Election Study) N=18535



The belief amongst the SNP that governmental status and competence will inspire confidence amongst the Scottish people and lead them to vote for independence appears to be more complex. Governmental status and the obvious advantages this gives the party in promoting its primary goal is also a disadvantage because the party has to maximise the potential of the devolved institution and thus enhance its popular support. Indeed, the SNP 'are doing things to be popular very deliberately' (Interview, 12th September 2011) and have, to an extent, avoided being too radical as a government so as to not create a larger anti-independence bloc amongst the public. However, the party has pursued some controversial policies as a majority government, namely legislation to tackle sectarianism and the legalisation of same-sex marriage, which could perhaps have the potential to stir up anti-SNP sentiment which could ultimately damage the independence cause. The Catholic Church in Scotland has been extremely vociferous in its opposition to gay marriage, claiming that the Scottish Government is 'embarking on a dangerous social experiment on a massive scale.'

(Huffington Post, 25th July 2012) The SNP, according to one respondent, remain resolute;

> We won't be scared of doing what we think is right, and we'll work with as many people as possible to bring them with us. If it turns against us, will it damage independence? Possibly, but we have to try and be [both radical and managerial]. (Interview, 24th September 2011)

Nevertheless, the evidence provided above suggests that the party had actually strengthened support for devolution. That does not necessarily mean that the public want to maintain the current devolved status quo, but that by being a competent government and showing that Scotland can do things differently, the SNP has unwittingly made a devolved parliament seem a fairer and more attractive prospect. Therefore, the party has had to adapt and come to terms with government, and has done so fairly comfortably, but in doing so might just be undermining its primary goal as a party by, in the context of difficult financial times and shrinking budgets, showing the Scottish public that devolution can deliver some policies that are of social benefit.

The SNP as Scotland's New Political Establishment

The duality between being both radical and managerial exposes a divide amongst MSP's and party officers about whether or not the SNP has, or is becoming, an establishment party. A number of MSP's were quite comfortable with the notion that the SNP is now the establishment, linking such a status with the ability to make important decisions and being seen as normal and mainstream. One cabinet minister remarked upon how a party like the SNP can no longer see itself as an anti-establishment force if it wants to win the referendum;

> What matters is getting the levers of power. [Republicanism, for example] are things that, when you're not at the table, you can have as luxuries. We don't have the luxury of being ideologically pure because we've got to win your Granny's vote. And frankly, if what wins your Granny's vote is 'OK, do you like the Queen?' Well, you can have the Queen. I really don't care... because at the present moment we're not having a fight about that. We don't need these things that will lose us votes. (Interview, 9th December 2011)

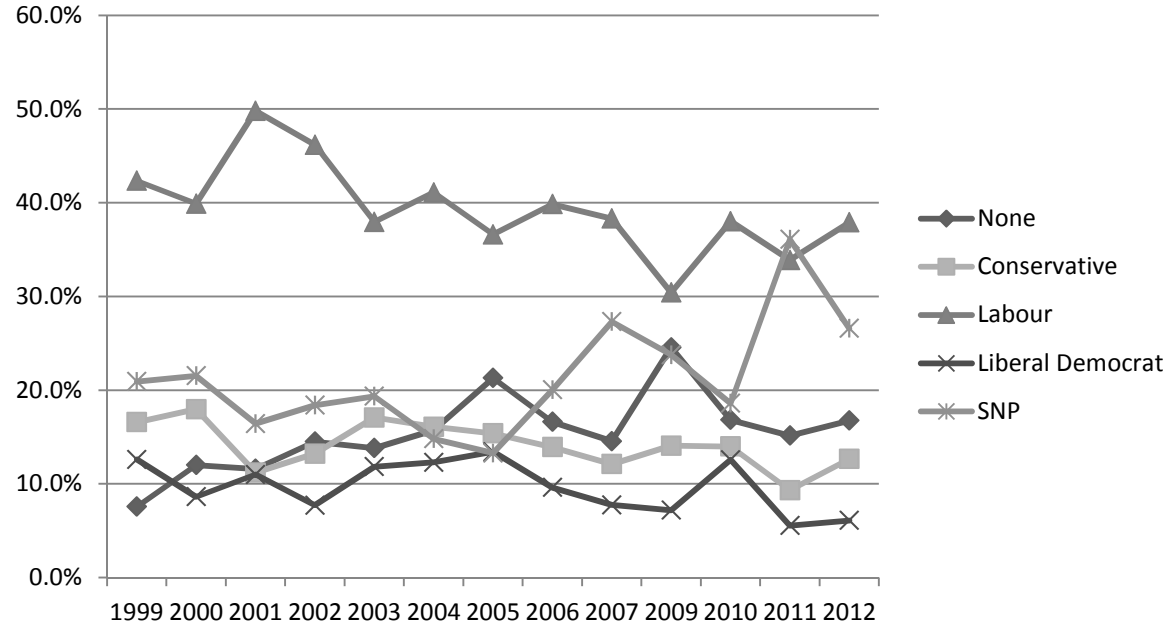
Power has brought with it a change in how some in the SNP see the party's role in Scottish politics. Back in 2007, the party was in the position to break the old establishment and become the establishment itself, acquiring the 'tools and machinery' of government in order to build support and advance the cause of independence (Interview, 12th September 2011). The party is now, on the whole, comfortable with this status because it means 'being the norm' (Interview, 19th September 2011) and shows the public that the SNP is not somehow a 'scary' party (Interview, 24th September 2011). One MSP remarked that, in the past, she would have been inclined to believe that the SNP should always 'take on elements of policy or society that aren't good'. However, she now believes that 'if you want to bring people with you it can't be done that way' because you 'don't go in and rip things apart' (Interview, 16th September 2011). The SNP has now placed itself not only as the promoters of independence, but as the custodians of the gains that have been made under devolution (SNP, 2012c; Sturgeon, 2012). Such sentiments point to a party that is very much comfortable in operating it in the current institutional context and accepting its role as the dominant political force in the country.

However, there are those who believe that being 'the establishment' is anathema to everything that the SNP stands for. According to Abedi and Lundberg (2009: 64; see also Abedi, 2004; and Abedi, 2002: 556-557), an anti-establishment party can be recognised if it fulfils the following three criteria: it provides a challenge to the status quo in terms of major policy issues and political system issues, it perceives itself as a challenger to the parties that make up the political establishment, and it asserts that there is a fundamental divide between the political establishment and the people and

thus implying that all establishment parties are the same. The first criterion, providing a challenge to the status quo, is embedded within the party's primary goal of independence. Indeed, the party's primary goal of Scottish independence prevents the party from becoming the establishment because, fundamentally, the SNP has never altered as a party (Interview, 18th October 2011). Despite the SNP's electoral success, it is not a party that exists to win elections, nor does it exist to 'manage the British state' better' (Interview, 18th January 2012). Indeed, its primary goal is undeniably radical in that it seeks to end the authority of the British state in Scotland.

There is also a belief within the SNP that its very make-up as a party is more diverse than the pro-UK parties and that this creates a clean break from the establishment. Figure 11 below shows that more of the Scottish electorate consistently identify with Labour despite the SNP's electoral success. As opposed to the other parties, the very make-up of the SNP prevents it from becoming the establishment because of its roots as a fundamentally grassroots party, as well as those who make up its senior ranks are drawn from a whole range of backgrounds outside the usual vested interests (Interview, 13th January 2012). This allows the party to create a 'new' establishment (Interview, 18th January 2012) which is different, maintains a radical edge and 'breathes new life' into Scottish politics (Interview, 9th September 2011). Rather than replacing the old establishment, the SNP is excluded by an establishment that 'lines up against' the party which gives the SNP the sense that it would be uncomfortable becoming like that (Interview, 13th January 2012). However, one minister suggested that this situation cannot last forever because the same trap that has befallen other parties lies ahead for the SNP too (Interview, 13th January 2012).

Figure 11: Party Identification in Scotland 1999-2012 (Source: Scottish Social Attitudes Survey) N=17637



Although the SNP clearly has anti-establishment trends, it still advocates the retention of institutional aspects of the union, dubbed the 'social union' by Alex Salmond. This approach has been used by the SNP to provide assurances to those sceptical of independence that important aspects of their British identity, such as Sterling and the Monarchy, will remain in an independent Scotland. To quote Alex Salmond;

> And when you consider our shared economic interests, our cultural ties, our many friendships and family relationships, one thing becomes clear. After Scotland becomes independent, we will share more than a monarchy and a currency. We will share a social union. It just won't be the same as a restrictive state, which no longer serves the interests of either Scotland or England. (Salmond, 2012)

The idea of a 'social union' is a significant element of SNP strategy. It exists to separate out the idea that there were will massive changes after independence from the notion that more powers will reside in Holyrood rather than Westminster, as well linking the issue of independence with the economy and employment (SNP, 2010). Therefore, independence, as the SNP advocate it, is not a complete break away from the established union between Scotland and England.

To build support for independence, the SNP believes that by being a competent government they will encourage trust in them as a party and foster confidence in the Scottish people. By showing that the devolved settlement can work, the SNP argues that this will wet the public's appetite for more powers and, ultimately independence. The party has made an attempt to appeal to the median voter in Scotland and come up with a policy programme which maximises the capacity to win votes at an election. This approach would mean that the SNP is a utility maximizing party which formulates the policy profile that will be popular with the largest number of people and thus maximize the party's vote-seeking capacity (Strøm and Müller, 1999). There is an abundance of evidence of this being the case, and the findings presented here support other work on this aspect of the SNP's development (Lynch, 2009).

However, the SNP has also promoted policies that do have the potential to damage the cause of independence. Remembering the party's second aim of furthering all Scottish interests, there is a genuine radical strand to the party's approach to government. As the party's 2011 manifesto states, 'The SNP is the party of Scotland. We are in business to make Scotland more successful. We care about our nation's welfare and will do all we can to make Scotland the best it can possibly be' (SNP, 2011a: 5). Because the Scottish nation is the primary motivating factor behind the SNP's priorities, as it is with any 'nationalist' party, the party believes that it cannot take its privileged position for granted and simply exhibit perpetual and competent management of a devolved Scotland.

Again, when it came to questions of whether or not the SNP had become an establishment party, opinions were divided. On the one hand, the SNP is now a fully-fledged establishment party which, on replacing the previous establishment, can now use the levers of power in order to achieve its primary goals. On the other hand, there were those who disagreed that the SNP was an establishment party, highlighting independence as the one thing

which prevents the party becoming the establishment because, ultimately, it wishes to end the authority of the British state in Scotland.

On the whole, as interpreted through Strøm and Müller's (1999) framework, the SNP has place emphasis on vote-seeking and office-seeking behaviour. However, despite the party keen on retaining political office, the power the comes from that office is ultimately directed, in a functional sense, at winning the independence referendum in 2014. Because of the pull of an independence referendum, the SNP cannot realistically become an office-seeking party *par excellence*. Without the pull of a clearly defined primary goal, the SNP could quite easily become a typical office-seeking party that seeks power for power's sake. Yet, in the SNP's case, the requirement to maximize vote-seeking capacity in order to capture office is ultimately one that is a policy-seeking one. On one level, the non-primary goal related policy that SNP advocates cannot be interpreted as representing policy-seeking considerations because those policies were largely chosen to maximize vote share. However, primary goal policy overrides other considerations and prevents the SNP from becoming that familiar establishment-type party.

Conclusion

This chapter has assessed the SNP's period in governmental office, focussing mainly on the 2007-2011 term. The chapter began by describing the party's primary goals, focusing on independence and the furtherance of all Scottish interests. The next section looked at how the SNP explicitly used government as a way in which to gain credibility with the electorate, as well as help shore up discipline in the party and maintain a united front. The final section analysed the SNP's term in office using the POV framework, finding that the party was quite happy to trade-off policy seeking behaviour in order to maximise their chances of winning back governmental office by winning as many votes as possible.

The SNP have, on the back of organisational reforms which were completed in 2004 (see chapter 8), adapted to the electoral marketplace of devolution.

The party's leadership is able to develop an electoral strategy which detaches the issues of independence and allows the party to campaign on the basis of competency and of protecting and promoting the interests of Scotland more generally. Furthermore, the SNP, by adapting to devolution in this way, has created something for a paradox for itself in that it is making devolved government work in the manner in which it was designed, and thus perhaps undermining its own primary goal. The party has also adapted to its new role as the largest party in devolved Scottish politics. The party has become very comfortable with its new establishment role, and has very much adapted to being a party of power. As chapter 8 will argue, professionalization has brought with it an attraction for career politicians who, in some cases, might not have the party's interests at heart.

Government has also further compounded the strength of the gradualist approach (Lynch, 2002, 2013; Mitchell, 1996) in the overall strategic profile of the SNP. The party has adopted a populist policy programme (Lynch, 2009) with the sole intention of winning power at the devolved level in order to keep pushing Scotland towards independence. Indeed, the party was more successful in 2011 than it would have imagined it could have been, and so now the dynamics of Scottish politics have changed to becoming completely dominated by the question of Scotland's constitutional status. The findings in this chapter broadly support the literature in the sense that the SNP were primarily concerned with office-seeking capacity and vote-seeking potential when in government. However, office-seeking was not pursued for the sake of it: the idea was to use the 'mechanics of state' at the party's disposal to set the agenda and make sure that independence was part of the mainstream of Scottish political discourse. This required a leadership that had autonomy over the strategic decisions it made, supporting the work of Mitchell et al (2012), and to an extent Lynch (2013), with regards to the process of professionalization in the SNP. Chapter 8 will discuss this issue in more depth.

Overall though, the party has adapted remarkably well to government. As a party in government for the first time, it's hypothesised that the party would experience vulnerabilities. This has not been the case. Again, chapter 8 will address how organisational reform has helped the SNP to adapt to a governmental role by freeing up the party's leadership and implement structural reforms which prevented active members from hijacking the candidate selection process, producing and facilitating a 'softer' electoral message.

Chapter 7 – Organisational Reform in Plaid Cymru

Introduction

After a disappointing 2011 Welsh election which saw the party lose 4 seats, Plaid underwent a consultation period which led to a report in early 2012, entitled *Moving Forward,* which outlined a number of recommendations regarding organisational reform. The need for reform became apparent as a result of the 2011 election campaign which saw Plaid struggle to formulate an effective vote-seeking strategy due to ineffective leadership structures, amongst other things (see chapter 5). On the 16th February 2013, a special conference was held in Aberystwyth to vote on those proposals that required changing the party's constitution. Those that did not require constitutional change were passed a few months earlier at National Council. At the special conference, the proposals from *Moving Forward* were almost unanimously passed, with a tiny minority against the proposal to make the constituency committee the primary unit of the party. The proceedings were over by lunchtime, and there was relief amongst Plaid elites that these reforms were passed without controversy and a belief that they represent a further step along Plaid's journey towards becoming a more professional political party (Interview, 19th February 2013). The reforms have led to a more professionalised party with clearer and more accountable leadership structures, political strategy residing with the party's leadership, a more efficient and streamlined approach to constituency campaigning, and less capacity for active members to dictate policy at the party's annual conference.

This chapter will analyse the effect that government has had on Plaid's organisation and overall strategic direction in terms of becoming more electorally successful. In short, how has governmental status affected Plaid Cymru as an organisation and its understanding of the electoral marketplace? The chapter will begin by investigating how the party adapted to and coped with government. It will then discuss the views that exist within the party about what organisational changes need to be made in order to

better equip the party to compete in the NAW. Plaid's internal review, entitled *Moving Forward* (Plaid Cymru, 2012a), will be discussed to ascertain the type of organisational reforms and electoral strategies that have been proposed, as well as some preliminary views towards those recommendations. The chapter will then discuss what these changes mean considering Plaid's primary goals and its status as an autonomist party.

Organisational Tensions

Despite securing a 'Yes' vote in the 2011 referendum, Plaid were collectively disappointed with the result of the 2011 Welsh election. The party slipped to third place behind the Conservatives and lost some important AMs, including Deputy Leader Helen-Mary Jones. What occurred as a result of this disappointing showing at the polls was the beginning of an internal review with a remit to suggest how the party could reform and improve its organisation. However, it is too simplistic to suggest that the poor election result was the only catalyst for potential change. It is believed that the party would have had to reform anyway; the election result hastened the process and highlighted the need to 'move on' as a party. Furthermore, the extra powers granted by virtue of the referendum would have meant a 'what next?' moment regardless in the sense that Plaid needs to know what its strategy is for the next ten years now that the referendum has been won and law-making powers have been granted (Interview, 3rd October 2011).

Plaid did make some modest organisational changes in anticipation of devolution, namely improved policy formulation procedures and the introduction of telecampaigning and voter profiling (Elias, 2011: 270). The party also adopted a new logo in the run up to the 2007 election (Ibid.: 268). However, none of these alterations fundamentally altered the organisational structure of the party and were piecemeal in nature. In terms of the post-2011 reforms, broadly speaking, there is a tension within Plaid between a need to be more 'effective' as a party but at the same time remain democratic and 'accountable' to party members.

The Need for Greater Effectiveness

One commonly shared criticism of Plaid's organisational structures is how branches operate. The local branch is a common target for criticism amongst Plaid elites, with a number of interviewees claiming that meetings at the constituency level are simply 'better' than those at the branch level. In terms of more specific critiques, there is recognition that there is a lack of consistency between how branches operate: some simply operate more effectively than others (Interview, 28th September 2011). Secondly, branch activities are accused of being very often mundane and boring (Interview, 3rd October 2011). Some branches are able to keep members engaged by having guest speakers at meetings, whilst others, according to a party officer, should be 'avoided like the plague' (Interview, 28th September 2011). Thirdly, the efficiency of branches' political activities has been brought into question. When branch activities are aggregated to the constituency level, there is often five or six people doing the same job (fund-raising, press relations etc) when it would be much more efficient to have a 'regional organiser' to manage constituency activity more effectively (Interview, 3rd October 2011). Finally, the branch still continues to be the basic organisational element of the party according to Plaid's previous constitution (Plaid Cymru, 2011a: 4-5) when the constituency is clearly the most important element in modern Wales: a branch that covers a council ward or a village cannot be seen as more important (Interview, 4th October 2011). What this indirectly leads to is branches setting up campaign teams alongside official ones, as well as resources (namely money) being held in bank accounts that cannot be accessed to aid constituency level campaigning (Interview, 4th October 2011). This situation can lead to the general problem of a lack of 'consistency' in how effective Plaid's campaigning capacity is from place to place (Interview, 6th October 2011).

Another aspect of the party's organisation that comes under criticism from within is that of the party's membership. There is an accusation that 'those who shout the loudest often prevail' within Plaid (Interview, 4th October 2011). What this amounts to is that the party gets dominated by a small number of

members who are very active within the party, particularly at branch level. Because the majority of members are not very active at all, the most active are often mistaken as representing the party as a whole (Interview, 28th September 2011). An AM remarked that it is often very difficult to control the party's 'hardcore membership', and that elected representatives are having to ask whether they exist to 'win elections or please a minority at the expense of a majority?' (Interview, 5th October 2011) Indeed, when the leadership gets 'hardnosed' and says 'we have to win', there are always those who say 'what about this and this?' (Interview, 5th October 2011) This leads the party's elected representatives feeling as if they lack control because the party is governed by its executive and motions to conference, all of which are controlled by 'hardcore' members (Interview, 5th October 2011). This, allegedly, means that Plaid behaves like a pressure group on the periphery of the constitutional debate rather than a 'fully-blown' political party that wants to govern Wales (Interview, 5th October 2011).

Related very closely to party members is the party conference. A number of interviewees, particularly AMs, stated that party conference is deficient and that it has to be reformed to some extent. One common critique is the idea that the party puts too much emphasis on policy development at conference. Using ad-hoc motions that come in to conference is not a good way to agree policy, and therefore the party fails to use conference in a 'modern context' (Interview, 4th October 2011). Despite readily acknowledging that branches have to be able to put ideas and motions forward, the reality is that only a few members from a few branches actually do it and this leads to constant repetition such as motions on S4C or anti-nuclear policy. In theory, this seems very democratic but in reality it is not representative of the party as a whole (Interview, 4th October 2011). This view is reiterated by a party officer who stated that any member of staff in Plaid would tell you that the party is 'too democratic' in this sense (Interview, 3rd October 2011). There is a belief that policy should be (more or less) decided upon by the time it reaches party conference because, for example, it is impossible to debate education policy in twenty minutes at conference. Furthermore, charismatic speakers can

sway a conference in the direction of a motion that is perhaps not, in overall terms, the best one for the party. In the end, having a system like this actually deters members from becoming more political active because they do not feel like they can get really involved in policy discussions (Interview, 28th September 2011).

The above discussion is a clear example of so-called 'demand side' issues regarding party membership (or rather, a certain segment of that membership) (Scarrow, 1996: 6). Because a party's leadership is theorised to view party members in a utilitarian sense, it is clear that the particular members alluded to above present a specific liability in the utility calculations of these party elites, particularly in terms of programmatic costs (Ibid: 40). Although the empirical evidence is based on the views of party leaders, it is nonetheless supportive of the theory that the extra-parliamentary party is likely to be concerned with policy-purity (Pederson, 2010: 741), particularly in relation to policy concerning Welsh language broadcasting on S4C (see Plaid Cymru, 2011c and Daily Post, 10th September 2011; Elias, 2009c). The evidence also lends some support to May's (1973) 'law', especially considering Kitschelt's (1989) claim that organisations that are 'loosely organised' are more likely to penetrated by mid-level radicals. It is fair to say that Plaid's branch structure, coupled with the way in which party conference operates *vis-à-vis* policy formulation, allows the most determined, policy-pure and active of members a forum through which they can have a considerable amount of influence over the party's strategic direction. Plaid's organisational structure, if understood using the principal-agent approach (Koelble, 1996), suggests that active members (principals) are able to use the aforementioned structures to monitor, screen and (to an extent) control the party's leadership (agents). Moreover, a segment of the party's elite wish to redress this relationship so that there are less screening and monitoring devices which constrain their autonomy to act in particular ways.

Maintaining Accountability

Acting alongside a desire for greater effectiveness in Plaid's organisation is a desire to retain, protect and strengthen Plaid's ethos as a party, particularly its commitment to internal democracy. Unlike some other parties, Plaid has no vested interests and relies completely on its membership. In order to be a stronger party, according to one AM, it is absolutely essential to 'take members with us' and include them as much as possible (Interview, 6th October 2011). For example, conference is criticised for being too much of a showcase and needs to be put back into the hands of the membership (Interview, 6th October 2011). Interestingly, this is in stark contrast to a number of party elites who claim the exact opposite. Indeed, another AM stated that they like the democracy of Plaid and the fact that conference is a real decision-making body (Interview, 26th September 2011). According to the same AM, you have to run Plaid the way you would want to run Wales. The history and ethos of Plaid is one that values the decentralised and collective approaches. Furthermore, Plaid is a party that is interested in fundamental change and, even if this is not electorally appealing (campaigning against the monarchy, for example), it is worth campaigning for if it is worthwhile (Interview, 26th September 2011).

The notion that conference needs to be more of a 'members' conference' is reiterated by other interviewees. At the moment, it is the same people who are always having their views heard; particularly the party's elected representatives. This alienates young people in the party and makes them believe that it is a party for 'God's chosen few' (Interview, 29th September 2011). The accusation has been made that many members feel that they are only contacted when the party wants money or volunteers for campaigning. The party needs to connect more with members if it wants to keep them (Interview, 28th September 2011). When asked about where they wanted Plaid to be in a year's time,[26] they clearly emphasised the need for Plaid to build a revitalised membership base and seek new members (Interview, 28th September 2011). Connecting and engaging with members in more

[26] Which would be Autumn 2012

constructive way provides the potential to revitalise the membership, attract new members, and thus have a greater number of 'soldiers' for campaigning purposes (Interview, 28th September 2011).

In contrast to the discussion about party members being potential liabilities, there is also a strong sense amongst Plaid elites that party members are an important asset. In terms of not having any vested interests, this is a clear example of the ordinary members bringing financial benefits (Scarrow, 1996: 43-44), but also legitimacy benefits (Ibid: 42) in the sense that a party more reliant on members (than say business or trade unions) is somehow 'cleaner' in the eyes of the electorate. Furthermore, Scarrow's (Ibid.: 49) assertion that members are never purely an asset nor a liability is also given empirical credence by the fact that those in Plaid who wish the redress the principal-agent balance (Koelble, 1996) do also see party members as an asset. However, it is important to qualify the type of benefit that a party member can bring to a party; a labour benefit is an entirely different type of benefit to an outreach benefit for example. Indeed, one party officer who stresses the need for Plaid to become more effective appears to see the labour benefit of members in the sense that more members means more 'soldiers' on the ground (Interview, 28th September 2011). However, the same party officer also wishes to engage members into the policy process far more than they are currently, therefore providing innovation and personnel benefits to Plaid (Interview, 28th September 2011).

Increasing internal democracy within a party is not necessarily at odds with making a party more effective as a vote-seeking machine. Indeed, Russell's (2005) work on organisational reform of the Labour Party shows that 'opening up' the party to ordinary members was an important step in persuading voters that Labour was not controlled by the far-left and militant trade unions. Although there is certainly some tension between the notions of accountability and effectiveness regarding party organisation, the term 'professionalization' is more useful. The process of shifting from an 'amateur' to a 'professional' organisation (Mair et al, 2004b: 11) is one which

incorporates not only a shifting balance between accountability and effectiveness, but also a renewed understanding about what these terms actually mean. In Plaid's case, there is a desire from a segment of the elite to 'open up' the policy-making process to more members and thus take influence out of the hands of certain overly influential branches. The two positions can both be classified as being aspects of the accountability that party members have over their leaders, but they are obviously very different in terms of how they actually work in reality.

According to one AM, Plaid has traditionally had a collective approach to party leadership and has shied away from focussing on one leader (Interview, 26th September 2011). However, it must be remembered that the party has been dominated by assertive individuals throughout its history (Elias, 2011; Evans, 2008; McAllister, 2001). Although, on paper, the party has quite clearly had a 'leader' in recent times, the role of President, for example, still has 'leadership functions' which can contradict that of the party leader (Interview, 3rd October 2011). The leadership arrangements had the potential to create a situation where there was confusion over where responsibility lay, and that fostered an element of 'fear' and 'lack of confidence' in the leader and made it harder for that individual to 'move the party' (Interview, 4th October 2011). The leadership structures in question arose when the party divided its Westminster and NAW leadership functions, a situation that arose after Ieuan Wyn Jones stood down as President after the 2003 Welsh election and Dafydd Iwan was elected as party President despite not being a member of the NAW. Ieuan Wyn Jones was then duly re-elected leader of the Assembly group after standing down as President. This approach to Plaid's leadership was criticised by Simon Thomas, a defeated MP in 2005 and currently an AM, who believed that the party needed to recognise a leader in the form of a 'single person around which they can identify in the assembly as the person who has the potential...to unite - not just Plaid Cymru members but also build a broader coalition' (BBC News, 9th May 2005; see also Elias, 2009c). Elias (Ibid.) suggests that the party's internal strife at this time led to Plaid reverting back to a more 'niche' profile,

a legacy that the organisational reforms sought to address and then set Plaid on a course to valuing office-seeking more than it had previously.

Proposed Changes to Plaid's Organisation

After the poor electoral result in May 2011, an internal party review was set up. Led by Eurfyl Ap Gwilym,[27] the review team set out to look at a number of areas of the party's organisational structure and its broader political strategy, culminating in the publication of a report entitled *Moving Forward: Renewing Plaid for Wales* (Plaid Cymru, 2012a). Although the review process has been described by one AM as 'a bin' for all of the party's problems to go into (Interview, 6th October 2011), the final report nevertheless offers two important insights. Firstly, the extent to which Plaid has understood and learned from its inability to formulate an effective and coherent vote-seeking strategy (as discussed in the previous chapter) can be gauged and discussed. Secondly, the discussion above showed that Plaid elites have a range of views about what is 'wrong' with their party and how these issues can be resolved.

Membership

Although members can be both a liability and an asset to a party's leadership, it is clear that Plaid as a party values its members extremely highly. According to *Moving Forward,* 'Plaid Cymru's strength is its membership. The Party must adopt a structure that maximises the involvement of the members and ensures a closer working relationship between all levels of the Party' (Plaid Cymru, 2012a: 6). Not only does the report recognise the importance of current members, it also states that recruiting new members is a priority because numbers have decreased over recent years and this hinders the party's ability to 'organise and campaign effectively' (Ibid.: 28). Furthermore, the report claims that Plaid does not take advantage of the 'pool of expertise and skills' within its membership and that the party should, within its membership records, have information regarding

[27] Eurfyl Ap Gwilym is a long standing member of Plaid Cymru who advises the party on economic matters.

the ‘professional skills and expertise of our members as well as their readiness to support the work required in the formulation of policy’ (Ibid: 23). There is also a firm statement ‘[ensuring] the accountability of the elected leadership to [members]’ (Ibid.: 28) signifying continued support for Plaid’s democratic ethos as a party. In short, *Moving Forward* reiterates the importance that Plaid’s leadership places on its membership as an asset (Scarrow, 1996).

However, the report also alludes to the notion that members can be a liability. When discussing strategy with regards to the next constitutional ‘steps’ Plaid should be advocating, it is claimed that the party ‘should be focussed on what is really important and not be distracted by side issues which are not directly connected with achieving [Plaid’s] strategic aims’ (Ibid.: 15). Although this is not said to be the fault of members *per se*, the same paragraph goes on to say that members have played their own role in this problem;

> In the absence of such a clearly articulated strategy members will be tempted to fill the vacuum by formulating their own version of policies and this can lead to incoherence and confusion. It is vital that the leadership team sets a clear strategy as to how to keep the party focussed on the prize and that members and elected representatives devote their energies to these defined matters. Members and elected representatives should be encouraged to keep to an agreed approach and not be tempted to become too involved in campaigns or issues that are not directly relevant to the Party’s objectives. (Ibid.)

Although this passage in *Moving Forward* is certainly not blaming members for the perceived lack of a ‘clearly articulated strategy’, it is certainly an attempt to curb activist autonomy when it comes to the expression of Plaid’s goals to voters. As Scarrow (1996: 40-41) suggests, a party’s leadership can view members as a liability in the sense that they represent programmatic costs; activists are likely to favour ideological purity and thus potentially seek a vote-losing strategy. Although the quote above includes elected members, there is a clear call for discipline and adherence to ‘an agreed approach’ and the channelling of ‘energies to these defined matters’. Indeed, one party officer suggested that ‘discipline’ is something that Plaid desperately needs as a party, both in terms of goals and the ‘broader’ political message

(Interview, 3rd October 2011). Undoubtedly, this 'discipline' will come from party leaders.

Plaid's experience in government also appears to have informed an effort to engage the membership in a process of 'political education'. It has been suggested that members were often unrealistic about what could be achieved in government (Interview, 3rd October 2011), and that this was particularly acute in the case of the Welsh Language Measure (Interview, 6th October 2011). *Moving Forward* suggests that Plaid must 'arm its membership more effectively to understand and handle these tensions' (Plaid Cymru, 2012a: 25). Furthermore, Plaid 'need[s] a much more intensive programme of policy formulation and political education' (Ibid.). Although blame could be attributed to the leadership in this regard, this part of the report is nevertheless suggesting that Plaid's members need to be more understanding of government in general, but perhaps also more trusting of the basic concept of being in power and the trade-offs that such a position invariably bestows. Aside from the need for sheer effectiveness as a vote-winning machine, educating members in a particular way is also a process whereby the potential for them to become a liability is reduced and their value as an asset to the leadership is increased.

The report also aims to address the liability-asset balance of party members with regard to party conference. Delegates from local branches have previously been able to vote on motions whilst ordinary party members attending as observers could not. *Moving Forward* suggests changing this system by allowing every member attending conference to vote (Ibid.: 47). Indeed, it is suggested that some members would not want to change this system and that delegates should be the ones who are allowed to vote (and talk) at conference (Ibid.). This proposal has met some hostility from local branches. At Plaid's National Council on the 3rd of March 2012 which spent the majority of its time discussing *Moving Forward,* Cangen[28] Caernarfon put forward an amendment, contrary to the recommendation in the review, that

[28] 'Cangen' is Welsh for 'Branch'

the current delegate system of voting at annual conference should be maintained and that voting should reflect the number of branch members (Plaid Cymru, 2012d). Although the amendment fell at the meeting (Plaid Cymru, 2012e), the fact that the branch was unhappy at the recommendation shows signs of, albeit fairly muted, resistance to the change from those stakeholders who stand to lose out in terms of influence as a result of organisational reform.

Changing the Primary Unit of the Party

One of the most common complaints about how Plaid is structured that was brought up by interviewees is the way that the branch system works. Although respondents were often quick to point out that many Plaid branches do excellent work, there are too many that are ineffective and do not encourage the participation of members. *Moving Forward* sets out to address such concerns by reforming this aspect of Plaid's structure. There are two broad issues that the report brings up with regard to branches. The first is that of the ability of branches to enthuse, excite and retain members. The second relates to how branches operate in relation to the overall effectiveness of the party. Taking the former issue, *Moving Forward* states;

> Members clearly want more interesting and informative Branch meetings and suggested there should be a lot more flexibility in the way Branches operate, for example varying meeting times from evening to daytime or weekends and organising joint political/training events. In addition, support in organising an interesting programme was requested and more contact with elected politicians. (Plaid Cymru, 2012a: 31)

Such concerns are closely related to the importance that Plaid places on its membership. Wright (1971) outlines two classic models for describing the mechanics of political parties; the party democracy model and the rational-efficient model. Although no party is ever completely one or the other, the party democracy model is certainly a better fit for Plaid. When it comes to party activities, this party type is often extensively and continuously active with its organizational imperatives being purposeful and the prime beneficiary of party activity being the members (Plaid Cymru, 2012a: 32). It is therefore

obvious why *Moving Forward* has focussed on engaging members more when it comes to branch activities.

The second reason for proposing reform of Plaid's branch structure is an attempt to make the party a more effective and efficient organisation. As the discussion above showed, there is lack of consistency across Wales in terms of how well branches operate. *Moving Forward* has attempted to address this problem by recommending that much of branches functions are shifted upwards to the Constituency Committee. To quote the report (Plaid Cymru, 2012a: 38);

> According to the Constitution, the Branch is currently "the primary level of organisation for the party". However, in large parts of the country, the branch structure is ineffective while, on the whole, constituency committees are functioning well. A significant minority of branches are inactive. About one third of constituencies now operate on a 'constituency-branch' basis. To maximise effectiveness, the Constituency Committee should be the main body responsible for the functioning of the party locally. This would not preclude the continuing establishment and support of branches.

Indeed, the report goes on to recommend that the party's 'Constitution be amended to make the Constituency Committee the primary level of organisation for the party' (Ibid.). The report highlights what this would mean in practice, and recommends that branches 'concentrate their efforts' on maintaining and expanding Treeware records, local fundraising, campaigning on matters of local importance and social events (Ibid.: 39). The Constituency Committees on the other hand should take responsibility for political strategy within the area, policy development and debate, recruiting and retaining members, political education and campaigning, including elections (Ibid.). The report recommends that the Constituency Committee's model themselves on the constituencies of the NAW (Ibid.: 40) and that 'one individual be allocated responsibility for the development of Party structure and organisation within each Assembly electoral region' (Ibid.: 41).

These proposed reforms constitute a very obvious shift of function upwards from branches to the constituency committee. Moreover, the fact that 'one

individual' be 'allocated responsibility' for overseeing future organisational developments in each electoral region is further proof that there is an attempt to streamline the party's functions and that party leaders should have a lead role in overseeing any changes. The language used in the recommendation regarding what functions branches should have, namely what branches should 'concentrate their efforts' on, strikes something of a paternalistic tone. Indeed, it can be interpreted as representing, from the point of view of *Moving Forward's* authors, the opinion that branches do represent a degree of liability despite the importance that Plaid places on its membership. Furthermore, the proposed division of labour between the branch and the Constituency Committee represents a redressing of the liability-asset balance, with the liabilities represented by branches being reduced whilst their value as an asset being maximised. This would ultimately result in Plaid's HQ having a greater role in defining the boundaries within which branches can act. One example in the review is the claim that it is unclear to what extent activists use templates provided by Plaid HQ (Ibid.: 59). The report then goes on to recommend that candidates must adhere to generic templates 'unless special dispensation is granted by the Chief Executive' (Ibid.). There is a clear trajectory here towards streamlining party campaigns across Wales and, at the same time, increasing the oversight of the party's HQ which undoubtedly will act in support of the party's leadership.

National Executive Council and the Leadership Team

Another key structural reform proposed is modification of the National Executive Council (NEC). According to *Moving Forward,* 'retaining the current NEC structure will not provide the necessary direction and leadership for the 21st century party we aspire to become' (Ibid.: 43). Plaid's democratic ethos has meant that the NEC has previously been at the heart of the strategic direction of the party. However, this has been criticised with the argument that, in today's political climate and the 24-hour news cycle, thirty-two people meeting every eight weeks is simply not agile and effective enough to make quick decisions when required (Interview, 24th March 2012). *Moving Forward* recommends the following;

> Our view is that for the NEC to reclaim significant executive responsibilities (as a body rather than through the Leadership Team or Directorate) alongside a more robust scrutiny function, it requires a more focussed slimmed-down membership (one could achieve this by removing all regional coordinators and National Section representatives) and to meet at least once a month, if not more frequently (Plaid Cymru, 2012a: 43).

Related to proposed reform of the NEC is placing more control over the everyday running of Plaid into the hands of its leadership. Recommendation 52 (Ibid.: 71) of *Moving Forward* proposes the creation of '...a small Leadership Team, which will take responsibility for overseeing the day-to-day political tactics of the Party along with the executive implementation of the Party's strategy.' Furthermore, the report recommends '...that the NEC's role is refocused on agreeing the strategic and political direction of the Party and subsequently scrutinising the work of those individuals and teams charged with the implementation of the strategy.' At the meeting of National Council on 3rd of March 2012, Cangen Porth a Cymer proposed the deletion of that recommendation and its replacement by a proposal that left much more influence in the hands of the NEC. Indeed, it was suggested that the Leadership Team should be '...constituted as a sub-committee of the NEC' as well as maintaining Plaid's 'executive implementation' (Plaid Cymru, 2012d). Furthermore, the same branch proposed that, contrary to the recommendation (Plaid Cymru, 2012a: 71) in *Moving Forward*, the position of Business Manager should be an elected one and not an appointment by the Leader (Plaid Cymru, 2012d). Although both of these amendments fell when voted upon (Plaid Cymru, 2012e), they were allegedly the most contentious issues to arise from the whole meeting. Indeed, reforms to the way that the NEC operates were supposedly the most controversial issues at the National Council meeting overall (Interview, 23rd March 2012).

Plaid's historical legacy of having a collective approach to leadership means that there is a wariness of having too much focus on a single leader, according to one AM (Interview, 26th September 2011). Due to this legacy of a collective leadership style, the party's structures need to be flexible enough in order to allow contribution to the leadership (Interview, 3rd October 2011).

The creation of a leadership 'team' appears to be an attempt to appease such concerns. However, *Moving Forward* recommends that 'the Constitution is further clarified with the role of the Leader taking explicit responsibility for the whole Party' (Ibid.: 49). This appears to contradict the collective ethos approach. As commented above, it is questionable how collectively Plaid has been led in the past due to the dominant position of some key figures. However, the party's conference does retain sovereignty in terms of policy decisions and so, in that regard, Plaid is a democratic political party.

Strategy – Becoming a More Effective Vote-Seeking Organisation

Mair et al (2004a: 265) state that a common response to shifting electoral markets is centralisation and professionalization. The 'amateur' is curtailed and the weight and direction of party strategy is placed in the hands of the leadership. Listening to voters becomes more important than listening to members (Ibid.: 266). Indeed, such shifts represent the general shift along the continuum from 'amateur' to 'professional' organisations (Mair et al, 2004b: 11). Plaid has definitely began the process of moving further along this path by reviewing its internal organisation and recognising that it needs to develop a more coherent and effective vote-seeking strategy in the future to meet its aim of entering into power once again. However, fundamental tensions still exist within Plaid surrounding its attachment to the Welsh language.

Streamlining and Professionalizing the Party

Moving Forward clearly outlines the strategic direction that Plaid should undertake going forward;

> Our strategy is to win political power at the national and local levels by fighting and winning elections and gaining power. Every election is an opportunity to put across our message and win support for our policies. Having achieved that power we will use it both to deliver better lives for the people of Wales and to win the transfer of ever greater powers to the Welsh people and institutions and, in the longer term, achieve independence for Wales within the European Union. (Plaid Cymru, 2012a: 13)

The quote above iterates a clear commitment to achieving electoral success, and the types of reforms discussed previously are an attempt to professionalize the party to that end. Although it has been suggested that these types of reforms may have occurred even if Plaid had not been in government (Interview, 3rd October 2011), being a governing party has inevitably been something of a didactic experience that Plaid has been able to learn from in an organisational sense. These sentiments can also be understood as a response to the period between 2003 and 2007 when internal strife within Plaid meant the party began to promote a more 'niche' oriented agenda and strategic approach (Elias, 2009c). Although *Moving Forward* could well have been published at a time when Plaid were not recently in government, the electoral disappointment of 2011 has provided the recommendations with the necessary legitimacy needed in order to instigate change. One AM remarked that these changes are absolutely necessary if Plaid wants to govern Wales again. The poor election result legitimises reform and asks the party the wider question of where they actually want Plaid Cymru to go; a junior partner in government or the biggest party in Wales? (Interview, 5th October 2011)

Ieuan Wyn Jones' final conference speech as Plaid's leader outlined his belief that Plaid should seek to enter back into government again, although not necessarily immediately (Wyn Jones, 2011). The recommendations in *Moving Forward* represent an attempt in realising this aim, if not necessarily in this Assembly term. A key tension which needs to be balanced going forward is that between keeping the party accountable whilst also making sure the party is effective (Interview, 24th March 2012). When it comes to the recommended structural reforms, particularly the shifting of competencies away from branches upwards to Constituency Committees, the difference between accountability and effectiveness becomes blurred. Effectiveness is sought on the basis that having party activity at the constituency level makes it more efficient and streamlined in terms of time and resources, but the recommendations made for improving branches is actually meant to encourage the continued engagement of current members and the attraction

of new ones. Furthermore, the idea that all members should be able to vote at conference is another mechanism designed to engage ordinary members more. Crucially, this is at the expense of the so-called 'activists' who are likely to be much more politically engaged and ideologically 'extreme' (May, 1973). Although the data is not available here to actually test whether or not this is empirically the case, it is nevertheless interesting that those in Plaid who are driving the review and the subsequent reforms appear to perceive them as such. Mair et al (2004a) state that democratization of party organisation has resulted in a *de facto* accumulation of leadership control, although this claim is not always as clear-cut as is often suggested (see Russell, 2005). By aiming to curb the influence of certain branches at conference and move some important branch functions 'upwards' however, the review is a step in this direction.

However, despite caution regarding the so-called 'tension' between effectiveness and accountability, *Moving Forward* does explicitly outline where Plaid's organisational structure is deficient and there is indeed a clear and existing tension. To quote the report;

> There is a need to streamline decision making within the political leadership of the Party. We believe our recommendations including the establishment of a Leadership Team strikes a better balance between the need for effective leadership and accountability to the wider membership. (Plaid Cymru, 2012a: 6)

Striking a 'better balance', couple with the term 'streamlining', presumably means that the leadership team should be free to make decisions that it sees fit. Furthermore, this quote assumes that this was not necessarily the case previously, something that has been touched upon above. Indeed, the report discusses the same kinds of deficiencies but this time in the context of communications;

> Whilst many decisions will clearly require a direct political involvement, others are of a more operational nature and should be left to the professionals within the Party. We have detected that a culture of 'decision by committee' has been allowed to evolve which can hinder effective and efficient communications delivery. Such an atmosphere has a direct effect on swiftness of operation; it can also

> stifle creativity and create risk aversion – all of which can lead to poor communications. (Plaid Cymru, 2012a: 57)

This quote is one of the clearest examples of the proposed shift towards more internal professionalization in Plaid. What this quote alludes to is a desire on the part of the review to place Plaid's 'message' more and more into the hands of a few professionals and out of the hands of the more numerous 'amateurs' in the party. This has apparently been a problem for Plaid since the creation of the NAW: the party suffers from a lack of 'tightness' with regards to its 'message' which is explained primarily by a 'lack of training' (Interview, 3rd October 2011). *Moving Forward* attempts to address this issue by recommending some measures that mean politically active members are a more consistent 'mouthpiece' for a centrally controlled message;

> Another suggestion is that members are regularly provided with "talking points". These would be short and succinct bullet points explaining Plaid's position on key issues or news items. These could vary from a succinct case for independence to Plaid's position on the recent negotiations around the Assembly budget. This would help arm members with the information and rebuttals needed to argue their case and promote Plaid's position locally. (Plaid Cymru, 2012a: 65)

Such proposals are similar to the one mentioned above which dealt with imposing generic campaign literature templates for candidates. It highlights not only a process of professionalization, but also of maximising the benefits that members can bring to the party. Party 'professionals' are given more freedom to set the boundaries within which members can act, thus potentially making the party more 'effective' and thus electorally successful.

The process of attempting to further professionalize Plaid as a political party has begun in the form of *Moving Forward.* The report makes it abundantly clear that Plaid needs to win more votes in Wales and to do so needs to become a more 'effective' organisation, in the sense that it carries out its functions in a quicker, more streamlined and publically appealing manner. The element within Plaid that desires a more vote-seeking party, both in relative and actual terms, has influenced the direction of the internal review.

As was discussed in chapter 5, Plaid's reliance on Labour to deliver the referendum on law-making powers undermined their vote-seeking ability. Furthermore, the idea of Plaid as an 'odd' party in the sense that it does not matter if Plaid fails to do well at elections if the nation-building project continues to proceed was also discussed. *Moving Forward* is an attempt to shift these perceptions towards the other widely held view in Plaid that it is a normal political party that exists to obtain political office, use the power that comes with that position and continue to try and achieve the party's goal of an independent Wales. However, and crucially, any reform of the party's organisation will ultimately be judged by its membership. At the centre of the relationship between individuals and the organisation they are a member of is the idea of a 'psychological contract' (Handy, 1993: 45). If members perceive reform as undermining this contract then they can become not only a liability, but perhaps leave the party altogether. Although there have been signs of discontent mentioned above, it is far too early to tell how extensive and widespread this is and whether it will have any lasting impact on Plaid at all.

Maintaining Loyalty and Broadening Appeal

In an attempt to broaden its appeal amongst the electorate and ultimately win more votes, Plaid is undergoing a process of what Hatch (1996: 91) describes as 'boundary spanning'. There is a realisation that the party has to be more successful in the electoral marketplace and has to tailor its policies accordingly. To quote *Moving Forward* (Plaid Cymru, 2012a: 20);

> We recommend that the Party undertakes detailed analysis of the Welsh electorate to inform the development of the political strategy. This exercise should be repeated at least once a year and used as a vehicle to measure political progress, e.g. has support for Plaid Cymru increased, has support for Welsh Independence increased, and has support for particular propositions advanced by Plaid (e.g. control over energy) increased?

Although self-evident for a political party that wants to win more votes, it becomes slightly more complex once the notion of the 'psychological contract' is taken into consideration. The process of autonomist parties developing along the niche to normal scale (Hepburn, 2009) has led to the

broadening and deepening of policy proposals. Indeed, coupled with this process might come the need to drop or dilute particular policy commitments, something that might prove to be internally damaging if that policy commitment constitutes a primary goal. In Plaid's case, the party's commitment to the Welsh language is an area that may not be compatible with the desire to be a more effective vote-seeking organisation. To quote *Moving Forward* (Plaid Cymru, 2012a: 12);

> The other political parties have also now developed a positive narrative towards the language and Plaid Cymru must recognise that this issue is no longer our exclusive territory. Some contributors felt however that the party is still stereotyped by its language activism. A number of contributors suggested that, in non-Welsh speaking areas especially, Plaid Cymru's record as a campaigning organisation for the Welsh language superseded any other aspect of the party's platform in the eyes of the public. One contributor said that Labour present themselves as the 'Welsh party' whilst Plaid Cymru is perceived as the 'Welsh-speaking party.'

Although this passage is certainly not advocating that Plaid abandon their commitment to the Welsh language, it is outlining that Plaid have to step back somewhat from the issue and realise that it is something that does not exclusively belong to them. However, if some activists believe that the language does indeed 'belong to them' then *Moving Forward's* proposals represent a distinct breach of the psychological contract between members and the organisation as a whole. It must be stated this is not the first time that Plaid has debated the issue of the Welsh language as it represents a long-running strategic issue for the party (Elias, 2009b, 2009c, 2011; Lynch, 1995; McAllister, 2001).

Once again, it remains to be seen how any changes in strategic direction in language policy impacts on Plaid's intra-party relations. However, this does represent a distinctive problem that autonomist parties face in the sub-state arena (see Jeffrey, 2009). On the one hand, Plaid is attempting to engage more with the Welsh electorate in policy areas that nationalist ideology is not 'thick' enough to engage with, while at the same time maintain the 'thinner' end of the scale with, by its very nature, a policy area that ultimately excludes

(Freeden, 1998). On the other hand, *Moving Forward* takes lessons from the SNP when it comes to the balance that can be struck between everyday policy issues and Plaid's constitutional objectives;

> Development of a constitutional route map would not only make the idea of independence more attractive to many but would enable us to win support for the next constitutional steps. In its stunning election results in 2011 the SNP was able to concentrate on its full range of policies while placing the question of independence in the context of their planned referendum. Thus the Scottish election was not about independence per se but about the betterment of the lives of the people of Scotland. (Plaid Cymru, 2012a: 10)

One party officer claimed that if *Moving Forward* was to be an exercise in changing party policy there would be an internal backlash within Plaid (Interview, 3rd October 2011). Moreover, one AM stated that, in policy terms, there is not a great deal 'wrong' with Plaid (Interview, 3rd October 2011). Indeed, *Moving Forward* does not go into any real detail on matters of policy. The report focuses mainly on strategic issues and the organisational changes that need to occur in order to make that strategy more effective. The quote above is interesting because it shows that Plaid have looked to the SNP for inspiration regarding the development of an effective vote-seeking strategy without having to overly compromise constitutional objectives. Indeed, Eurfyl ap Gwilym spent some time in Edinburgh talking to the SNP about Plaid's reforms towards the end of 2011 (Plaid Cymru, 2011e). Given the success that the SNP has had attracting so-called 'valance voters', as well as the presence of this type of voting behaviour in Wales (Scully and Wyn Jones, 2012), it is likely that Plaid seek to adopt a similar type of strategy when seeking to persuade people to vote for them. Indeed, *Moving Forward* conceded that Plaid has spent 'little or no resources' in persuading voters to cast their ballot in favour of Plaid (Plaid Cymru, 2012a: 18). If this is to be the case then it will undoubtedly mean attracting those voters who are not particularly partisan and thus will be more receptive to persuasion on the basis of Plaid's perceived competence across a range of policy issues.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed organisational reform in Plaid; in particular the reasons for the reforms, the reforms themselves, and the strategic reasons behind them. The disappointing result in the 2011 Welsh election provided the party's elite with legitimate grounds to substantially alter and reform the organisational structure of the party. The aim of this process, outlined in documentary form in *Moving Forward*, is to put Plaid on a better organisational footing to becoming more politically successful in the future. As chapter 5 argued, the party suffered from organisational vulnerability (Bolleyer, 2008: Deschouwer, 2008) in the latter stages of coalition government which led to a deficient election campaign. It was this campaign that provided a window of opportunity for the party's leadership to legitimately embark upon restructuring the organisational make-up of the party.

The reform process, completed in February 2013, has, at least theoretically, made Plaid a more professional political party. Key decision making structures, campaign capacities and leadership functions have been placed into fewer hands at the apex of the party's hierarchy. However, this is not to say that the party has become an undemocratic organisation. *Moving Forward* is keen to stress that Plaid's members should continue to be an integral part of the fabric of the party, with improved structures to keep party members more engaged and interested and the introduction of OMOV at annual conference. However, more democracy for all members is a method through which control over policy and strategy is taken out of the hands of the most active members and into the wider membership. This invariably means a more moderate 'average' which is likely to be more in line with the leadership's, and more importantly ordinary voters', interests. As chapter 8 will show, the SNP also adopted OMOV to achieve a similar end.

With regards to the following chapter on the SNP's organisational reforms, it must be stated that Plaid were organisationally more advanced than the SNP at the outset of devolution (see McAllister, 2001). The party adopted OMOV for the selection of candidates before the SNP did, and Plaid indeed

outperformed the SNP at the first round of devolved elections. Plaid's problems after the outset of devolution were strategic and revolved around whether to pursue governmental power or exist as a broader agenda-setting entity with more social movement characteristics (Elias, 2009c). As chapter 5 showed, government provided a section of the elite the opportunity to truly cement the idea that Plaid is a political party that's role in Welsh politics is to seek governmental office and replace Labour. The *Moving Forward* proposals must be seen in that light. Indeed, Plaid's new Labour, Leanne Wood, has talked at length about winning the 2016 Welsh election and replacing Labour as Wales' largest party. As much as the organisational reforms, theoretically, may make that job easier, they must also be seen as a process of cementing the party's strategic direction. Only time will tell whether or not this fissure in the party's strategic approach to politics will close, as it has largely done in the SNP, although the achievement of the referendum win (Wyn Jones and Scully, 2012) will add weight to the arguments coming from those who wish to see Plaid as a 'party of power'.

In terms of learning and adaptation, the reform process and subsequent changes to the party's structure is testament to Plaid's ability to modify itself in an attempt to be more successful. Unlike the SNP, it took governmental participation and a poor electoral result to initiate a process of reform. Despite the different triggers, everyday decision making and campaign strategy are now in fewer hands and the capacity of very active members to dominate party conference has been somewhat diminished. There has been a clear redefinition of the balance of power between Mair's (1994: 4) three organisational 'faces': the party in public office, supported by the party in central office, have certainly been granted a greater strategic role, while the most active members of the party on the ground have had their influence curbed via decreased opportunity to act as liabilities.

Chapter 8 – Organisational Reform in the SNP

Introduction

After a disappointing result at the 2003 Scottish election, the SNP began a process of organisational reform which was completed at a special conference held in Aberdeen in 2004. The reforms were designed to make the SNP a more efficient, effective and successful electoral machine, as well as aid the party's development from a party of protest to becoming a party of power (Mitchell et al, 2012). Despite retaining independence as the cornerstone of its identity as a political party, the SNP has become a different organisation in the sense that strategy now rests firmly in the hands of the party's leadership, the influence of activists over the party has diminished, and the party has become more disciplined in its approach to elections. Indeed, the SNP's historic majority in the 2011 Scottish election was, at least partly, attributable to its relative professional development which, as this chapter will argue, has improved the party's campaigning abilities.

This chapter will be organised into three main parts. The first will explore the intra-party pressures and problems that led to the reform process. The second part will examine the changes that were enacted in 2004 and the rationale behind them. The third part will examine what effect these changes have had on the SNP according to interview respondents. This will involve an examination of the changes of the internal culture of the SNP and the evolution of the party's strategic focus since that period. The chapter concludes by arguing that although the SNP has professionalised (see Russell. 2005 for a detailed account of the equivalent process in the Labour party), the primary goals of the SNP exist as a stabilising mechanism which allows the leadership flexibility to direct the party according to their own strategic initiatives around the more fixed objective of independence, and subsequently reconstitutes the asset-liability relationship (Scarrow, 1996) between members and elites.

A Party of Protest in a Changed Context

The creation of the devolved Scottish Parliament in 1999 provided the SNP with a new opportunity to promote its primary goals. According to Lynch (2002: 241), the creation of a Scottish Parliament changed the political fortunes of the party;

> The parliament provided the Nationalists with both a political forum and a constitutional mechanism through which to advance the case for independence and hasten its arrival. After years on the margins at Westminster the SNP was able to articulate its policies and constitutional preference with a Scottish parliament with responsibilities for key issues in Scottish life such as education, health, agriculture, law and order and the environment amongst others.

The opportunities of devolution were abundant and obvious, but challenges existed as well, particularly for the party's organisational structures. From a party that was largely a voluntary body before 1999, devolution transferred the *de facto* locus of power in the party away from its internal structures to the elected representatives in the Scottish parliament (Mitchell et al, 2012: 36). However, the party's constitution was not altered at this time to reflect the changing relevance of the SNPs position in Scottish politics. There were calls for reform of the party's organisational structures back in 1999 by a leading figure in the party, as Mitchell et al (2012: 37) describe;

> Mike Russell, SNP chief executive from 1994 to 1999, argued for an overhaul of the SNP's internal structure at a fringe meeting at the SNP's first conference after devolution. He noted that the party had gone through an 'almost unnoticed revolution' in the previous six months. From operating as an 'essentially extra-Parliamentary party' with only six MPs, it had become Scotland's main opposition but it had failed to take these changes into account in its own structures. Russell argued that party spokespersons, now predominantly MSPs, needed to be given more autonomy in making policy and that its conference should have 'overall supervision' but 'not line by line scrutiny'. He suggested a reduction in the number of national office bearers and that one-member-one-vote (OMOV) elections should be used for electing all party offices including candidate selections.

Russell's ideas were heavily criticised by many in the party at that time. However, the issue became prevalent again towards the end of the Scottish

parliament's first term. After the 2003 election, the party's leadership possessed the necessary political capital to push for organisational change and implement OMOV, amongst other things (Interview, 14th March 2013).

Intra-Party Tensions in 2002

The year or so leading up to the 2003 Scottish election was a difficult one for the SNP. For example, in the summer of 2002, the party was subject to internal tensions that did not escape the attention of the Scottish media. The most high-profile incident concerned Margo MacDonald, now an independent MSP for the Lothian region, when she was placed in fifth place on the party's list and was thus effectively deselected (The Scotsman, 11th July 2002). To be selected to stand on the list, candidates were selected by branch delegates at regional selection meetings. This process had been used for decades in the party, but in 2002 it led to a number of senior and capable MSP's being placed so far down the list that they were virtually deselected (Mitchell, 2002: 41-43). More importantly was the general issue surrounding the selection of candidates within the party (see Mitchell et al, 2012: 37-38). The Scotsman reported the following on the 19th of June, 2002;

> Mr Swinney's leadership was in turmoil as SNP activists appeared more intent on settling personal grudges than with a successful campaign for next year's Holyrood elections, with Andrew Wilson, the economic spokesman; Michael Russell, the education spokesman; and the popular maverick Margo MacDonald among those facing the scrap-heap.
>
> Mr Swinney stood accused of failing to seize the initiative on his election as leader and move the party towards a more moderate one member, one vote system, instead of leaving the initiative in the complex process with a handful of hardliners.
>
> The debacle makes it much more difficult for the SNP to mount a credible challenge next year, and there was jubilation in Labour ranks.
>
> The parliamentary careers of at least five SNP MSPs appear finished as a result of the bitter score-settling and backbiting of the selection process for next year's election, while five more are in serious jeopardy.
>
> Some of the SNP's brightest talents and most high-profile MSPs are among those under threat: as well as Mr Russell and Mr Wilson, the

> deputy presiding officer, George Reid, is in danger of losing his seat. (The Scotsman, 19th June 2002)

This quote highlights, in particular, the very public nature of the intra-party conflict within the SNP at this time. Furthermore, the relative de-selection of some of the party's most high-profile politicians was an obvious blow to the party's leadership and highlighted the fact that the leadership was relatively weak when compared to the party today. Indeed, as Mitchell et al (2012: 37-38) state, the 'main losers were 'Swinney supporters' and '[b]eing known to the activists was more important than having a high public profile.' The 2003 election subsequently proved disappointing for the SNP. Despite some optimism within the party at some of the progress made in some traditional Labour-voting constituencies (Interview, 11th June 2012), the election was a discouraging one on the whole. The SNP actually gained two seats in the constituency vote in 2003, but lost 10 on the regional list, a decline of 8 seats overall. In proportionate terms, the SNPs share of the vote was down 4.96% and 6.36% in the constituency vote and list vote respectively. The party's leadership was particularly concerned, with John Swinney stating the following when addressing the party's National Council on the 7th June, 2003;

> For the first time in 30 years we took seats from Labour and with just 23,000 more votes the SNP would have 21 not nine first past the post seats. But let's not kid ourselves. The hard reality for our party is this: in far too many areas of Scotland we lack that electoral credibility. (Swinney, 2003)

John Swinney's time as leader of the SNP was a difficult one, particularly when his leadership of the party was challenged by Bill Wilson, a Glasgow activist, who claimed that he had been urged to stand by grass-roots members in order to fight 'New Labourisation' in the party (BBC News, 25th July 2003; Mitchell et al, 2012: 38). This echoed similar comments made about Mike Russell back in 1999 when he suggested the party adopt OMOV for candidate selections (Ibid.: 37). There is a great deal of sympathy for Swinney amongst SNP elites, with one minister stating that she thought it probably 'wasn't the kind of thing he wanted to do' but, in doing so, he 'paved the way for our success more than he gets the credit for' (Interview, 13th

January 2012). One MSP refers to John Swinney as the SNP's very own Neil Kinnock figure who 'took all the stick from militants' and 'took on the party constitution to stop a small number of people in branches having too much power' (Interview, 22nd August 2011). Both Lynch (2013) and Mitchell et al (2012) comment on the importance of John Swinney's time as leader of the SNP in terms of the importance of the organisational reforms he was largely responsible in instigating.

The 2003 Election Result as a Legitimising Mechanism for Change

The 2003 election result, coupled with the intra-party difficulties experienced in the preceding year, legitimised a process of internal reform of the party's structures. It had become apparent with the party's leadership that reorganisation of the selection of candidates was a key priority for the party if it was to become a more efficient vote-winning, and thus seat-winning, organisation. The day after the 2003 election, John Swinney made a statement which would frame the priorities of his leadership for the next year;

> To our members I say: the SNP will always be the party of Independence. But if we want to do more than talk about it; if we want to achieve that historic goal, we must change. We have a constitution designed for a different political age. We are a national party without a national membership system. And in too many areas we have no effective party structure or party accountability. So the task now is to put the membership in the driving seat, to democratise, to connect much more fully with Scottish civic life, and to ensure all our Parliamentarians are totally focussed on the job at hand. It is time for root and branch rejuvenation of the party as we face up to the challenges of the modern political era. (SNP, 2003)

The process of internal reform was largely completed by April 2004, with the successful alterations to the party's constitution and standing orders in place by the end of that same year. The issue of internal reform was a very important one for the party's leadership, with Swinney particularly keen. His sentiments are summarised in a paper for the party's National Executive Committee;

> I am absolutely determined that the Party must grasp the thistle of internal reform now. For too long we have been trying to work with uncertain and unwieldy internal structures, and we cannot delay

> change any longer, if we are to put this Party on a footing to win the independence which we all seek. (SNP, 2004a)

Furthermore, Swinney dedicated a significant portion of his Spring Conference keynote address to the issue of internal reform, further highlighting the importance of the issue at the time. Indeed, Swinney made the link between the SNPs primary goal of independence and the need to reform the party's internal structures;

> Delegates, given those huge external challenges, some are asking why devote so much of this conference to our own constitution? And the simple answer is this: because none of what I have been talking about will happen unless we are in a position to make it happen. Changing the SNP is not an academic internal exercise. It is about freeing you, me, all of us, to campaign for Independence at this and every other election. It is about making this Party reflect what we are trying to achieve for our country. (Swinney, 2004)

Organisational Deficiencies and their Solutions

An internal consultation was held in 2003 which resulted in the proposed reforms in 2004 being: 'the introduction of One Member One Vote for certain Party selection and election processes; the reduction of the size of the NEC and the introduction of a role of Business Convener; the introduction of a new system of nominations for leadership contests; a code of conduct for members [...]; [and] a review of the Party's local structures in light of changing political boundaries.' (SNP, 2004a) Also significant was the proposal to create the post of 'party leader', as previously the party had a form of collective government with a 'convenor' at its head (Mitchell et al, 2012: 36). Changes to the party's constitution went before a special conference in Aberdeen in April 2004 (SNP, 2004b). The final reforms included streamlining the NEC and having fewer senior office bearers; the introduction of OMOV for the election of leader, deputy leader and in selecting candidates; the creation of the position of party 'Leader' with the power to appoint a Business Convener. These reforms were overwhelmingly backed at the special conference (Mitchell et al, 2012: 38).

Candidate Selection and the Shift to One-Member-One-Vote

The lead-up to the 2003 election, and the election itself, was a 'painful' period for the SNP (Interview, 2nd August 2012). What was highlighted was the 'detrimental effect a small number of individuals could have' on the party's campaigning abilities and 'wider morale' in general (Interview, 2nd August 2012). Indeed, the method through which candidates were selected prior to 2004 were described as 'bonkers' by a cabinet minister (Interview, 9th December 2011), with many activists having 'a lot of power' over the party leadership (Interview, 11th June 2012). Before 2004, candidates were chosen by branches, which meant that the most active members in the party were responsible for choosing those who would stand for election. Mitchell et al (2012: 37) describe the problems resulting from this system;

> Considerable time and effort was expended by SNP activists in battles over ranking candidates, depriving the SNP of efforts which would otherwise have been spent campaigning amongst the wider electorate. Accusations were made that new branches were established only to gain delegates for the election of list candidates. A number of List MSPs were effectively deselected by falling in the rankings to positions that made their return highly unlikely.

There is a shared understanding amongst SNP elites about how these structural arrangements affected the SNP. According to one minister, individuals who wished to be politicians before 2004 had to be 'focussed on working with activists' which led to an 'internal focus rather than an external one' (Interview, 16th November 2011). Now, candidates have to be 'externally focussed' because the party's reforms 'encourage this' (Interview, 16th November 2011). A cabinet minister remarked that the previous structures existed for a party that 'needed key activists', whereas now 'it is the machine itself that is formidable' (Interview, 9th December 2011). Because previously the party relied heavily on its activists, it 'didn't take a lot to throw a fairly major spanner in the works' (Interview, 2nd August 2012).

When asked about the 2004 reforms, the shift to One-Member-One-Vote (OMOV) was the most widely mentioned and important reform according to

interviewees. Currently, candidates are selected according to the following rules;

> All selections of parliamentary candidates will be carried out on the basis of one-member-one-vote using the principles of single transferable voting. Members will be made aware of the Scottish National Party's commitment to equality of opportunity and the need to ensure a broad mix of parliamentarians are elected to represent the diverse communities of Scotland. (SNP, date unknown (a): 5)

Opening up the selection process in this way is a significant change to the SNPs organisational structure in theoretical terms. Although it is outside the scope of this thesis to empirically test May's (1973) 'law' with regards to the SNP membership itself, the fact that the party's leadership felt it necessary to adopt such changes is nevertheless pertinent because the leadership viewed the structure of party opinion and the ability of that opinion to affect party strategy in terms similar to May's law. Furthermore, Kitschelt's (1989: 409-410) contribution states that parties which are 'loosely' organised, thus making penetration of 'middle-level' functions easier for more 'policy-pure' members (Pedersen, 2010), further highlights the theoretical justification for reforming the SNP in such a way. By using the wider membership as a legitimising mechanism, the party can front a message which is more likely to appeal to a larger number of the electorate. The party's campaigning capacity has been much improved by 'cutting away old practices' and producing a 'softer message', and 'John Swinney and Peter Murrel take the credit for this' (Interview, 22nd August 2011).

Koelble (1996) suggests that the tension between office-seeking and policy purity is a common one in political parties, and that 'failure' legitimises more activist supervision. The SNPs 2004 reforms reflect both of these theoretical expectations. Firstly the party was geared towards becoming a more valence orientated (Johns et al, 2009), and thus vote-seeking (Strøm and Müller, 1999), actor through efforts to restrict access to using conference, for example, to promote issues not in the interests of the leadership. Secondly, the creation of roles such as business convenor allows the leadership to feel comfortable in the knowledge that strictly party business is being addressed

effectively. This is in contrast to the period before the reforms when much of John Swinney's day was allegedly taken up by 'HQ stuff' (Interview, 2nd August 2012). This enabled the party to largely avoid the organisation 'vulnerabilities' being in government for the first time is expected to bring (Bolleyer, 2008; Deschouwer, 2008).

Reforming the National Executive Committee

The National Executive Committee (NEC) played an influential role in the SNP's strategy and development throughout its history (Lynch, 2002; Mitchell, 1996) By 2004, there was recognition that the NEC had to be reformed, and the time had come to 'slim down' the NEC in order to allow the 'leadership to act with a bit more leeway' (Interview, 2nd August 2012). This particular reform was a key part of Swinney's reform agenda, although there is evidence that, in the face of 'strong feeling in the Party', the initial proposals regarding the NEC were altered towards having less parliamentarians as members 'so that it reflects a wider cross section of activists'. (SNP, 2004a) In effect, these changes have meant that the NEC has 'receded' and 'simply administrates' because 'cabinet makes the big decisions' with regards to party strategy (Interview, 9th December 2011).

Central Administration of Membership

The collection of party membership fees was highlighted as a big issue before 2004. Previously, SNP Headquarters sent membership cards to branches who would then sell them locally. Such a method was in operation since the 1960s when branch numbers increased rapidly. Lynch (2002: 109) states that 'branch management of membership was not very efficient and many of the members who drifted into the SNP in these years quickly drifted out again.' This system also meant that it was virtually impossible for the central party to know how many members it had with any real precision. Furthermore, the previous system was open to abuse because setting up a 'ghost branch' was possible for the candidate ranking process and thus 'candidates could find votes for themselves' (Interview, 2nd August 2012). One reason for changing to a Central Administration of Membership (CAM) system was to 'cut this out' (Interview, 2nd August 2012). However, perhaps

a more pressing reason for the shift to CAM was a financial one. Indeed, 'party membership was relatively low' around 2003, but having a CAM system meant that members could be 'engaged with' and allowed a 'greater decision-making capacity' which would have been impossible under the old system (Interview, 11th June 2012). This in turn allowed 'the party centrally to have much greater knowledge of members' and an increased financial capacity which 'gave it a campaigning capacity that it never had before.' (Interview, 11th June 2012) CAM allows the centre to 'keep members up-to-date' because most members aren't active in branches (Interview, 24th September 2011). Also, the CAM system is simply a more effective method of collecting money for the party's coffers. After the 1999 election for example, the SNP was 'stretched to the limit' in terms of its financial situation (Lynch, 2002: 234). CAM means that the previously inconsistent and unreliable of party funding is replaced with something that is more stable, predictable and generates higher yields (see Mitchell et al, 2012: 40 for an overview of the improved financial situation for the SNP as a result of CAM).

Standing Orders and Agenda Committee and its Role in Party Conference

The reform of the Standing Orders and Agenda Committee (SOAC) was, although appearing a rather banal reform, was actually very important in improving the party's image (Interview, 2nd August 2012). Previously, the composition of SOAC was determined at the party's National Council meeting which meant that if a majority could be mustered then you had control over this important committee (Interview, 2nd August 2012). The 2004 reforms changed this so that elections to SOAC were decided at Conference. This meant that it was practically impossible to control a majority because there would be literally hundreds of delegates voting (Interview, 2nd August 2012). The remit of SOAC is as follows:

> [T]o decide whether resolutions, amendments, nominations and other matters pertaining to the [Annual] Conference are in accordance with the Constitution and Rules and Standing Orders of the Party; [and] to revise and amend resolutions and amendments or to incorporate in one resolution a number of similar resolutions from several notifiable bodies, and to rewrite the resolutions received, provided always that

> the principles underlying the resolution or amendment shall not be infringed. (SNP, date unknown (b))

It is clear from this quote that the role of SOAC is an important one. Any issue that is to come before the party's Annual Conference has to go through SOAC. Because a party conference is one of the most covered events in a political party's calendar, it is in the leadership's interest to make sure that the public see that party in the best light possible. Under the previous arrangements, SOAC could be used as a platform to get issues on to the conference floor that were not the in the leadership's interest, such as NATO and the Monarchy (Interview, 2nd August 2012). According to an MSP, some within the party 'don't get why conference doesn't have the holy word', although most understand that this is simply 'the price you pay for being in government' (Interview, 22nd August 2011). A cabinet minister suggested that it is not reasonable for conference to 'expect things' from the Scottish Government, and that conference is an important 'talent spotting' forum for the party's leadership (Interview, 9th December 2011).

What kind of party is the SNP now?

Organisational reform has transformed the SNP. Although there is still a strand of opinion within the party that believes organisational change has not affected the party a great deal, the dominant view appears to be that of a party that has changed. The party has become more hierarchical and conducive to careerism, but at the same time it has become a more 'outward looking' organisation that is more in tune with the concerns of the electorate. Despite these changes, the party's annual conference is still acts as the sovereign heart of the party. The leadership's decision motion to end the party's long-held policy against NATO membership after independence showed that, despite professionalization and its results, the party still retains important elements of its pre-devolution identity.

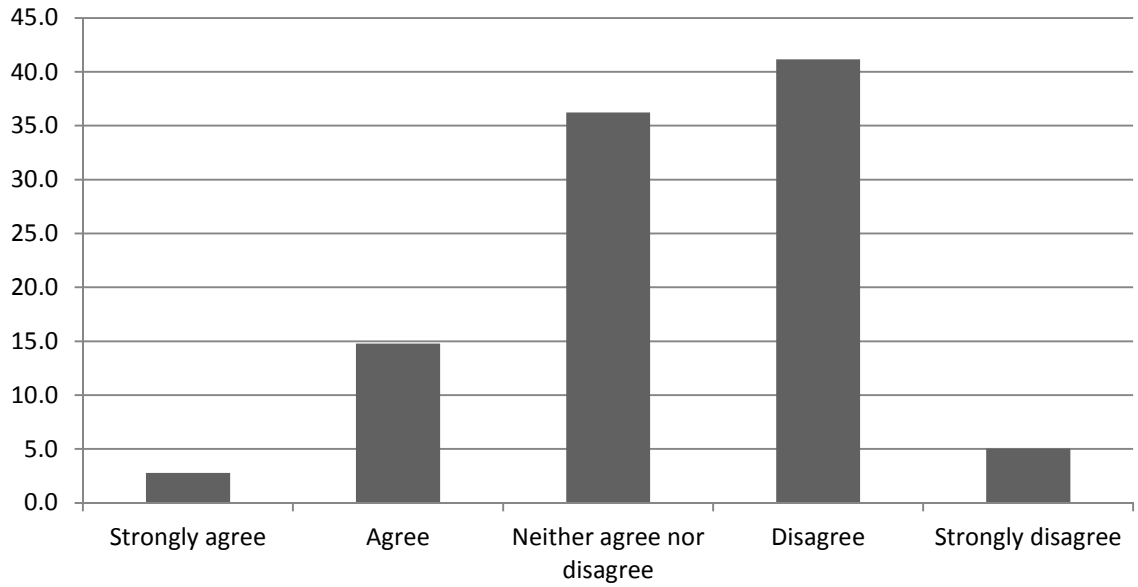
A More Hierarchical Organisation?

Interviewees were asked about how the SNP has changed as a result of its internal reforms. In response to being asked whether the SNP had become a

more hierarchical organisation, a Cabinet Minster stated that it had, claiming that if this was not the case 'you would have anarchy' (Interview 9th December 2011). Using a specific example from Government, the same respondent stated that the decision to shift towards a single police service and a single fire service in Scotland was taken without an internal debate because the party no longer 'has the luxury to go to National Council and have a discussion.' (Interview 9th December 2011). Furthermore, 'internal knowledge' is required to take the correct decision on matters such as these. (Interview 9th December 2011). One MSP stated that the party has 'certainly become more centralised' since 2004, and a result of this is that policy is no longer 'a conference issue' (Interview, 18th August 2011). Indeed, the same MSP used the example of the Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Scotland) Bill, commonly known as the Sectarian Bill, to illustrate how policy is often made. He stated that '[Alex] Salmond decided that we were going to have a sectarian bill without consultation', with the party then being put in a situation where is 'almost has to' support the decision (Interview, 18th August 2011). Indeed, he stated that this is 'quite a shift' to how the party previously went about its policy making business, and this is either 'positive' or 'unhealthy', depending ones point of view (Interview, 18th August 2011). Although the vast majority of MSP's interviewed believed that the 2004 reforms were a positive development, disillusionment with the party's leadership still exists and is highlighted in a report from National office bearers of the party. According to one individual;

> For the last year, as I have since May 2006, I have attempted to ensure that no division would arise between the Government and the Party, which I took, and take, as the greatest danger to our cause. But I have been aware that, more and more, the leadership do not really want to hear the NECs views where they differ from the Cabinet's. They give information on what they have decided but that is all. Any who may disagree are marked down, as I have been, as not "team players" - like the demand in the early 80s for "maturity" - meaning that they don't agree with you but are not willing to debate and vote on the matter in Council or Conference, which are the only bodies with the authority to change Party policy. (SNP, 2012a: 9)

Figure 12: Percentage of Party Members who Agree or Disagree that Ordinary Members do not have Enough Say Over Party Policy (Source: SNP Membership Study) N=6693



One MSP bemoaned this situation to a degree, stating that, of all the 2004 reforms, which incidentally were 'the right thing to do' overall, 'the policy making structures' caused the most 'worry' (Interview, 19th September 2011). Although she states that she is not 'naive enough to think that the party gets together four times a year to decide policy', she does 'want the party to feel that it is the ethos of what [members] want.' (Interview, 19th September 2011) The findings are not reflective of the party's membership however (see figure 12). Indeed, although positive of CAM overall, she stated that 'there is a degree of truth' in the notion that 'the party only hear from the leadership when they want money' (Interview, 19th September 2011). This view does not reflect the membership's opinion, however. According to data from Mitchell et al's (2012) SNP membership study, the vast majority (67.3%) disagree that they party only contacts them when they want money (see figure 13 below).

Figure 13: Percentage of SNP Membership Agreeing that the Membership is only Contacted when the Party Wants Money (Source: SNP Membership Study) N=6715

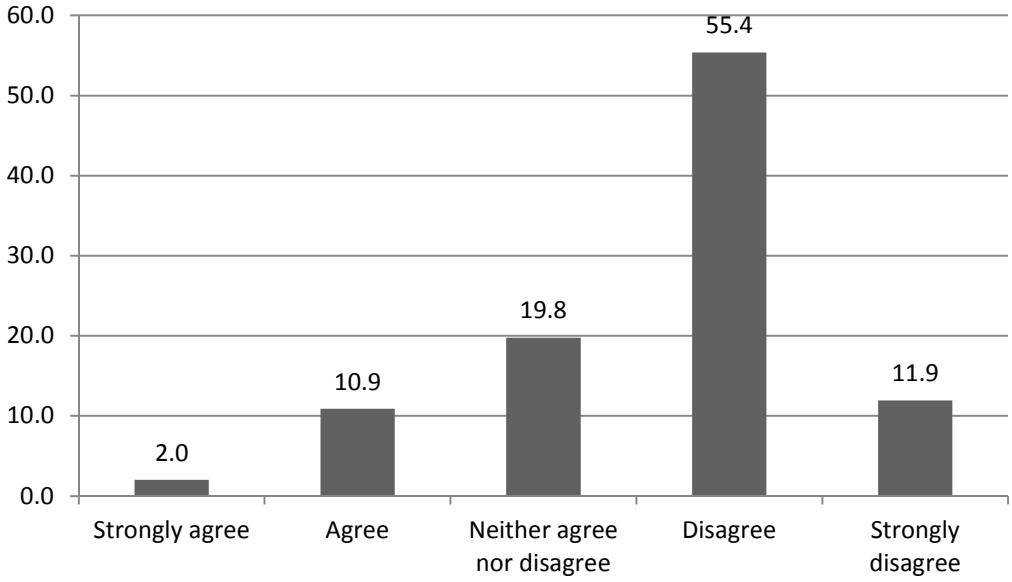


Figure 14: Percentage of SNP Members Categorised by Local Party Meeting Attendance who Agree that the Party Contacts them only when it Need Money within Groups Depending on Local Party Meeting Attendance (Source: SNP Membership Study) N=6635

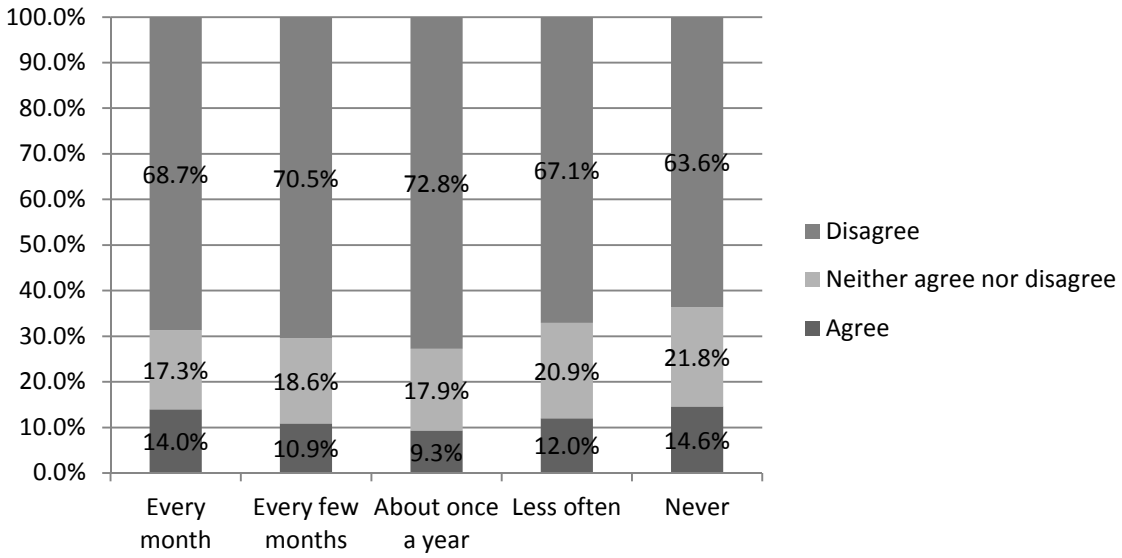


Figure 14 above considers whether the party only contacts members for money according to how often they attend local party meetings. The groups who agree most that the party only contacts them for money are those who are least and most active. However, they are a minority, and the vast majority do not think the party only contacts them for money. Those members

who attend local party meetings every month are the group who might have felt that the party only contacted them for money considering that it was the group which had its influence curbed by the organisational reforms. However, this expectation is not met according to the SNP membership data.

Careerism and 'Men in Suits'

Alongside a greater degree of leadership control, the SNP has been affected by other aspects of professionalization. One example mentioned by an MSP is the notion that the SNP has become a party of 'men in suits' (Interview, 25th August 2011). She stated that, although the 2004 reforms and governmental status have accelerated this process, 'around 1997, [the SNP] began to change' (Interview, 25th August 2011). From previously being a party that 'wasn't professional like today', the SNP now attracts 'people straight out of university who go into research jobs and then into parliament, most of whom are men.' (Interview, 25th August 2011) This has led to 'the grassroots getting left out a little' when it comes to directing the activities of the party (Interview, 25th August 2011). A Cabinet Minister alluded to this notion, saying that the leadership 'can't push the grassroots too far', but at the same time it is important for the leadership to have 'the flexibility to act, not to have an open debate in National Council' as an alternative (Interview, 9th December 2011). The problem with this situation is that the SNP is in danger of 'going down the same route as other parties' and welcome influential people into powerful positions who do perhaps do not have the 'party's ethos at heart' (Interview, 25th August 2011). However, another Cabinet Minister stressed that the balance between the SNP as a political party and as a movement is a good one, with 'the role of Business Convenor [...] very helpful in providing the link between the party and the Government.' (Interview, 14th September 2011).

Despite agreement that the party was more hierarchical than it had been in the past, the SNP is largely held accountable by its primary goal (Interview, 13th September 2011). Furthermore, 'the Cabinet [is] not here to manage a devolved Scotland' and that the 'mechanism for independence is through

electoral success.' (Interview, 13th September 2011) Furthermore, he described the SNP as, despite internal reform and governmental status, as 'still [having] the heart of a movement.'

The SNP achieved a great deal of electoral success in 2007 and 2011 which, as admitted by some interviewees, would perhaps not have been possible if not for the reforms in 2004. Mitchell et al (2012: 49) largely agree with this assertion;

> Devolution may have changed the opportunity structure but this in itself was not enough to bring the SNP to power. The legacy of its constitution, suited to days when it was either a pre- or precarious Parliamentary party, limited its ability to take advantage of the new opportunities offered by devolution. Some senior party figures who advocated change wanted a more professional organisation but others also saw reform as a means of shifting power within the party away from activists towards Parliamentarians and ensuring that a more cohesive group of Parliamentarians was returned. While other factors were important in determining the SNP's success in 2007, its transformation from what was essentially an amateur activist model to an electoral professional model played a significant part.

The SNP's transformation is evident by its ability to appeal to voters as a party that would deliver competent government, not Scottish independence (Johns et al, 2009; 2013). However, is clear that the SNPs primary goal of Scottish independence is, at the very least, a check on this process. The party's goal of Scottish independence is an indivisible objective that is necessary for retaining and mobilising its membership into, at the very least, paying their monthly fees into the party's coffers. An autonomist party cannot simply reject its primary goal, but it can reform its internal structures so that the party's leadership has more flexibility over the party's strategic direction, resulting in the primary goal being perhaps less prominent than some active members of the party would prefer.

As discussed in chapter 6, the SNPs parliamentary group has been exceptionally disciplined since the party came to government in 2007. Although minority government is an important factor in fostering a disciplined environment, it has also been argued that the goal of independence has

fostered a sense of unity and common direction. As one MSP put it, the party 'lost its gung-ho attitude' after 2004, with 'less individual freedom' as a result (Interview, 8th September 2011). However, on being asked whether this is a problem, he replied 'No, we joined for independence, it's a price worth paying, it doesn't bother me one bit' (Interview, 8th September 2011).

The findings here reflect those of Johns et al (2012) who have analysed the gender gap with regards to electoral support for the SNP. Although this section has analysed the internal workings of the party as opposed to problems regarding its electoral appeal, it is nevertheless important to hypothesise the possible links. Although analysis of such links is outside the scope of this thesis, it is not out with the realms of possibility that the masculine nature of the internal politics somehow 'filters' through to the electorate and damages somewhat its electoral prospects with women.

Becoming a More 'Outward-Looking' Party

The SNP's internal reforms have led to the SNP being more capable of understanding and reflecting the everyday concerns of voters. The SNP began to realise that to win elections they would 'have to stop looking inward and start speaking a language that resonates with voters.' (Interview, 13th September 2011) Before the SNP realised this, they were only 'talking about stuff that was relevant to ourselves' (Interview, 13th September 2011). He went on to state that 'when you start looking outward you then behave and speak in a different way'. (Interview, 13th September 2011) This was hindered in the past because 'those who wanted to be politicians' had to 'focus on activists' that resulted in 'an internal focus rather than an external one' (Interview, 16th November 2011).

Such sentiments were expressed publically in 2003 by the party leader at the time, John Swinney. In a statement made after the 2003 Scottish elections he said;

> If the results last night tell us anything, they tell us this: the SNP is no longer a party of protest - but we are not yet viewed as a party of government. Let me make this clear - for the SNP there is no going

> back. Our future rests - not in attracting votes to protest AGAINST the government - but in attracting votes to BECOME the government. And that means the SNP must behave and act at all times as an alternative government in waiting. To do that - to win the trust of the people - we must develop our arguments and we must transform our party - both inside and outside the Scottish Parliament... To our members I say: the SNP will always be the party of Independence. But if we want to do more than talk about it; if we want to achieve that historic goal, we must change. (SNP, 2003; emphasis original)

This statement signifies an explicit understanding from the SNP itself that it had to 'normalise' in terms of how it presented itself to the Scottish electorate. The party's experience in government is merely a continuation of this strategy. By becoming a competent party of government and appealing to voters on a valence basis (Johns et al, 2009), the SNP has made itself a 'mainstream' political party that's electoral success is not hindered by the existence of inherent niche characteristics. Despite this, the party has had to make strides towards its primary goal nevertheless and has used the apparatus of the Scottish Government to do this whilst in a minority situation between 2007 and 2011. Since the 2011 election the situation has changed somewhat, with a referendum on Scottish independence a certainty (HM Government and Scottish Government, 2012), meaning that the SNP have now to engage the electorate on positional grounds as well as valence ones (Clark et al, 2009: 30-31).

The NATO debate – The Old Party Resurfacing?

Despite professionalization and the resulting changing to the party's internal structures, party conference is still the ultimate decision making body in the party. Indeed, since the 2004 reforms there has been very little issues resulting in internal disputes. This changed in October 2012 with the proposal to change the party's long standing opposition to NATO membership on independence. In a policy update forwarded by Angus Robertson MP and Angus MacNeil MP, the proposal put before the party's annual conference was a significant alteration of existing party policy. The most controversial aspect of the policy update was;

> Security cooperation in our region functions primarily through NATO, which is regarded as the keystone defence organisation by Denmark, Norway, Iceland and the United Kingdom. The SNP wishes Scotland to fulfil its responsibilities to neighbours and allies. On independence Scotland will inherit its treaty obligations with NATO. An SNP Government will maintain NATO membership subject to an agreement that Scotland will not host nuclear weapons and NATO continues to respect the right of members to only take part in UN sanctioned operations. (SNP, 2012b: 9)

Indeed, the policy update was swiftly rebuked by a number of key figures in the party, including a large number of MSPs. An amendment to the policy update was tabled which read;

> As NATO continues to be a nuclear weapons based alliance, Conference resolves that the SNP position will continue to be that Scotland should not remain a member of NATO, but instead cooperate as part of the Partnership for Peace programme and be a full member of the common Security and Defence policy (CSDP) of the European union and the Organisation for Security and cooperation in Europe. (SNP, 2012b: 10)

Mitchell et al (2012: 30-31) make reference to a senior source in the SNP who states that opposition to nuclear weapons is in the party's 'DNA' which has resulted in few efforts to overturn opposition to NATO. However, they also find that opposition to NATO within the membership is not so clear cut, with 53% of the party believing membership is in Scotland's strategic interest (Ibid: 116). Incidentally, the party's leadership succeeded in changing the party's policy position on NATO membership, albeit extremely narrowly.[29]

Although the party's leadership achieved its goal of changing the SNPs policy on NATO membership, it led to two MSPs, Jean Urquhart and John Finnie, resigning the party whip. The issue was also extensively covered in the Scottish press. It was indeed the first time that such a controversial issue had gone before the party's annual conference since the 2004 reforms. However, it is important to note that such a contentious issue arose at the behest of the party's leadership. According to the opinion of an individual writing in an internal report, the party leadership (specifically, the Cabinet), is

[29] The party voted 394 to 365 in favour of changing the party's policy on NATO membership.

known for keeping issues off the conference agenda, but '[the immediate exception to this tendency is the NATO resolution'. Furthermore, '...there has been a refusal to ask Conference, or Council, to change policy on referenda on the monarchy, or on EU membership' (SNP, 2012a: 9).

The NATO example raises two points. One the one hand, it highlights the ability of the party's leadership to use the so-called second face of power (Lukes, 2005) and maintain control over the party's conference agenda. Presumably, the reforms to SOAC previously discussed are related here. The decision to put a change before conference was one that was made by the leadership. On the other hand, the fact that the issue was so contentious and divisive is testament to the ongoing importance of primary goals. Although not a primary goal in itself, an independent Scotland free of nuclear weapons is a principled stance that is critical to the type of Scotland many in the SNP want to promote. This is undoubtedly tied in to the furtherance of Scottish interests, and many in the party will not believe nuclear weapons to be in the interests of the Scottish nation. The flexibility and the pragmatism of party members has clear limits because independence exists as something more than just a neutral status: it is value laden. Although the 2004 reforms have led to a party that is more leadership orientated and less reliant on active members, the primary goal of the party is a constant reminder of the limits to which the leadership can go with regards to the alteration of party policy.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed organisational reform in the SNP, outlining the internal problems the SNP faced in 2002, the reasons for reform, the reforms themselves, and some of the effects that the reforms have had on the party. The SNP's organisational adaptation to devolution was anticipatory (Bolleyer, 2007) in stark contrast to Plaid's. The reforms granted the parties leadership with much for freedom and authority, and meant that difficult decisions that would arise in government, such as deciding not to table the referendum and

creating a single fire and police service, could be made without recourse to previously important decision making bodies such as the NEC.

The SNP's performance at the 2003 Scottish election, coupled with the intra-party hostilities leading up that performance, providing legitimate grounds for the party's leadership to fundamentally re-organise the SNP's internal structures. John Swinney led from the front, seeing the process as a route towards governmental participation. Indeed, he saw organisational reform as an essential component of the party's route towards government, and ultimately independence. By adopting OMOV and reforming bodies such as the NEC and SOAC, the party became a more professional and hierarchical organisation. Just like Plaid almost a decade later, the party reconstituted the relationship between the party on the ground, the party in central office and the party in public office (Mair, 1994: 4) firmly towards the latter two, with party HQ working to support and free up the party's leadership to make strategic decisions as it saw fit.

The organisational reforms that the SNP underwent between 2003 and 2004 were critical in the party's development towards being an office-seeking entity (Mitchell et al, 2012). This was a difficult period for the party (Lynch, 2013) and it eventually led to Swinney's resignation. However, the findings in this chapter, as well as those in chapter 6, supplement Mitchell et al's (2012) analysis and indeed build on them. This will be discussed at length in the conclusion.

For about 6 years the authority of the party's leadership went unchallenged. However, the democratic heart of the SNP is still party conference, and the decision by the leadership to change the party's policy on NATO membership showed the power that party members still yield. Although the leadership achieved its aim of changing party policy to that which now favours NATO membership on independence, the vote was close and highlighted at least some of the limits of leadership power. Despite adapting and learning from the experience of 2002, the SNP has retained some its core organisational features, with party conference being the most important one. Furthermore,

the fact that NATO membership is a principal which, apart from being important in its own right, is intimately tied up to the vision of the type of independence many in the SNP seek is indicative of the limits to the pragmatic compromise that members are willing over independence.

Chapter 9 – Conclusion

Introduction

This chapter represents the concluding part of the thesis. The previous chapters have aimed to provide theoretical direction to the research; provide some background on both Plaid and the SNP; describe the methodological approach; and present empirical analysis on both parties in an attempt to answer the following question: how have Plaid and the SNP learned and adapted to the changed opportunity structure of devolution? The purpose of this chapter is to provide a definitive answer to that question.

The chapter will be split into six sections. The first two will consider governmental participation and organisational reform in Plaid and the SNP in turn. This will involve a summary of the empirical findings, a theoretical assessment of their significance, and a direct comparison between the two cases in this comparative case study. The third section will provide comparison with other parties in order to ascertain how unique or common their experience actually is. The fourth section aims to draw the previous three sections together in order to address the research question. The fifth section will provide an overview of the most recent literature on Plaid and the SNP and will critically assess this literature in light of the findings in this thesis. The sixth section will conclude the chapter and also outline how this research can be built upon in the future by providing potential research agendas involving these two parties.

Governmental Participation

Taking up governmental office was a significant step in the history of Plaid and the SNP. Aside from the fact it was for the first time, it was also the first time that two parties who fundamentally opposed the constitutional status quo had the capacity to actually enact reforms themselves from a position of governmental power. In the case of Wales, it is important to state that a significant number of politicians from different parties in Wales were unhappy

with the model of devolution that had been legislated in 1998. That said, it is only Plaid that advocates complete independent statehood for Wales.

Both parties in government had to reconcile competing and often contradictory objectives. Thus, they were both subject to the trade-offs expected by Strøm and Müller (1999). Furthermore, both parties aimed to gain credibility from being in government. There was a sense in both parties that government would finally show sceptical elements of the electorate that they were capable of governing. Both parties were forced to adapt to the context of government and adapt accordingly, whilst giving the impression that they were changed parties so as to reassure a potentially sceptical electorate. Governmental office was a distinct opportunity to do this.

Policy, Office and Votes – Making Trade-Offs and Choosing Between Objectives

As claimed by Elias and Tronconi (2011a), Plaid and the SNP were subject to the same pressures as any other party type. According to Strøm and Müller (1999), these pressures take on the form of strategic trade-offs between policy, office and vote-seeking behaviour. Both Plaid and the SNP experienced such trade-offs as parties of government.

Due to the importance of the referendum for Plaid, the party put a huge amount of effort into achieving a 'yes' vote. However, governmental status placed strain on Plaid's leadership structures to the extent that a tension occurred between 'party' and 'government'. Ieuan Wyn Jones' role as DFM and Minister for the Economy and Transport meant that a vacuum developed at the head of the party organisation. A lack of delegation ensued which meant the party was 'left behind' somewhat at the expense of governmental business. The emphasis on achieving a positive result in the referendum put further strain on the party's organisational structures and exposed a profound organisational vulnerability (Bolleyer, 2008: Deschouwer, 2008). The party's leadership structures did not allow the party to both pursue its policy aims as a government and its electoral aims as a party. The party successfully used its coalition 'weight' (Bolleyer, 2007) and set up monitoring structures (Müller

and Meyer, 2010) so as to make sure its coalition partner kept to their end of the coalition bargain, but it was unable to use this success for electoral gain.

Whilst in government, Plaid sacrificed vote-seeking capacity, both unintentionally and knowingly, in order to make sure the referendum was delivered. Putting priority on the referendum over electoral success provides credence to Elias and Tronconi's (2011a: 519) argument that autonomist parties are often very effective in forcing state-wide parties to adopt their agenda. Put another way, they used their 'blackmail potential' to great effect in keep Labour to task over the referendum. In practical terms, prioritising this objective over another will ultimately mean that more time, effort and resources are devoted to this end. Indeed, it was Labour that was able to benefit electorally in 2011, despite a role as facilitators of constitutional change rather than drivers of it. As a result, Plaid's historical 'symbiotic relationship' with Labour (McAllister, 2001: 215) was reaffirmed in the One Wales Government. Whilst Plaid appear to have provided the impetus for constitutional changes and reform of Welsh language policy, Labour took the credit as the party 'standing up' for Wales. Plaid were therefore unable to present themselves as the most able party able to protect Wales from the Conservative-led coalition government at the UK-level, and by adapting to government for policy ends forsook a critical element of their identity as an autonomist party.

Literature on autonomist parties in government (Elias and Tronconi, 2011a; Toubeau, 2011) suggests that their primary goal success often comes in the form of forcing state-wide parties to adopt their agenda and initiate that reform on their behalf. In this case, Plaid institutionalised this relationship through their association with Labour in government. By monitoring all communications and placing priority on being a competent and successful policy-seeking party of government, the party fulfilled the above assumptions rather naturally. As a result, and despite being successful in policy terms, political success (McConnell, 2010) in the form of electoral success eluded Plaid. One major explanation for this is the importance of primary goals.

There was a sense within the party that the chance of government had to be seized, and so some concrete progress towards the party's primary goals was crucial. The One Wales Government provided the capacity for this to happen. The party's membership therefore supported a coalition with Labour in order to deliver the referendum. Indeed, it may be a long time before Plaid can ever enter into government again, and so the sense of urgency and the need to make sure that governmental status is not wasted were strong motivations for the party's leadership.

There is no reason why Plaid could not have developed a more effective vote-seeking strategy that may have given them a greater amount of electoral success. Literature on junior partners in coalition does suggest that they tend to lose out disproportionately *vis-a-vis* their larger partners (Beulens and Hino, 2008). Furthermore, the notion that some second-order election effects permeated the 2011 Welsh election (McAllister and Cole, 2012) meant that the election was fought mainly in terms of UK-wide and non-devolved issues. This was unfavourable for Plaid and suggests that electoral success may have eluded them, regardless of how effective their vote-seeking strategy was. Compared to the very 'Scottish' 2011 Scottish election, the 2011 election in Wales was less 'Welsh' and so more permeable to UK-wide factors that helped determine electoral behaviour (Scully, 2013). Nevertheless, the existence of organisational vulnerability (Bollyer, 2008; Deschouwer, 2008) highlights the weakness of Plaid's organisational capacity to be a party of government that could mount an effective vote-seeking strategy. The party's internal review and reform process which began after the 2011 election (see chapter 7) shows the process of learning from and adapting to the institutional context of Welsh devolution and the potential of governmental status in the future.

The situation for the SNP was markedly different. A major point of departure with regards to the two parties is the fact that the SNP was the largest party in the Scottish Parliament in 2007 and governed alone. The parliamentary arithmetic, coupled with the adversarial nature of Scottish politics (Mitchell,

2010), meant that a policy seeking strategy was always going to be difficult. At the outset, the SNP promised to hold a referendum on independence, but the bill was never brought before parliament. The decision, made by the party's leadership, was based upon the notion that had the bill been defeated, which was very likely, it would have provided ammunition for the SNP's opponents and demoralised the membership. Unlike Plaid, the SNP did not have the legislative capacity to enact primary goal policy. The focus therefore became one used the capacity of the Scottish Government to produce material on constitutional change and carry out the *National Conversation.* The SNP used the capacity of governmental office when it could not embark on a policy-seeking strategy.

Although the SNP's period in office from 2007 to 2011 did not coincide with any great shift in support for independence, it did allow the party, through the National Conversation, to play an agenda-setting role in terms of constitutional change (Harvey and Lynch, 2012). The party was able to do this without resorting to legislation, and only needed to straddle the fairly minor hurdle of gaining funding for such enterprises through parliament. The value of governmental office was of great importance to the SNP: without the necessary majority in parliament to pursue some of its preferred policy aims, particularly a referendum, the party placed heavy emphasis on its credentials as a competent party of devolved government, and thus on vote-seeking behaviour.

Policy is undoubtedly important to the SNP, so it is important to disentangle the party's constitutional aims from its 'everyday' policy profile. Indeed, the SNP were effective in developing a policy profile which maximised their vote-seeking potential which was separate from independence. Policy for popularity took precedence, at least when it came to electioneering, over policy of principle. The SNP have tried to be deliberately popular in order to maximize the potential amount of votes they could win at the 2011 Scottish election. The capturing of political office was crucial for the SNP so that they could use it to instrumentally pursue their constitutional aims. The party's

deliberate attempts to be as popular as possible, and therefore seek as many votes as possible, suggests the balance of policy, office and vote-seeking behaviour erring on the side of office and vote-seeking. That said, the SNP's second term in office is proving to be almost completely dominated by its primary goal of independence because of its single party majority status and the signing of the Edinburgh Agreement.

Although the SNP did not hide from the issue of independence, the party was very much aware that winning a devolved election and promoting constitutional change are two separate things. An element of 'primary goal detachment' occurred, involving the use vague and non-specific language around the issue of independence, focussing on winning votes rather than necessarily engaging in debates on independence as a strategic imperative, and highlighting the referendum as a safety mechanism for those voters who were willing to vote SNP but were perhaps unconvinced by the case for independence. The SNP focussed on promoting itself as a competent party of government (Johns et al, 2013) rather than as an autonomist party committed to fundamental constitutional change. Winning votes and capturing governmental office was the party's strategic imperative, and it adapted its strategy and political tactics accordingly.

Both parties adapted fairly well, at least initially, to the governmental circumstances in which they found themselves. Despite being in government for the first time and thus open to a range of 'vulnerabilities' (Bolleyer, 2008; Deschouwer, 2008; Buelens and Hino, 2008), both parties learned from the experience and adapted accordingly. In Plaid's case, adapting accordingly meant placing heavy emphasis on primary goal policy-seeking capacity in the form of the referendum which, because of its close proximity to the 2011 Welsh election, hindered the party detaching from government and facilitated a trade-off in the form of an effective vote-seeking strategy. The party's electoral setback in 2011, at least partly facilitated by a failure to detach from government and formulate an effective electoral campaign, instigated a further process of adaptation in the shape of organisational reform as a result

of the weaknesses in the party's structures that were exposed in 2011. The SNP, on the contrary, were able to detach independence from their campaign and focus on defending their governmental record, therefore maximising their vote-seeking potential .

Both parties can be described as successful in government. McConnell's (2010) distinction between 'policy success' and 'political success' is useful here in that Plaid can be ascribed to the former and the SNP to the latter. Despite the setback electorally, Plaid were successful in making sure the referendum was delivered and won, that the Welsh language was given equal status to English, and that the Holtham Commission (2010) be set up which recommended more powers be devolved to the NAW. Plaid has clearly made steps towards its primary goals. The SNP have been politically successful: the party won a historic majority at the 2011 Scottish election and has made sure that the constitutional question is at the forefront of Scottish politics, perhaps more so than at any stage in its modern history. However, policy success in the shape of primary goals eluded the SNP in its first term in office. As a result of its political success, however, the party has managed to secure a referendum on independence in 2014, and has achieved as much as it can in terms of primary goals considering that they still require a majority in that referendum. Despite this, a paradox has resulted from the SNP's strategic approach: the party has actually strengthened devolution in the eyes of the Scottish electorate, a point which will be discussed below.

Changing as a Result of Government – The Search for Credibility

Devolution changed the prospects of Plaid and the SNP. Both parties, on the whole, saw the creation of the NAW and the Scottish parliaments respectively as potential platforms for achieving their primary goals. Governmental office was a crucial aspect of this, as discussed above. However, another important aspect of being in government for these parties was the potential to show the electorate that they could be trustworthy, competent parties of government. Furthermore, for Plaid at least, it was an

opportunity to show their own members that government was a positive development and that real progress could be made as part of it.

Plaid saw governmental office as an opportunity to show the electorate, and indeed its own membership that it was a 'normal' (Hepburn, 2009) political party. Governmental office was a mechanism through which the party's leadership could show sceptical elements of the party membership that government was a positive and worthwhile endeavour. In terms of the electorate, by being in government and doing a creditable job Plaid's leadership believed that the party could directly address those who criticised the party as being inherently unable to govern competently and sensibly, as well as overcome some of the stereotypes of Plaid as simply a party for Welsh speakers from the North and West of Wales. However, it is widely conceded in the party that the decision to go into government with Labour, and thus lose out on the chance to have a Plaid FM, meant that this strategy was always going to have a lesser impact than if Ieuan Wyn Jones had headed a rainbow government as FM. Plaid's leadership, particularly Wyn Jones, remained largely unknown among the wider public and thus widespread electoral credit could not be apportioned. Despite a coalition with Labour being able to offer the incentive of a referendum on primary law-making powers, Plaid and its leadership found itself taking a backseat role while Labour's leader and FM, Carwyn Jones, stole the headlines. This is undoubtedly the price that Plaid had to pay in order to get a successful outcome in the referendum.

Furthermore, criticism has been levelled at the ministerial portfolios that Plaid held in government. Specifically, the decision to take on both Rural Affairs and Heritage and Culture was seen, by some, as simply reinforcing the stereotype that Plaid is a party that is only concerned with farming and the Welsh language. Literature on coalition government states that ministers can have a strong influence on their portfolio (Laver & Shepsle, 1990: 874; Hindmoor, 2006: 62). Coupled with Plaid's historical attachment to the Welsh language and its electoral strength in many parts of rural Wales, it was no

surprise that they did take on these two portfolios. Considering the literature on party membership, it is reasonable to assume the persual of 'autonomist' primary goals through such portfolios would be welcomed by a large swathe of Plaid's membership. Unfortunately, suitable data does not exist to test this assumption.

At an elite level, the decision to take on both of these particular portfolios was not unanimously welcomed. The idea that these portfolios reinforce the stereotypes which are perceived to damage Plaid's electoral prospects is one which is not a peripheral one. Indeed, stereotypes can strongly influence individual political decision-making (Rahn, 1993). There is evidence to suggest that some individuals in the assembly group felt that the leadership should have pushed for a portfolio that commands a much larger budget, such as Health or Education. There is a tension here between those who wish to use government to pursue 'Plaid' policies, and those who wish to use government as a tool for increasing the popularity of and the publicity surrounding the party. It is unlikely of course that both these types of behaviour are exclusive, but there is a divide between those who place priority on one or the other.

As Jeffrey (2009) highlights, autonomist parties face the prospect of weakening their core vote if they are perceived to be de-ideologizing their primary goals too much. Due to its association, both real and perceived, with the Welsh language, Plaid still experiences a fundamental tension at the heart of its identity as a political party. On the one hand, Plaid has to make sure it keeps its own party members happy, active and engaged in the party, as well as retaining the support of its core voters. However, they must also reach out to voters who do not speak the language (see Dafis, 2012 for an insider's opinion on this dilemma). Despite governmental participation and a deliberate attempt to overcome stereotypes, the association with the language is still an element of Plaid's identity that still affects it and its relationship with the Welsh electorate. *Moving Forward* indeed suggests a conscious shift away from the language issue by recommending a deliberate

'blurring of the lines' (Jeffrey, 2009) between Plaid and the other main parties in Wales.

Similar processes were afoot in the SNP after 2007. The SNP entered into government for the first time in 2007 and were keen to show the public that they were indeed a 'normal' (Hepburn, 2009) political party. SNP elites were keen to use government to shed the party in a different light because they perceived that the electorate was still wary and unsure of the SNP. The party's strategy was to pursue a popular programme of government, show a united and disciplined front, and build upon the trust that the electorate placed on them so that when it came to discussing independence, the electorate was more likely to be receptive. Unlike the more reactionary, fundamentalist strategies for achieving independence pre-devolution, the party wholeheartedly adopted a more conservative, gradualist approach which involved embracing and accepting the devolved settlement whilst, at the same time, attempting to persuade the electorate that the advantages of devolution could be enhanced and secured through independent statehood. The SNP was aiming to make independence plausible by virtue of its own credibility as a party of government. However, the discussion in chapter 6 highlighted the paradox of this position: by making devolution work 'better' it becomes more difficult to argue for change, and research from the Scottish Social Attitudes Survey has shown this to be the case.

It is difficult to perceive an alternative strategy for securing a referendum on Scottish independence. There is an acceptance within the SNP that the route the party has taken in a strategic sense was almost pre-determined by the framework of devolution. However, as the discussion above demonstrated, there is evidence to suggest that the SNP's period in office has, rather than lead to increased support for independence, actually reinforced the popularity of devolution. The party had to demonstrate to the Scottish public that it could have the potential to, and then actually, govern competently and thus boost its vote-seeking potential in order to seek office. However, by pursuing a policy profile in office, the party appears to have

adversely affected its primary goal-seeking potential. Although the ultimate test of this notion will be in the outcome of the referendum on Scottish independence, there is nevertheless good indication that the so-called 'governing paradox' exists. By being competent and able, both as a potential and actual government, the SNP has in fact made the public more satisfied with Scotland's status as a devolved nation as opposed to an independent one.

The SNP have historically been a vote-seeking party in the context of UK electoral politics. The party managed to hold a small core of seats between general elections, but its most famous victories came in by-elections where they were the recipients of protest votes against the UK-wide parties, particularly Labour. With devolution, and thus the realistic prospect of holding governmental office, a viable vote-seeking strategy had to be based upon a credible policy platform. As research into the SNP's electoral success has shown, perceptions of competence on the part of the public were key factors in the SNP's electoral successes in 2007 and in 2011 (Johns et al, 2009; 2013). These perceptions of competence were initially important for the party in order to maximise their vote-seeking and office-seeking strategies. However, the party was keen to make sure that competence was a defining factor of their period in office in order to make independence more credible.

In contrast to Plaid, no interviewees claimed that governmental status was a mechanism to educate the party of the benefits of holding political office and wielding power at the devolved level. As chapter 8 showed, the SNP undertook organisational reform for the purpose of becoming a party of government in waiting. The SNP's shift from an amateur activist to electoral professional model (Mitchell et al, 2012) in anticipation of government (Bolleyer, 2007) signifies a party, at leadership level at least, which saw the benefits of office as self-evident. For Plaid elites, some of the complaints levelled at the party's organisational structures revolve around the notion, broadly speaking, that there was previously plenty of scope for active

members to use the party's penetrable democratic structures (Kitschelt, 1989) to pursue 'policy pure', 'vote-losing' strategies (Pedersen, 2010). Only after government were reforms taken to make these structures less penetrable by active members. Such concerns highlight an interesting difference between the two parties: while the SNP leadership, bolstered by a more professional party organisation, see little reason to highlight to their members the benefits of governmental office, Plaid's leadership was motivated to highlight the benefits of power to its membership, a membership that indeed had more influence over the strategic direction of the party than the SNP's considering the absence of organisational reform before government.

Organisational Reform

Both parties have had to adapt in organisational terms to the changed opportunity structure of devolution. For the SNP, this process occurred in anticipation of government, whilst for Plaid it occurred as a result of the experience of government. The experience of both parties is therefore fundamentally different despite the resulting changes being very similar. The SNP appear to have learned from devolution itself: a larger parliamentary group and the subsequent need to select candidates to fight Scottish elections exposed a flaw (from the leadership's point of view) in the selection process. Other weaknesses in the party's structures existed, but it was the experience of the candidate selection debacle which provided legitimate cause to begin the process and enact organisational reform. Plaid learned from government: despite carrying piecemeal organisational reforms before 2007 (Elias, 2011), the party did not reform to the same extent as the SNP pre-government. It took the experience of government and the subsequent organisational and electoral 'vulnerabilities' (Bolleyer, 2008; Deschouwer, 2008; Buelens and Hino, 2008) as a result to provide legitimate cause to begin a more substantial process of reform.

Adapting and Learning – An Organisational Response

The SNP began competing in devolved elections with a party organisation that had become outdated overnight. The SNP had become a serious parliamentary force and had cemented its position as the second largest party in Scottish politics. This exposed weaknesses in the party's organisational structure that would eventually be addressed in the 2004 reforms.

The reforms correspond to a number of theoretical expectations when it comes to party organisation and member-elite relations. Firstly, the 2004 reforms seem to suggest that those determined to reform the party thought about the membership in similar terms of May's (1973) law of curvilinear disparity: that those members occupying the 'middle' of the party in terms of being active members were more 'extreme' and so tighter organisational structures were required to curb their influence. Furthermore, the fact that the party's various bodies and committees, such as the NEC and SOAC, were tightened up is evidence of SNP elites being well aware of the types of effects predicted by Kitschelt (1989). Furthermore, and again related to May's (1973) work, the leadership was making a concerted effort through OMOV to strengthen its position, credibility and legitimacy on the assumption that the vast majority of less active members would hold views more parallel to their own, as opposed to the more 'policy-pure' activists (Pedersen, 2010).

On the one hand, opinion amongst SNP elites is fairly unanimous in terms of accepting that the 2004 reforms have made the party a more effective campaigning machine. Indeed, as mentioned above, some go as far as saying that governmental status may not have been possible without the reforms, and that the potential for a majority would have been even more unlikely. On the whole, the electoral success that the party has enjoyed since the reforms were implemented and Alex Salmond returned as leader makes it more difficult for analysts to discover any internal discontent. In other words, parties are generally happy when they are winning. This is not to say that there are not criticisms of the professionalization process. As

discussed in chapter 8, the party has been accused of becoming a haven for 'men in suits' and attracting young careerists straight out of university to the potential detriment of the 'ethos' of the party.

However, the party's primary goal has acted as a safety mechanism in the face of professionalization. There is evidence to suggest that at least some within the party are willing to accept changes and reform, even reform which may hinder individual freedom for example, if it means that the party becomes more successful and, as a result, moves closer towards achieving its primary goal. Furthermore, the party has been described as having 'the heart of a movement' which has persisted in the face of professionalization. According to Jeffrey (2009), autonomist parties often face the dilemma of having to soften their message in order to appeal to a wider voter base. This, it is argued, can weaken their appeal to members and core voters. However, the SNP has been able to offset these problems, and uses them as a mechanism to promote stability, unity and consistency within the organisation. This in turn provides a focal point for party discipline and legitimacy for the leadership to act in an autonomous and flexible manner regarding everyday governance.

The SNP has become a more effective office and vote-seeking party, with the leadership able to control the political strategy of the party to a greater degree than before and the party itself becoming a more efficient and successful campaigning force. The fact that the basis of power has shifted away from party activists is also significant. The SNP has historically been divided between fundamentalists and gradualists. Since the 1990's, it is clear that, on balance, the party has taken a more gradualist approach to its primary goal of Scottish independence (Lynch, 2002). Mitchell et al (2012) discovered that the majority of SNP members are pragmatic in the sense that they understand the practical obstacles and realities when it comes to the advancement and achievement of their primary goal. Organisational reforms such as OMOV have given the leadership a greater basis of legitimacy to pursue a similar sort of strategy because they can point to the fact that their

parliamentary group is democratically elected by the membership. This presents an interesting nuance to Scarrow's (1996) asset-liability approach because by neutralising a liability in one part of the membership, the SNPs reforms have magnified the asset potential of another.

With regards to Plaid, the notion that the party was not organised in such a way as to best take advantage of the changed opportunity structure was widespread. These grievances can generally be divided into two main categories: the desire to see Plaid as a more 'effective' organisation, and the wish to see greater accountability for members in relation to party elites, mostly AMs. In terms of effectiveness, the main issues were those concerning deficiencies in the branch structure, the role of party members, and the function of party conference. On the accountability aspect, the main issues related to the empowerment and engagement of members and the need to make conference more inclined towards the membership. Considering the *Moving Forward* report as a whole, those pushing the effectiveness agenda will find the internal review more satisfying. The recommendations contained in the review are aimed at creating a more streamlined and effective party organisation, with more strategic functions being placed in fewer and more professional hands.

Just as in the case of the SNP, Plaid elites appear to have followed, broadly speaking, May's (1973) predictions in that the 'extremists' will be found in the middle-ranks of the party. Furthermore, the response adheres to Kitschelt's (1989) hypothesises that these groups thrive in the context of open and democratic party structures. *Moving Forward* represents a response to the perception that it is the case. Reforms to branches, the moving of competency to Constituency Committees, the proposal to open conference voting up to all members rather than just delegates, and the ongoing desire for greater professionalization in general all represent a shift that ultimately reduces the influence of the 'policy pure' extra-parliamentary party (Pedersen, 2010).

Overall, Plaid is evolving as an organisation and is making strides to becoming more professional in its political activities. *Moving Forward* is clearly an attempt to shift the party in this direction. Generally, the report aims to redress the liability-asset balance (Scarrow, 1996) in the way leaders see party members, and aims to streamline party functions by placing important functions in the hands of fewer people that can be influenced to a greater extent by party elites. Because these reforms only fully came into effect in February 2013, it is impossible to ascertain the effect they have had on the party. Plaid successfully fought a by-election in the Ynys Môn constituency in August 2013 after Ieuan Wyn Jones decided to renounce his seat. Despite the party doing extremely well in this by-election, even increasing their share of the vote quite substantially, the fact that the party is historically well organised in this particular seat means that assessing the contribution of organisational reform in this case would not be helpful. The real test for a reformed Plaid will be in the 'safe' Labour seats in South Wales at the 2016 Welsh election. At this stage however, like the SNP, the reforms do closely follow the expectations of Mair et al (2004b) in that power and strategic capacity has become more centralised.

Legitimising Reform – Different Triggers, Similar Results

Plaid initiated substantial organisational reforms a decade after the SNP. Plaid did initiate some changes leading up to 2007 (Elias, 2011), but they cannot be considered as fundamental. After a stunning electoral performance in 1999, the party lost seats at the 2003 election and subsequently entered a period of uncertainly with regards to its leadership and strategic direction in the run up to the 2007 election. It was only after the 2011 election that Plaid entered into a process of fundamental organisational reform. For the SNP, the disappointing result of the 2003 election provided the leadership with legitimate basis upon which to construct the narrative of internal change and renewal. John Swinney dedicated the next year of his leadership to explicitly making the SNP a government in waiting. Although largely a thankless task at the time, he is widely admired within the party now as the figure who made the SNP into a more professional campaigning force.

One of the organisational weaknesses Plaid suffered from in government was that its leadership structures lacked the capacity for proper delegation when the tension between leading a parliamentary group and heading a party organisation manifested itself in the shape of an unclear exit strategy. Ieuan Wyn Jones was unable to successfully balance his role as DFM and party leader, leading to the accusation that he became 'detached' to the detriment of his role as party leader. The cause of this detachment has been blamed on Wyn Jones himself, but blame has also been directed at some in the party who were unsupportive of him. Chapter 5 argued that the importance of the referendum to Plaid and the DFM's immersion in the role of keeping Labour to task over the referendum led to a leadership vacuum and contributed to an unsuccessful election campaign. As a result, proposals have been put forward to provide more support to the leader, particularly in the form of a business manager, so that this vulnerability is not repeated if Plaid proceeds back into government in future. There were plenty of grievances with the organisational structures of the party, as chapter 7 highlighted, but they were not the trigger for organisational reform.

There is very little evidence to suggest that the SNP experienced organisational vulnerability as a result of government. In this respect, the anticipatory nature of their reforms appears to have been successful. The changes to the party's leadership structures and the creation of the position of business manager meant that the administrative duty of running the party was largely left to staff in party HQ, with the party leader free to lead the parliamentary group and focus on strategic decisions. The trigger for reform therefore came from the difficult period in the run-up to the 2003 election. The very public nature of the intra-party tensions surrounding the selection of candidates, coupled with the disappointing result at the 2003 election, provided the leadership with enough impetus and legitimate reason to initiate a process of organisational reform. Furthermore, the party's leadership, John Swinney in particular, placed much emphasis on the need for change and invested a lot of time and energy into driving the process forward.

Chapter 5 provided evidence that Plaid is a party that is not as focussed on electoral success as some of its competitors. This is in contrast to the SNP who explicitly and publicly declared their intention to seek governmental office as Scotland's largest party in terms of seats in the Scottish parliament. Plaid's relationship to Welsh Labour, described as symbiotic by McAllister (2001), points to an inability by Plaid to find itself in a position to replace Labour as Wales' dominant political party. The 1999 Welsh election was indeed the closest the party has ever come to displacing Labour. The SNP, on the other hand, has made concerted efforts to displace Labour from its own niche rather than find its own, evidence of which being that the SNP's support is largely reflective of Labour's (Hassan, 2009b). The SNP has therefore put much more emphasis than Plaid on seeking political power and thus reforming itself in such a way in order to achieve it.

Despite the different triggers for reform, the reforms themselves have been rather similar. It is important to note that a fair amount of this is down to the fact the Plaid consulted the SNP on how to reform the party and so it is undoubtedly the case that some of the reforms will be similar. Firstly, both parties rely almost exclusively on their membership for sources of funding and for campaign purposes. Secondly, both parties' annual conferences are the sovereign and democratic heart of the party. Thirdly, both parties took much of their previous organisational structures and identities into the context of devolution and found aspects of these troublesome and incompatible with a more streamlined, professional approach.

Although Plaid have been more cautious about creating the position of leader, placing weight on the notion of a 'leadership team' instead, the creation of the post of business manager is directly comparable to that of the SNP. The fact that opposition to that post being appointed by the leadership was dispelled shows that Plaid has taken its organisational vulnerabilities as a result of government seriously and looked to the SNP as an example of how give the party's leadership more strategic autonomy. Furthermore, the

relegation of the NEC to a more administrative role is directly comparable to the experiences of the SNP.

However, Plaid have professionalized aspects of their organisation in different ways to the SNP, and have arguably been more radical. Changing the primary unit of the party from the branch to the constituency committee is a reform that the SNP did not undertake. Although the SNP's branches largely fulfil an administrative and local campaign role, they are still classified as the primary unit of the party. Plaid, in comparison, has taken the step of shifting many of the responsibilities of branches into the hands of constituency committees and of individual regional organisers. This is an example of an explicit and deliberate shift towards a more centralised and professional organisation (Mair et al, 2004b). This reform is coupled by a subtle, yet important, reform which states that all campaign material has to be displayed on generic templates, as well as all any original campaign material requiring special dispensation from the Chief Executive. This is a clear shift in power from the party on the ground to party in central office, with the business manage playing a role that means the party in central office benefits the party in public office (Mair, 1994).

The use of OMOV is a common element to Plaid and the SNP's organisational reforms, although it has been used in different ways. Indeed, Plaid has been using OMOV as a method for selecting candidates for longer than the SNP. The changes towards OMOV are discussed above in relation to the law of curvilinear disparity. Both parties have sought to use OMOV to curb the influence of active members, whether it is for the selection of candidates or for voting on motions and amendments at annual conference. In both cases, organisational 'space' existed and was used by active members to implement their interests, whether on matters of policy or the selection of favourable candidates. The intended outcome of opening up of these 'spaces' to the entire membership has been to curb the influence of the policy pure member (Pedersen, 2010) which has been deemed to be damaging the parties' wider electoral prospects. By making the penetration

of ‘middle-level’ functions (Kitschelt, 1989) more difficult, the reforms have aimed to make it more difficult for those policy-purists to have a disproportionate influence and easier for the wider, less ‘extreme’ membership to perform a cancelling-out effect by sheer weight of numbers.

Maintaining an Ethos

It is assumed that members of Plaid and the SNP see their party’s primary goals as the most important ‘cause’ into which they place their efforts (Epstein, 1967: 261). Analysis of the SNP membership study carried out by Mitchell et al (2012) empirically testifies to this being the case. This cause is a shared ‘meaning’ and belief that will exist in common across different levels of the party’s hierarchy (Eldersveld, 1964: 100). Both parties have respected their organisational heritage and traditions by making sure that, despite professionalization, their membership remains one of, if not the, most important element of the party. Both Plaid and the SNP have historically relied on their membership and grass roots activity (McAllister, 1981). Both organisational reform processes were careful not to uproot that legacy.

Moving Forward refers to membership in great detail. As chapter 7 outlined, the reform process is partly aimed at reinvigorating the membership by making the party a more exciting and engaging organisation to be involved with, as well as using the talents of members to engage with the policy making process. A sceptical interpretation of this would be that the leadership is simply attempting to drown out the influence of more active members in a similar fashion to adopting OMOV at annual conference, as well as trying to get members to contribute to the workload of the party in tough financial times. However, according to Scarrow’s (1996) typology, members are viewed as a distinct asset to a party such as Plaid and a number of interviewees were keen to stress that Plaid is indeed the embodiment of its membership. Nevertheless, a party concerned with capturing political power in the form of governmental office has different organisational imperatives to that of a party solely concerned with policy (Schlesinger, 1994: 24). With Plaid committed to the pursuit of government,

how the party is able to balance these potential tensions in future will be of particular interest

In the case of the SNP, the party has clearly undergone a process of professionalization in the spirit that Mair et al (2004b) describe. The party's leadership has undoubtedly become more autonomous and powerful. However, the party's primary goals have placed a check on these trends becoming, as Michels (1962 [1911]) described, oligarchic. The ethos of the party is one that is shared across the membership, and studies of the party's membership suggest a pragmatic view towards the necessary actions required to achieve constitutional reform in Scotland (Mitchell et al, 2012). Therefore, the shift toward an electoral professional model of party organisation is one that is broadly accepted, as long as the goals of the party are seen to be promoted and delivered upon successfully. Despite the problems outlined by Jeffrey (2009) that autonomist parties theoretically face as a result of new electoral arenas, the existence of a clearly definable primary goal, like Scottish independence, as well as the continued progress being made towards its implementation, facilitates tolerance of professionalization. However, the debate on NATO membership at the party's annual conference has shown the limits of leadership power in the SNP. Despite the leadership successfully changing NATO policy, the closeness of the result and some of the subsequent fallout shows that conference as the sovereign heart of the party still has a major role to play. Like Plaid, the membership is still crucial to the SNP and its organisational structures continue to reflect that, despite professionalization.

Comparing Plaid and the SNP to other Parties – The Green Comparison

This thesis has focussed heavily and in detail on only Plaid and the SNP. According to Ware (1987: 1), parties are 'the product of a specific historical experience which is not replicated elsewhere.' In order to fully appreciate the experiences of both parties, it was essential to focus on them in depth and at length. However, this is not to say that the experiences of these parties are not similar to those of different party types. Indeed, the example of green

parties resonates with that of Plaid and the SNP. Both Plaid and the SNP, like Green parties, fundamentally object to an aspect of the status quo, although those objections are markedly different. Furthermore, they have had to reconcile those objections with electoral and institutional contexts which encourage them to build a broader policy base in order to achieve electoral success and political success. In addition, the context often requires organisational reform in order to shape the structure of the party in order to best achieve that success.

In the case of the Plaid and the SNP, there seems to be some affinity with the experience of Green parties with regards to adaptation to political opportunity structures. According to O'Neill (1997: 5), there have been two debates within Green parties: the 'anti-party debate', and the 'purpose of political activity debate'. The first refers to whether Green parties should be political parties, or whether they should simply exist as broader social movements. This debate has long been settled within the SNP despite evidence to suggest that at least some of their party elites still believe in the romantic idea of belonging to a wider, nationalist social movement. The debate is still, to an extent, ongoing in Plaid with the *Moving Forward* report referring to the choice between being a pressure group and a political party as a false one. The second debate relates to whether Green parties should remain novel, or 'niche' (Adams et al, 2006; Meguid, 2005; Wagner, 2012) actors, or whether they should broaden their appeal and become more 'mainstream' in their approach to winning electoral support. Although this debate has been largely settled within Plaid and the SNP, it nevertheless highlights a similar strategic conundrum that is common to Green parties as well.

O'Neill (1997: 21) states that all Green parties have faced a stand-off between pragmatists and fundamentalists, similar to the gradualist-fundamentalist debate (Mitchell, 1996) in the SNP that was largely settled after 2004. Similar strategic tensions have occurred within Plaid in the form of the so-called 'National Left' and the more gradualist and traditionalist

'Hydro Group' (Evans, 2008: 440-441). In the German Greens, for example, the key strategic debate in the 1980's was that between the *Fundi's* (fundamentalists) and the *Realo's* (realists) (Frankland and Schoonaker, 1992: 113). Faced with a political opportunity structure in the shape of the German *Bundestag*, the Greens, over a period of time, shed their single-issue status to become a political party (Mayer and Ely, 1998: 4). This relates with the experience of Green parties more widely in that they tend to experience a strong gravitational pull towards pragmatism (O'Neill, 1997: 32). In the case of the German Greens it was the need to meet the 5% electoral threshold which meant it was important to adopt a wider spectrum of issues in order to attract enough votes and secure parliamentary entry (Mayer and Ely, 1998: 7).

Dumont and Bäck (2006: S35) suggest that Green parties implicitly possesses disadvantages when it comes to government formation. These include their relatively small size, the tendency to be thought of as more policy and vote-seeking than office-seeking, and the scepticism often held about the relevance of national government. The Belgian Greens, for example, have experienced electoral setbacks as a result of government (Delwit and Van Haute, 2008). On the other hand, entering into government can yield positive results, examples including the German Greens and the Finnish Greens (Sundberg & Wilhelmsson, 2008). Rüdig (2006, see also Poguntke, 2002) argues that Greens can choose two paths to incumbent electoral success: either they try and distance themselves from government, or they take full responsibility for the record of that government and either succeed or fail. In the case of Plaid, the latter approach occurred, and the result was electoral failure, although the party did achieve some important primary goals successes, most importantly the referendum. According to Hirsch (1998: 183), the main successes of Green parties continue to be their agenda-setting capacity in the sense that their larger competitors have found it necessary to adopt some of their traditional policy platforms. The success of autonomist parties often takes a similar form in the sense that state-wide parties become more receptive to traditional 'autonomist' concerns when

faced with potential electoral threat (Elias and Tronconi, 2011a; Toubeau, 2011).

In terms of organisational reform, centralisation and professionalization has been commented upon and analysed in political parties in Britain (Smith, 2009) including the Liberal Democrats (Evans and Sanderson-Nash, 2011), the British Labour party (Russell, 2005), and Green parties across Western Europe (Burchell, 2001; Doherty, 1992; Poguntke, 2002). The common denominator in all these cases is the desire to be more electorally appealing and take advantage of the electoral marketplace within which they operate. The German Greens, for example, began to question their *'Anti-Volkspartei'* organisational structures in the face of electoral success and pressures on policy formulating capacity, leading one individual to state that the party was becoming *'Eine Stinknormale Partei'* (Frankland and Schoonmaker, 1992: 110). Nevertheless, the Greens were well on the path to becoming 'normal party like the others' (Hirsch, 1998: 184) and the structures that were in place to hinder an SPD-style professional party elite began to be rolled back in the late 1980's (Frankland and Schoonmaker, 1992: 111).

Addressing the Research Question - How have Plaid and the SNP learned and adapted to the changed opportunity structure of devolution?

The example of the German Greens resonates with the experiences of Plaid and the SNP. Faced with changed opportunity structures, both parties faced choices in terms of how best to organise in order to take advantage of devolution and give them the capacity to maximize their vote-seeking potential. The SNP adapted, like the German Greens did, before they entered into government, and it has been previously argued that these changes allowed the party not only to win more votes, but prevent organisational vulnerability whilst in government. Plaid, on the other hand, learned from the experience of government itself, embarking on a process of organisational that was legitimised and facilitated by an electoral setback. In short, the *SNP learned to be a party of government in advance of the fact*, whilst *Plaid learned as a result of being a party of government*.

Despite the temporal disparity and the slightly different triggers for change, both Plaid and the SNP have become parties that, as a result of devolution, place heavy emphasis on being in government. In short, they have both become office-seeking entities. This adaptation has transpired in the context of devolved institutions which, like any other legislative arena, reward governmental participation. As stated in the previous paragraph, the SNP made a conscious decision to become an office-seeking party. It has also been able to detach its independence agenda from its everyday policy profile in the search for electoral success, although whether this aids the party's goal of Scottish independence remains to be seen. Plaid happened upon government to an extent in that the electoral circumstances placed them at the centre of two potential coalition scenarios which, under the leadership of Ieuan Wyn Jones, explicitly sought governmental office. One scenario, the rainbow option, would have given Plaid a much greater profile in that they would have obtained the office of FM. However, as things transpired, the party ended up with a much less prominent role in terms of coverage yet were provided with the opportunity to enact primary goal policy, with the referendum the most important.

The organisational reform process is a crucial element in the adaptation of both parties. The SNP reformed their organisational structures in order to maximize their vote-seeking capacity in order to win governmental power. The party has been completely successful in this endeavour. Plaid's review process has followed the SNP's precedent: the *Moving Forward* report states, quite explicitly, that Plaid's role is to win governmental power and become the largest party in Wales. The report is making a conscious effort to overrule and replace the idea that Plaid is not a party that puts electoral success at the forefront of its objectives. Indeed, in order to achieve an independent Wales, Plaid must become the largest party in Wales, hold governmental office, and use that power in order to advance its autonomist aims. Ultimately, both parties have reconciled office-seeking with their identities as autonomist parties and professionalization is simply an extension of this strategic imperative.

So, how have Plaid and the SNP adapted to devolution? They have adapted by making conscious efforts to shake off their 'party of protest' identities in order to redefine themselves as a 'party of government'. By doing this, they have become like most mainstream political parties operating in liberal democracies across the world. The SNP has reconciled this new status to a greater degree than Plaid and its record in government, its strategic behaviour and its organisational reform history is testament to this fact. Plaid has initiated the process that, all things being equal, will lead them to adapting in a similar way to the SNP. A note of caution is required though: structural considerations are crucial not only in understanding and appreciating why Plaid's behaviour in government was, actually, entirely rational and successful, but also comprehending and considering the challenges that face a party like Plaid in the future. Given the different nature of devolution in Wales, the lack of a distinctive media narrative compared to Scotland, and the fundamentally different nature of the union with England, the ability of Plaid to achieve the same electoral success as the SNP in the future is a difficult prospect. Nevertheless, the party has adapted and changed into an office-seeking, party of government in-waiting so that it can take advantage of the opportunity if it does indeed arise.

Assessing the Contribution of this Thesis to Recent Literature on the SNP and Plaid Cymru

This section provides an assessment of relevant and recent literature on Plaid and the SNP. The aim of this section is to provide an overview of this literature and thus ascertain the contribution that has been made to this literature by this thesis. Jeffrey (2009) argues that much of the research into autonomist parties has traditionally been sociological in nature, and that the obvious direction for future research to take a more institutional perspective. This thesis has aimed to do that by focussing less on the aims, objectives and electoral support of Plaid and the SNP and more on how they adapted to devolution and governmental status. In this regard this thesis is carrying out such a task and provides not only a unique investigation into each of these parties, but offers a comparison between the two which adds

extra insight into the behaviour, strategy and adaptation of autonomist parties.

The section begins by examining each party in turn, beginning with the SNP. The assessment of the literature will address the two main themes of this thesis, namely governmental participation and organisational reform. The section that deals with the SNP is longer than the one dealing with Plaid, namely because of the larger volume of literature that exists. After dealing with the two parties in turn, a brief summary section will provide an overview of the contribution to the literature made by this thesis.

The SNP

There is a sizeable amount of literature that examines the historical development (Mitchell, 1996; Lynch, 2002, 2011, 2013), strategic and ideological evolution (Lynch, 2009), membership attributes (Mitchell et al, 2012) and analysis on who supports and votes for the SNP in elections (Johns et al, 2009, 2011, 2013). The success of the party at the 2011 Scottish election and the referendum on Scottish independence on the 18th of September 2014 will only increase the academic interest in the SNP and Scottish politics more generally. This section will provide a critical overview of this literature, as well as others, in order to ascertain the position of this thesis in literature on the SNP.

The historical development of the SNP has been covered at length by a range of notable scholars (Finlay, 1994, 2009; Lynch, 2002, 2013; Mitchell, 1996). Finlay's (1994) excellent account of the early development of the SNP is largely outside the scope of this thesis despite being thoroughly relevant in the overall understanding of the party's development. Similarly, Mitchell's (1996) contribution is thorough and insightful but only covers the SNP's development until the mid-1990's. However, Finlay (1994) and Mitchell (1996), as well as Lynch (2009), detail the SNP's strategic and ideological development into a 'mainstream' (Elias and Tronconi, 2011a) political party. This period of development, although somewhat far removed in a temporal sense from the period covered in this thesis, nevertheless

affected the behaviour of the SNP as a party of government. The findings from this thesis add to this literature by examining the organisational reform process in 2003-2004 and highlighting how this period was crucial for the party's development and subsequent move into government. The thesis also detailed how SNP elites attempted to use governmental office as a basis to present that party as the most competent party of government, a strategy that was indeed successful (Johns et al, 2009; 2013), and use the office as a basis to build confidence in independence. Harvey and Lynch (2012) offer an analysis of the politics behind the 'National Conversation' and their findings support the findings in this thesis with regards to the strategic approach of the SNP towards independence in their first term in office. This thesis, by focussing on the SNP itself, adds an appreciation of how organisational and strategic developments within the SNP affected and informed the party's approach to the politics of independence. It also added some analysis of the 'governance paradox' alluded to by Harvey and Lynch (Ibid.): the idea that being a competent party of government may actually undermine the cause of independence because the electorate may see devolution working well and thus disagree that there is any need to change it. This idea will ultimately be tested by the outcome of the independence referendum in September 2014.

Lynch (2013) offers an updated history of the SNP (see Lynch, 2002 for the first edition), covering the SNP's development up until 2013 and thus the party's transition into a party of government. Lynch's contribution to the understanding of the SNP is thorough and detailed, but the book is pitched at a non-academic as well as an academic audience. In that sense the book lacks a theoretical appreciation of the development of the SNP. The book never claims to be anything other than a historical account of the SNP's development, but this means that some more recent developments, such as the organisational reforms and the transition into government, are covered in a fairly superficial way. In particular, Lynch (2013: 255-257) offers barely two pages of analysis of the organisational reforms undertaken by the SNP between 2003 and 2004. A more thorough and theoretical analysis of this

period is offered by Mitchell et al (2012) and indeed in this thesis. Lynch's (2013: 255-257) brief account of the reforms basically lists some of the key changes that were enacted, as well as discussing the change to the party's constitution at this time which clarified its primary goal somewhat. This thesis offered a more theoretical account of the party's reforms, finding that the reforms created a more hierarchical party with a strengthened and more autonomous leadership. Furthermore, this thesis tied these reforms into the party's transition into government and suggests that dealing with the reforms as a mere 'event' in the SNP's development, as opposed to a fundamental part of the party's strategic and electoral development, is a mistake. Indeed, Mitchell et al (2012) place far more emphasis on the importance of the party's organisational reforms.

However, despite Mitchell et al's (2012) more thorough account of the party's reforms, this thesis analyses the reforms in a more theoretical and less historical way. There is, nevertheless, plenty of overlap between Mitchell et al's (Ibid.) coverage of the organisational reforms and the findings in this thesis. Mitchell et al (Ibid.: 40-41) rightly emphasise the importance of the candidate selection process with regards to the SNP's organisational profile since devolution. They draw upon the relative strength of the party's activists in the run-up to the first election to the Scottish parliament, using the example of 'zipping' the party's lists with alternate female and male candidates, a reform that was favoured by the party's leadership but opposed by many activists and thus defeated at party conference.. Furthermore, the fact that the SNP elected some MSP's that were troublesome in 1999 reflects the desire of party elites to forge a more discipline party discussed in this thesis. Indeed, as MacKay (2009:82) argues, the fact that many SNP MSP's were worried about their position on the list in the run-up led to instability in the party as candidates sought to ensure support from local delegates. Findings from this thesis, namely that the SNP has become a more 'outward looking' party and managed to move away from perpetual internal conflict, support such assertions and indeed further our

understanding of the SNP's developments in the context of Scottish devolution.

Mitchell et al (Ibid.: 42) do discuss the fact that the changes to selection procedures did not prevent all of the 'hardliners' who challenged John Swinney's leadership from becoming MSP's and state that the party's remarkable discipline probably emanates from its electoral success since 2007. The findings in this thesis do not challenge this assertion, but it does argue that the party acquired a significant level of discipline from the understanding that holding governmental office meant that the SNP was, at least implicitly, promoting its primary goal of Scottish independence. There was a distinct feeling amongst a number of party elites that if the party did not act responsibly and competently in office then it may undermine the potential of Scotland becoming an independent state. Although it is difficult to ascertain the relative weight of this finding in relation to the importance of electoral success, it is a crucial ingredient in helping to understand the behaviour of the SNP as a party of government.

In terms of how the SNP's leadership structures altered in the 2003-2004 reform period, Mitchell et al's (Ibid.: 44) contribution largely reflects the findings in this thesis. From a party that, although heavily influenced by some key individual figures, was structured in such a way that meant the leadership was heavily constrained by its internal institutions, particularly conference. The SNP in the pre-devolution period was a party that was heavily dependent on the activity of its local branches (McAllister, 1981). The 2003-2004 reforms, coupled with the party's entry into government, meant that conference took on a more media focussed and less policy-focused role in the internal politics of the SNP, along with bodies such as the national council (Mitchell et al, 2012: 47). Indeed, Mitchell et al (Ibid.: 49) state that, overall, the organisational reforms have had a significant effect on the SNP and have led to the party becoming a professional political organisation. However, Mitchell (Ibid.: 47) use the example of the party's controversial policy idea to increase the age that someone can buy alcohol in

a shop from 18 to 21, a move that was publicly criticised by the party's youth wing. Despite professionalization, there is still room for the wider party to articulate its discontent at policy decisions taken by the leadership. This thesis draws on the example of the controversial proposal to change the party's long-standing opposition to NATO membership. This example further shows that the party does retain conference as its sovereign heart, although it has ultimately become far more leadership orientated in terms of policy decisions and strategic management. Overall, this thesis complements Mitchell et al's (Ibid.) coverage of the party's organisational reforms.

The use of literature on parties in government for the first time and the policy/office/votes framework is also a point of departure from Mitchell et al (2012) and Lynch (2013). Although the SNP were not affected by the hypothesised vulnerabilities in their first term in office, the literature on parties in government for the first time nevertheless provides a valuable theoretical framework through which the empirical data could be analysed. Indeed, this approach showed that Plaid faced organisational and electoral vulnerabilities as a result of governmental participation, something that the SNP managed to avoid. One of the key reasons why the SNP managed to avoid organisational vulnerability was indeed the reform process that was carried out in 2003 and 2004. Had it not been for this period then the process of going into government, disregarding the 2011 Scottish election, could have been very different and less favourable for the SNP. Looking at the party in this way, something that Lynch (2013) and Mitchell et al (2012) do not, means that this thesis provides a unique perspective with regards to studying the SNP's transformation into a party of government.

Furthermore, the use of the policy/office/votes framework is absent, to a large degree, from Lynch (2013) and Mitchell et al (2012). The use of such a framework in this thesis allows the findings to corroborate with other work in the field of autonomist parties and governmental participation, namely Elias and Tronconi (2011a). The findings in this thesis show that, as predicted by Elias and Tronconi (Ibid.), the SNP faced the same difficult choices as any

other type of party. That said, some things that were made easier for the SNP than may otherwise have been the case, namely the weakness of the opposition, particularly Labour, in Scotland. Nevertheless, the framework allowed for revealing analysis of the empirical data which showed that the party traded off policy-seeking capacity in order to recapture governmental office. This approach is original and unique in the study of the SNP (and Plaid) and so represents furtherance in the understanding of why and how the party behaved as a party of government.

Lynch's (2009) article on the SNP's ideological development argues that under devolution the party has moved from being social democratic to having no ideology. Mitchell et al (2012: 51) dispute this claim by virtue of the findings from their membership study which suggests the party is firmly on the centre-left. The findings of this thesis do give some credence to Lynch's (2009) argument, although it has to be stated that the thesis never sought to analyse the SNP's ideological positioning and so cannot provide a challenge to Mitchell et al (2012). Interview evidence gathered for this thesis does suggest that a number of SNP elites were keen to highlight the SNP's centre-left credentials. Lynch's (2009) analysis takes a far more historical view than this thesis does. However, the use of the policy/office/votes framework comes to a very similar conclusion: the SNP was keen on promoting its office-seeking and vote-seeking credentials and policy considerations were, on balance, traded-off if necessary. Interview data suggested that the SNP went out to be deliberately popular in order to be in a position to maximise its ability to promote Scottish independence. This thesis goes beyond Lynch's (Ibid.) analysis in the sense that it provides a more theoretically nuanced account as to why, in government, the SNP was keen to behave in the way it did with regards to trade-offs. It is therefore clear that any ideological underpinning that the SNP has not so dogmatically held as to prevent the party maximising the electoral and political opportunities afforded by devolution.

Johns et al's (2009, 2013) analysis of both the 2007 and 2011 election victories fits well with the findings in this thesis. They find that, in both elections, the SNP was elected because it was seen as standing up for Scotland's interests, were perceived to have the most able front-bench team and leadership, and were thought to be the party that would govern Scotland the most competently. The findings in this thesis support these factors closely in the sense that SNP elites put a lot of emphasis on being competent and showing the public that the party was a disciplined organisation that was not dominated by its primary goal. However, the SNP has found it difficult to attract female voters (Johns et al, 2012). In the chapter on organisational reform, this thesis discusses the idea that the SNP has become a male-dominated party. There is evidence that the SNP in recent years has become a launching pad for young men straight out of university. This situation has been exacerbated by governmental status and organisational reform. However, these findings have not been analysed in more depth given the limitations of the interview data collected. Nevertheless, it deserves some closer empirical attention in the future, and this thesis has provided some potential background for that to happen.

The notion that the SNP was able to separate policy from party in the form of the referendum is made by Leith and Steven (2010:263). In the same article however, Leith and Steven (Ibid.: 267) state that the SNP lacks a central ideological pillar beyond nationalism, a view that is clearly outdated and discredited by recent scholarly work, most notably Mitchell et al (2012). Furthermore, and related to this thesis, Leith and Steven (2010: 267-268) seem to miss the crucial point that rather than being a weakness, the fact that the SNP can accommodate a diverse range of ideological viewpoints at elite level is credit to its primary goal. Firstly, it is wrong to suggest that it is something of an anomaly to have differing ideological positions between elected members, one only has to look to New Labour for evidence of this (Russell, 2005). Secondly, the fact that devolution encourages valence voting (Johns et al, 2009; 2013), coupled with the lack of key features of state that can exacerbate ideological differences between parties (tax, foreign

affairs and immigration, for example) means that having the overarching goal of independence is the focal point for party members and a teleological end-point in time. The ideological differences between Bill Kidd and Fergus Ewing (Leith and Steven, 2010: 267) are not very relevant if the Scottish parliament only has a limited amount of capacity to exacerbate them. In short, the labelling of the SNP as treading on ideological and electoral quicksand simply because it only has a limited and 'nationalist' appeal fundamentally misunderstands the nature of the SNP itself and the political and institutional context within which it operates.

Gallagher's (2009) article also attempts to explain the strategy of the SNP in government, albeit in a non-theoretical manner. Like Leith and Steven (2010), this article has a very limited understanding of the SNP as a political party. Statements such as 'the SNP made a fetish out of the image of Scotland as a victimised nation' (Ibid.: 537) shows a very shallow understanding of how the SNP are attempting to attempt to use the Scottish parliament to build confidence in Scotland's ability to govern itself as an independent country, a strategy by SNP elites that this thesis examined at length. However, Gallagher (Ibid.: 536) also states that 'the SNP has been content to allow the civil service to administer the country' which, aside from the strong language, is somewhat correct. Although there is a lack of awareness of the hard realities for a minority government in an adversarial political environment, Gallagher (Ibid.) is alluding to the importance that was placed on office and vote-seeking behaviour. Indeed, Gallagher (Ibid.: 536) claims that while the civil service was running the country, the SNP concentrated on political campaigning. This is a clear exaggeration, but it does allude to findings in this thesis which discuss the professionalism of the SNP's campaign, the careful use of language when it came to independence, and the desire to be deliberately popular in order to win votes. Gallagher's (Ibid.) mistake is to solely think about the SNP as a nationalist party, and not take into account the development the SNP has undergone which has transformed it into a professional political party, something that this thesis does.

Plaid Cymru

There is less academic literature covering recent developments in Plaid compared to the SNP. Indeed, there is a significant amount of literature on the party in Welsh that was not consulted due to this fact. Nevertheless, the literature that does exist in English is, on the whole, of a good standard. Davies (1983) and Evans (2008) cover the early history of Plaid and the career of Gwynfor Evans respectively, while McAllister's (2001) book covers the entire history of the party up until devolution. Plaid's ideological development (Sandry, 2011) and strategic development (Elias, 2009b, 2009c, 2011) have also received attention from academic scholars.

Elias' (2009c) article covering Plaid's adaption to devolution is a good overview of the party's strategic and organisational development in this context. In particular, the treatment of the internal troubles in Plaid between 2003 and 2007 are covered very well. The article also successfully outlines the strategic challenges faced by Plaid from 1999 onwards; including the problem the party has had with regards to the other, state-wide parties stealing their core, autonomist issues, a situation hypothesised by Jeffrey (2009). This thesis builds on Elias' (2009c) analysis in two ways. Firstly, the thesis analyses how Plaid adapted to government and were able to use this status to promote further devolution for Wales. The thesis also finds that there were tensions within the elite regarding Plaid's ultimate purpose in Welsh politics, similar to Elias (Ibid.). Secondly, the thesis analyses Plaid's organisational reforms after the disappointing election result of 2011, arguing that they represent an attempt to further professionalise the party and go far beyond the piecemeal changes discussed by Elias (Ibid.).

Taking a longer term view, Elias (2011) analyses Plaid's historical development by focussing on different thresholds that the party has crossed. This thesis focuses almost exclusively on the party crossing the threshold of governance. The thesis finds that the party had some significant dilemmas going into government, namely how to reconcile a desire to portray itself as being a party that is not simply concerned with language,

independence and rural Wales with having to choose stereotypical portfolios as a party of government. This tension between 'identities' is commented upon by McAllister (2001: 76-77; see also Lynch, 1995) who identifies the need for Plaid to represent and act accordance with its core vote who are concerned with 'traditional' Plaid issues, and the importance of branching out beyond these issues in order to truly challenge Labour in its southern heartlands. This thesis supports such claims in the chapter analysing governmental participation, with the section of portfolio distribution providing a key insight into the strategic difficulties faced by the party.

Elias (2009b) discusses some of the internal conflict that broke out in Plaid regarding its policies on the Welsh language, as well as a perception that the referendum on law-making powers was not being championed vigorously enough, concluding that such issues may well cost them votes at the 2011 Welsh election. That may well have been the case considering the party's performance at the 2011 election, although it is out with the scope of this thesis to provide conclusive proof either way. Elias's (Ibid.) article was written fairly early on into Plaid's term in office and so is limited in this respect. Indeed, the issues over the language dissipated somewhat and by 2011 the party was united behind achieving a positive result in the referendum. Building upon previous research, this thesis illuminates the behaviour of Plaid in government, particularly in the lead-up to the referendum, and provides a theoretically informed account of such behaviour using the policy/office/votes framework.[30]

McAllister's (2001) book offers the most recent historical overview of Plaid's history written in English. Although the book acts as a useful introduction to the party's history, it suffers from a lack of theoretical underpinning. However, much like Lynch's (2002, 2013) history of the SNP, the audience the book is intended for is wider than the academic community. There is thus very little engagement with wider and relevant theoretical debates. Furthermore, the book is outdated in that it hardly deals

[30] This part of the thesis has recently been published as a peer-reviewed journal article (McAngus, 2013)

with devolution at all. Indeed, the book shows a lack of understanding of the challenges and issues a party like Plaid would have to deal with in the context of devolution. Lynch (2002) does deal with such issues in the concluding chapter and thus demonstrates a firmer grip on how an autonomist party may be constrained, but also find opportunities, in a new 'space for politics' such as the NAW. Such considerations would require a much firmer grasp on literature on party strategy and party organisation. Furthermore, McAllister's (2001) concluding chapter does summarise Plaid's development up until devolution without providing any theoretically based assumptions about how devolution might affect Plaid. For example, McAllister (Ibid.: 213) states that Plaid has been 'the only democratic nationalist party of Wales' and this has given the party 'a relatively free run within Welsh politics'. This is a fairly naive assumption considering McAllister's (Ibid.: 215-216) assertion that the relationship between Plaid and Welsh Labour is a 'symbiotic' one. The logical extension of such an assertion, an assertion that this thesis supports through analysis of the party's relationship to Labour with regards to the referendum, is that Labour would surely feed on Plaid's 'nationalist' profile in an attempt to recover in electoral terms after 1999. Even whilst in government with Plaid, Labour labelled itself as the 'Welsh' party. This thesis provides an understanding of such process by examining how Plaid was able to achieve its goals in government whilst facing the inevitable trade-offs that come with policy success.

An intriguing part of McAllister's (Ibid.: 216-218) book is the concluding part which offers a prediction of Plaid's political fortunes in the year 2020. It is predicted that Plaid would be in government in 2003, and now in 2020 the party is back in government for the second time. There is an element of foresight in McAllister's predictions in the sense that the party would suffer from internal disputes over its strategy, something analysed by Elias (2009c). However, McAllister places too much stock on Plaid's organisational development and capacity in general and so does not recognise the pressures that becoming a sizable parliamentary party would

bring. This thesis builds upon such a void by not only providing an analysis of Plaid's performance in government, but also by covering the organisational reform process and outlining the continuing adaptation process Plaid is still undergoing. The thesis indeed builds on Elias' (2011) discussion on Plaid's 'piecemeal' organisational progress up to 2007.

However, McAllister's predictions do have some worth in the sense that it is predicted that, by 2020, Plaid will be a mainstream party of power. This remains to be seen of course, and the party's performance at the 2016 Welsh election will give some indication as to how effective the organisational reforms have been and how electorally competitive Plaid can be in the context of very 'British' devolved elections in Wales (Scully, 2013). However, Plaid's new leader, Leanne Wood (interestingly, McAllister does predict Plaid will have a female leader in 2020), has consistently stated that Plaid's goal is to be the largest party in Wales. This thesis found that some elites were keen to use the status of government to 'teach' the wider party membership of the virtues of political power. Wood has built on this process and clearly believes that Plaid's uncertainty regarding its identity that occurred between 2003 and 2007 (Elias, 2009c) has been resolved. The organisational reform process was also part of this process. Therefore, McAllister may well be correct in this assumption, although providing any concrete answers at the point would be premature.

The Overall Contribution

The previous two sections have shown how this thesis has contributed to the literature on Plaid and the SNP. It has done so in two main ways. Firstly, by analysing the parties in government and examining how both parties dealt with the policy/office/votes trade-off, the thesis has provided an institutional perspective (Jeffrey, 2009) into the strategic decisions that were made in government. The assumption that Plaid and the SNP would face the same challenges as any other type of political party was proposed by Elias and Tronconi (2011a) and proved to be correct. This thesis has provided an in-depth, comparative case study of Plaid and the SNP and in this regard it is a

unique study. For scholars interested in these two parties, as well as autonomist parties more generally, this thesis has contributed to our understanding of how government affects parties like Plaid and the SNP, and raises interesting questions that can be asked of other parties in other countries. Secondly, the thesis examines the organisational adaptation of both parties. As mentioned earlier in the thesis, the organisational development in the context of sub-state political arenas is under-theorised. This is in stark contrast to state-wide parties. This thesis offered an analysis of both parties' organisational reform processes and concluded that, although there were contextual and unique aspects in each case, there were broad similarities which were largely expected according to the theoretical literature. This thesis has provided a comparative assessment of the organisational adaptation of two parties and implicitly posed some fundamental questions that could be asked of similar parties in similar contexts.

Therefore, both those who are interested in Plaid and the SNP specifically and those who are interested in autonomist parties, and indeed parties in general, more broadly, will benefit from the findings in this thesis. The thesis has provided one of the most detailed accounts of both of these parties' recent developments that is available, and has based such analysis on a theoretical framework which places the research in the wider context of research into political parties. The thesis also poses many questions, some of which are dealt with above, which scholars ought to return to in order to more fully understand these parties and the effect that devolution has had on them. The main, overarching idea that this thesis offers to the literature is as follows: both parties have, of course, primary goals that are crucial to their identity, but both parties have sought and learned to become, via different paths, parties that intrinsically value governmental office and the benefits of political power. This process is further down the line in the case of the SNP, but Plaid have undoubtedly made overtures since losing in 2011 which suggests that they are a party that is seeing its role in Welsh politics out with the symbiotic frame of the past, at least at an elite level. The job of scholars is to revisit both of the parties in future and with events such as the referendum on Scottish independence and further devolution

for Wales this will undoubtedly prove to be a generally fascinating and theoretically fulfilling endeavour.

Conclusion

This chapter has drawn together the empirical chapters looking at governmental participation and organisational reform in Plaid and the SNP. The chapter provided comparative analysis of the chapters which dealt with the two empirical strands of the thesis, related the experience of both parties to the experience of Green parties, and provided an answer to the research question that was set in the introduction. The thesis aimed to be as comparative as possible. The fact that no membership study of Plaid has been carried out to date means that a direct comparative analysis of both parties' memberships cannot be offered. Indeed, there is much to learn about Plaid's membership, and this meant that some of the theoretically driven propositions offered in this thesis remain just that. Nevertheless, the thesis exists to provide both an empirically rich examination of Plaid and the SNP, as well as offer a theoretically informed piece of research that is relevant to the wider political science community. Scholars of constitutional change, in particular the UK, party organisation, party strategy and multi-level governance will potentially find the findings of this thesis relevant to their own research.

Future Research Agendas

The changing nature of the constitutional make-up of the UK will continue to make the study of Plaid and the SNP salient and relevant. There are many unknowns with regards to the future of both Scotland and Wales. Indeed, the result of the independence referendum will represent an important juncture for the SNP and Plaid, to a lesser extent. This important juncture will not only manifest upon a vote for independence: indeed, the continued existence of devolution in Scotland will be no less intriguing for researchers interested in the SNP. Similarly, constitutional developments in Wales in the shape of further devolution of legislative competencies and tax powers will shape the strategic imperatives of Plaid looking head. A number of future research

agendas are open to future researchers regarding Plaid and the SNP. The possible agendas are by no means exhaustive, and are all related to the content of this thesis.

If Scotland votes for independent statehood, then the SNP's role in this 'new' Scotland will be a fruitful area of research. How will the party cope and adapt to not only new opportunity structures, but also the fulfilment of its primary goal? Will the party splinter and potentially wither away, or will it endure as a purely office-seeking organisation? Assuming it endures, where will it fit in the overall party system, and what relationship will it have to the Labour party? Will its second primary goal of the furtherance of all interests be enough to keep its membership engaged, or will the absence of the goal of independence mean a lack of enthusiasm amongst its ranks? Similar questions apply if Scotland votes to remain within the UK. How will the party come to terms with the Scottish public rejecting its primary goal? Will there be an internal backlash against the leadership over its strategy and tactics regarding the referendum? Will the party put more weight on the idea of territorial empowerment within the UK, or stick to pressing for full independent statehood? All of these questions are related to those addressed in this thesis as they all refer to adaptation to new opportunity structures, regardless of whether those structures involve independent statehood or not.

The possibility of Wales becoming an independent state anytime in the near future is, at best, remote. However, this does not mean that there is a lack of possible research agendas regarding Plaid. One possible avenue of research would be a membership study similar to that carried out on the SNP by Mitchell et al (2012). Such data would be extremely useful in not only comparing Plaid's membership to the SNP's and other parties, but also test some conceptions and assumptions about what Plaid's membership is like. In terms of Plaid's adaptation to continually changing opportunity structures, there are also a range of potential questions to be asked. Has the party benefited in electoral and strategic terms from its organisational reforms?

What is the next step on Plaid's journey as an autonomist party in terms of its primary goals? Is Plaid able to 'share' more effectively the issue of Welsh language protection and promotion as laid out in *Moving Forward*? If Scotland does vote for independence, how does Plaid frame this event in their constitutional narrative with regards to Wales?

Appendix A

Below is a list of the individuals who were interviewed for this thesis. They are referenced in the thesis anonymously according to their position in the party and the date that they were interviewed on. The term 'party officer' is used to refer to a range of roles such as party HQ staff, advisers and holders of influential voluntary posts. Some interviewees are former parliamentarians and party officers, but they are not referenced as such in order to maintain anonymity.

Plaid Cymru Interviewees

Cllr Delme Bowen, Jocelyn Davies AM, Geraint Day, Lord Dafydd Elis-Thomas AM, Llyr Huws Grufydd AM, Eurfyl ap Gwilym, Cllr Mohammed-Sarul Islam, Bethan Jenkins AM, Alun Ffred Jones AM, Elin Jones AM, Helen Mary Jones, Ieuan Wyn Jones AM, Morgan Lloyd, Cllr Neil McEvoy, Rhuanned Richards, Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM, Simon Thomas AM, Dafydd Trystan, Lindsay Whittle AM, Leanne Wood AM.

SNP Interviewees

Brian Adam MSP, Marco Biagi MSP, Roderick Campbell MSP, Angela Constance MSP, Euan Crawford, Roseanna Cunningham MSP, James Dornan MSP, Linda Fabiani MSP, John Finnie MSP, Jamie Hepburn MSP, Fiona Hyslop MSP, Kenny MacAskill MSP, Gordon MacDonald MSP, John Mason MSP, Joan McAlpine MSP, Iain McCann, Derek McKay MSP, Alex Neil MSP, Stephen Noon, Elizabeth Lloyd, John Swinney MSP, David Torrance MSP, Sandra White MSP, Humza Yousaf MSP.

Bibliography

Abedi, Amir (2002) 'Challenges to established parties: The effects of party system features on the electoral fortunes of anti-political-establishment parties' *European Journal of Political Research* 41(4): pp. 551-583

Abedi, Amir (2004) *Anti-Political Establishment Parties: A Comparative Analysis* (Oxon: Routledge)

Abedi, Amir and Thomas Carl Lundberg (2009) 'Doomed to Failure? UKIP and the Organisational Challenges Facing Right-Wing Populist Anti-Political Establishment Parties' *Parliamentary Affairs* 62(1): pp. 72-87

Abedi, Amir and Thomas Carl Lundberg (2012) *The SNP and Plaid as Anti-Political Establishment Parties* Paper presented to the Political Studies Association Specialist Group: Territorial Politics Biennial Conference, 13-14 September 2012, Brussels

Adams, James, Michael Clark, Lawrence Ezrow, and Garrett Glasgow (2006). 'Are Niche Parties Fundamentally Different from Mainstream Parties? The Causes and the Electoral Consequences of Western European Parties' Policy Shifts, 1976–1998' *American Journal of Political Science,* 50(3)**:** pp. 513-529.

Anderson, Benedict (2006) [1983] *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso)

Anderson, Lee F. (1968) 'Organization Theory and the Study of State and Local Parties' in Crotty, William J. (ed) *Approaches to the Study of Party Organization* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon) pp. 375-403

Armstrong, David and Raymond M. Duch (2010) 'Why Can Voters Anticipate Post-Election Coalition Formation Likelihoods? *Electoral Studies* 29: pp. 308-315

Austen-Smith, David and Jeffrey Banks (1990) 'Stable Governments and the Allocation of Policy Portfolios' *American Political Science Review* 84: pp. 891-906

Bale, Tim and Magnus Blomgren (2008) 'Close but no Cigar? Newly Governing and Nearly Governing Parties in Sweden and New Zealand' in Deschouwer, Kris (ed) *New Parties in Government: In Power for the First Time* (London: Routledge) pp. 85-103

Bargsted, Matias A. and Orit Kedar (2009) 'Coalition Targeted Duvergian Voting: How Expectations Affect Voter Choice Under Proportional Representation' *American Journal of Political Science* 53: pp. 307-323

Barisione, Mauro (2009) 'So, What Difference do Leaders Make? Candidates' Images and the Conditionality of Leader Effects on Voting' *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties* 19: pp. 473-500

Bartkus, Viva Ona (1999) *The Dynamic of Secession* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)

Baumgartner, Frank R. And Bryan D. Jones (2009) *Agendas and Instability in American Politics 2nd Edition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press

BBC News (2001) *Plaid rejects Welsh independence, 22nd September 2001* (accessed 22nd February 2012)
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/in_depth/uk_politics/2001/conferences_2001/plaid_cymru/1558236.stm

BBC News (2003) *Swinney will defend leadership, 25th July 2003* (accessed 18th January 2013)
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/3095193.stm

BBC News (2005) *Plaid urged to find single leader, 9th May 2005* (accessed 15th January 2013)
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/vote_2005/wales/4528351.stm

BBC News (2010) *New Referendum Strategy for SNP, 11th February 2010* (accessed 8th June 2013)
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/8509814.stm

Benjamin, Roger W. (1977) 'Strategy versus Methodology in Comparative Research' *Comparative Political Studies* 9: pp. 475-484

Benton, Ted and Ian Craib (2001) *Philosophy of Social Science: The Philosophical Foundations of Social Thought* (Basingstoke: Palgrave)

Bergman, Manfred Max (2008) 'The Straw Men of the Qualitative-Quantitative Divide and their Influence on Mixed Methods Research' in Bergman, Manfred Max (ed) *Advances in Mixed Methods Research* (London: SAGE) pp. 11-21

Bogdanor, Vernon (1999) *Devolution in the United Kingdom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)

Bolleyer, Nicole (2007) 'Small Parties: From Party Pledges to Government Policy' *West European Politics* 30(1): pp. 121-147

Bolleyer, Nicole (2008) 'The Organizational Costs of Public Office' in Deschouwer, Kris (ed) *New Parties in Government: In Power for the First Time* (London: Routledge) pp.17-44

Browne, E.C. & Feste, K. (1975) 'Qualitative dimensions of coalition payoffs: Evidence for European party governments, 1945–1970' *American Behavioral Scientist* 18(4): pp. 530–556.

Bryman, Alan (2008) *Social Research Methods 3rd Edition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)

Buelens, Jo and Airo Hino (2008) 'The Electoral Fate of New Parties in Government' in Deschouwer, Kris (ed) *New Parties in Government: In Power for the First Time* (London: Routledge) pp.157-174

Burchell, Jon (2001) 'Evolving or Conforming? Assessing Organisational Reform Within European Green Parties' *West European Politics* 24(3): pp. 113-134

Burnham, Peter, Karin Gilland, Wyn Grant & Zig Layton-Henry (2004) *Research Methods in Politics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan)

Butt, Sarah (2004) 'Political Knowledge and Routes to Party Choice in the British General Election of 2001' *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties* 14: pp. 3-17

Cairney, Paul (2010) *Coalition and Minority Government in Scotland* Paper Presented to the Political Studies Associations Conference, University of Edinburgh 1st April 2010

Carter, Catríona and Romain Pasquier (2010) 'Introduction: Studying Regions as 'Spaces for Politics': Re-Thinking Territory and Strategic Action' *Regional and Federal Studies* 20: pp. 281-294

Carty, R. Kenneth (2004) 'Parties as Franchise Systems: The Stratarchical Organizational Imperative' *Party Politics* 10: pp. 5-24

Christiansen, Thomas (1998) 'Plaid Cymru: Dilemmas and Ambiguities of Welsh Regional Nationalism' in De Winter, Leiven and Huri Tursan (eds) *Regionalist Parties in Western Europe* (London: Routledge)

Clarke, Harold D., David Sanders, Marianne C. Stewart and Paul F. Whitley (2009) *Performance Politics and the British Voter* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)

Coakley, John (1992) 'The Social Origins of Nationalist Movements and Explanations of Nationalism: A Review' in Coakley, John (ed) *The Social Origins of Nationalist Movements* (London: Sage Publications) pp. 1-12

Coffey, Amanda and Paul Atkinson (1996) *Making Sense of Qualitative Data: Complementary Research Strategies* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications)

Commission on Scottish Devolution (2009) *Serving Scotland Better: Scotland and the United Kingdom in the 21st Century – Final Report, June 2009* (accessed 17th September 2012) http://www.commissiononscottishdevolution.org.uk/uploads/2009-06-12-csd-final-report-2009fbookmarked.pdf

Constitution Unit, The (2000) *Nations and Regions: The Dynamics of Devolution* (Quarterly Monitoring Programme, Wales, February 2000)

Convery, Alan (2012) 'The 2011 Scottish Conservative Party Leadership Election: Dilemmas for Statewide Parties in Regional Contexts' *Parliamentary Affairs* (Advance Access)

Creswell, John W. (2009) *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches 3rd Edition* (Thousand Oakes: Sage Publications)

Cross, William and André Blais (2012) 'Who selects the party leader?' *Party Politics* 18(2): pp. 127–150

Curtice, John (1999) 'Is Scotland a Nation and Wales Not? Why the Two Referendum Results Were So Different' in Taylor, Bridget and Katrina Thomson (eds) *Scotland and Wales: Nations Again?* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press) pp. 119-147

Curtice, John and Rachel Ormston (2013) *Attitudes towards Scotland's Constitutional Future: Initial findings from Scottish Social Attitudes survey 2012* (Edinburgh: ScotCen Social Research)
http://www.natcen.ac.uk/media/1021490/ssa12briefing.pdf

Dafis, Cynog (2012) 'Welsh speakers inhabit a networked community' *ClickonWales* (accessed 9th July 2012)
http://www.clickonwales.org/2012/04/plaid-cymru%E2%80%99s-image-2-welsh-speakers-inhabit-a-networked-community/

Daily Post (2011) *Plaid Cymru back boycott of TV licence to defend S4C, 10th September 2011* (accessed 19th June 2012)
http://www.dailypost.co.uk/news/north-wales-news/plaid-cymru-back-boycott-tv-2684643

Dardanelli, Paolo (2003) *Ideology and Rationality: The Europeanisation of the Scottish National Party* Paper Presented to the 8th EUSA International Conference, Nashville, TN USA, 27-29 March 2003

Davies, D. Hywel (1983) *The Welsh Nationalist Party 1925-1945: A Call to Nationhood* (New York: St. Martin's Press Inc.)

Davies, John (1993) *A History of Wales* (London: Penguin)

De Swaan, Abram (1973) *Coalition Theories and Cabinet Formations* (Amsterdam: Elsevier)

De Winter, Lieven and Margarita Gomez-Reino Cachafeiro (2002) 'European Integration and Ethnoregionalist Parties' *Party Politics* 8: pp. 483-503

De Winter, Lieven., Margarita Gómez-Reino and Peter Lynch (eds.) (1996) *Autonomist Parties In Europe: Identity Politics And the Revival of the Territorial Cleavage*. Barcelona: ICPS

De Winter, Lieven and Huri Türsan (eds.) (1998) *Regionalist Parties in Western Europe* (London: Routledge)

Delwit, Pascal and Emile Van Haute (2008) 'Greens in a Rainbow: The Impact of Participation in Government of the Green Parties in Belgium' in Deschouwer, Kris (ed) *New Parties in Government: In Power for the First Time* (London: Routledge) pp. 104-120

Deschouwer, Kris (2003), 'Political parties in multi-layered systems' *Journal of European Urban and Regional Studies* 10(3): pp. 213-226

Deschouwer, Kris (2008) 'Comparing Newly Governing Parties' in Deschouwer, Kris (ed) *New Parties in Government: In Power for the First Time* (London: Routledge) pp. 1-16

Devine, T.M. (1999) *The Scottish Nation 1700-2000* (London: Penguin)

Doherty, Brian (1992) 'The Fundi-Realo Controversy: An Analysis ff Four European Green Parties' *Environmental Politics* 1(1): pp. 95-120

Dumont, Patrick and Hanna Bäck (2006) 'Why So Few, and Why So Late? Green Parties and the Question of Governmental Participation' *European Journal of Political Research* 45: pp. S35-S67

Duncan, Fraser (2007) ''Lately, Things Just Don't Seem the Same': External Shocks, Party Change and the Adaptation of the Dutch Christian Democrats during 'Purple Hague' 1994-8' *Party Politics* 13(1): pp. 69-87

Duverger, Maurice (1959) *Political Parties: Their Organization and Activity in the Modern State* (London: Wiley)

Eldersveld, Samuel J. (1964) *Political Parties: A Behavioural Analysis* (Chicago: Rand McNally)

Elias, Anwen (2009a) *Minority Nationalist Parties and European Integration: A Comparative Study* (New York: Routledge)

Elias, Anwen (2009b) 'From Protest to Power: Mapping the Ideological Evolution of Plaid Cymru and the Bloque Nacionalista Galego' *Regional and Federal Studies* 19: pp. 533-557

Elias, Anwen (2009c) 'Plaid Cymru and the Challenges of Adapting to Post-Devolution Wales', *Contemporary Wales,* 22(1): pp. 113-138

Elias, Anwen (2011) 'Plaid Cymru' in Elias, Anwen and Fillippo Tronconi (eds) *From Protest to Power: Autonomist parties and the Challenges of Representation* (Vienna: Wilhelm Braumüller) pp. 259-282

Elias, Anwen and Fillippo Tronconi (2011a) 'From Protest to Power: Autonomist Parties in Government' *Party Politics* 17(4): pp. 505-524

Elias, Anwen and Fillippo Tronconi (2011b) 'Introduction: Autonomist Parties and the Challenges of Political Representation' in Elias, Anwen and Fillippo Tronconi (eds) *From Protest to Power: Autonomist parties and the Challenges of Representation* (Vienna: Wilhelm Braumüller) pp. 1-25

Epstein, Leon D. (1967) *Political Parties in Western Democracies* (London: Pall Mall Press)

Evans, Elizabeth and Emma Sanderson-Nash (2011) 'From Sandals to Suits: Professionalisation, Coalition and the Liberal Democrats' *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 13(4): pp. 459-473

Evans, Geoffrey and Dafydd Trystan (1999) 'Scotland and Wales: Nations Again?' in Taylor, Bridget and Katrina Thomson (eds) *Scotland and Wales: Nations Again?* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press) pp. 95-118

Evans, Geoffrey and Robert Andersen (2004) 'Do Issues Decide? Partisan Conditioning and Perceptions of Party Issue Positions Across the Electoral Cycle' *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties* 14: pp. 18-39

Evans, Gwynfor (2001) *For the Sake of Wales: The Memoirs of Gwynfor Evans* (Cardiff: Welsh Academic Press)

Evans, Rhys (2008) *Gwynfor Evans: A Portrait of a Patriot* (Talybont: Y Lolfa Cyf.)

Fabre, Elodie (2008) 'Party Organization in a Multi-level System: Party Organizational Change in Spain and the UK' *Regional and Federal Studies* 18(4): pp. 309-329

Fabre, Elodie (2011) 'Measuring party organization: the vertical dimension of the multi-level organization of state-wide parties in Spain and the UK' *Party Politics* 17(3): pp. 343-363.

Fairclough, Norman (2000) *New Labour, New Language?* (London: Routledge)

Finlay, Richard (1994) *Independent and Free: Scottish Politics and the Origins of the Scottish National Party 1918-1945* (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers Ltd)

Finlay, Richard (2009) 'The Early Years: From the Inter-War Period to the Mid-1960s' in Hassan, Gerry (ed) *The Modern SNP: From Protest to Power* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press) pp. 19-30

Frankland, E. Gene and Donald Schoonmaker (1992) *Between Protest and Power: The Green Party in Germany* (Boulder: Westview Press)

Freeden, Michael (1998) 'Is Nationalism a Distinct Ideology?' *Political Studies* 46: pp. 748-765

Gallagher, Tom (2009) 'Labour and the Scottish National Party: the Triumph of Continuity in a Changing Scotland' *The Political Quarterly* 80(4): pp. 533-544

Gamble, Andrew (1988) *The Free Economy and the Strong State: The Politics of Thatcherism* (Basingstoke: Macmillan)

Government of Wales Act 2006 (ch.32) London, HMSO (accessed 27th January 2012) http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/32/pdfs/ukpga_20060032_en.pdf

Guardian, The (2001) *Councillor in call to stem the 'tidal wave' of English immigrants into Wales* (accessed 17th July 2012) http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2001/jan/18/localgovernment

Handy, Charles (1993) *Únderstanding Organizations 4th Edition* (London: Penguin Books Ltd)

Harmel, Robert and Kenneth Janda (1994) 'An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change' *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 6(3): pp. 259-287

Harvey, Malcolm and Peter Lynch (2010) *From National Conversation to Independence Referendum? The SNP Government and the Politics of Independence* Paper presented to the Political Studies Association Conference, 29th March - 1st April, 2010, Edinburgh

Harvey, Malcolm and Peter Lynch (2012) 'Inside the National Conversation: The SNP Government and the Politics of Independence 2007-2010' *Scottish Affairs* 80

Harvie, Christopher (1994) *Fools Gold: The Story of North Sea Oil* (London: Penguin Group)

Hassan, Gerry (2009) 'The Auld Enemies: Scottish Nationalism and Scottish Labour' in Hassan, Gerry (ed) *The Modern SNP: From Protest to Power* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press) pp. 147-161

Hassan, Gerry and Eric Shaw (2012) *The Strange Death of Labour Scotland* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press)

Hatch, Mary Jo (1997) *Organization Theory: Modern, Symbolic and Postmodern Perspectives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)

Hay, Colin (2002) *Political Analysis: A Critical Introduction* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan)

Hazan, Reuven Y. and Gideon Rahat (2006) 'Candidate Selection: Methods and Consequences' in Katz, Richard S. and William Crotty (eds) *Handbook of Party Politics* (London: SAGE) pp. 109-121

Heidar, Knut and Jo Saglie (2003) 'Predestined Parties? Organizational Change in Norwegian Political Parties' *Party Politics* 9(2): pp. 219-239

Hepburn, Eve. (2008) 'The Rise and Fall of a Europe of the Regions' *Regional & Federal Studies* 18(5) pp. 537-555

Hepburn, Eve (2009) 'Introduction: Re-Conceptualising Sub-State Mobilization' *Regional and Federal Studies* 19(4-5): pp. 477-499

Herald, The (2012) *First Minister relents over key Scotland Bill demands* (accessed 13th June 2013) http://www.heraldscotland.com/politics/political-news/first-minister-relents-over-scotland-bill-key-demands.17085956

Herman, Valentine and John Pope (1973) 'Minority Governments in Western Democracies' *British Journal of Political Science* 3: pp. 191-212

Hindmoor, Andrew (2006) *Rational Choice* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan)

Hirsch, Joachim (1998) 'A Party is not a Movement and Vice Versa' in Mayer, Magit and John Ely (eds) *The German Greens: Paradox Between Movement and Party* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press) pp. 180-190

HM Government and Scottish Government (2012) *Agreement between the United Kingdom Government and the Scottish Government on a referendum on independence for Scotland* (Edinburgh, 15th October 2012) (accessed 20th November 2012) http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0040/00404789.pdf

Holsti, O. R. (1969) *Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley)

Hopkin, Jonathan (2003) 'Political Decentralization, Electoral Change and Party Organizational Adaptation: A Framework for Analysis' *European Urban and Regional Studies* 10(3): pp. 227-237.

Hopkin, Jonathan and Jonathan Bradbury (2006) 'British Statewide Parties and Multilevel Politics' *Publius* 36(1): pp. 135-152

Holtham Commission (2010) *Independent Commission on Funding & Finance for Wales* (Welsh Government) (accessed 27th January 2012) http://wales.gov.uk/docs/icffw/report/100705fundingsettlementfullen.pdf

House of Commons Library (2007) *The Scottish Parliamentary elections May 2007: The formation of the Scottish Executive and the election of a Presiding Officer* SN/PC/04372 (accessed 17th September 2012) http://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons/lib/research/briefings/snpc-04372.pdf

Huffington Post, The (2012) *Gay Marriage A 'Dangerous Experiment' Says Catholic Church In Scotland* (accessed 10th June 2013) http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2012/07/25/gay-marriage-a-dangerous-experiment-says-catholic-church_n_1701498.html

Hutchison, I.G.C. (2001) *Scottish Politics in the Twentieth Century* (Basingstoke: Palgrave)

Jeffrey, Charlie (2009) 'New Research Agendas on Regional Party Competition' *Regional and Federal Studies* 19: pp. 639-650

Jenkins, Bethan (2010) *Welsh Language Measure* (accessed 6th July 2012) http://www.bethanjenkinsblog.org.uk/mesur-iaith-gymraeg-welsh-language-measure

Jenkins, Philip (1992) *A History of Modern Wales 1536-1990* (Harlow: Longman)

Johns, Robert., Lynn Bennie and James Mitchell (2012) 'Gendered nationalism: The gender gap in support for the Scottish National Party' *Party Politics* 18(4): pp. 581-601

Johns, Robert; James Mitchell, David Denver and Charles Pattie (2009) 'Valence Politics in Scotland: Towards an Explanation of the 2007 Election' *Political Studies* 57: pp. 207-233

Johns, Robert; James Mitchell and Christopher J. Carman (2013) 'Constitution or Competence? The SNP's Re-election in 2011' *Political Studies* (forthcoming issue)

Jones, Rhys and Carwyn Fowler (2008) *Placing the Nation: Aberystwyth and the Reproduction of Welsh Nationalism* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press)

Katz, Richard S. and Peter Mair (1995) 'Changing Models of Party Organization and Party Democracy: The Emergence of the Cartel Party' *Party Politics* 1(1): pp. 5-28

Keating, Michael (2004) 'European Integration and the Nationalities Question', *Politics and Society,* Vol.32, No.3, pp.367--388

Kidd, Colin (2008) *Union and Unionisms: Political Thought in Scotland, 1500-2000* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)

King, Nigel and Christine Horrocks (2010) *Interviews in Qualitative Research* (London: SAGE)

Kitschelt, Herbert (1989) 'The Internal Politics of Parties: The Law of Curvilinear Disparity Revisited' *Political Studies* 37: pp. 400-42

Koelble, Thomas A. (1996) 'Economic Theories of Organization and the Politics of Institutional Design in Political Parties' *Party Politics* 2(2): pp. 251-263

Krippendorff, Klaus (2004) *Content Analysis: An Introduction to its Methodology* (Thousand Oaks: Sage)

Kuhn, Thomas (1962) *The Nature of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: Chicago University Press)

Labour (2011) Standing up for Wales: Welsh Labour Manifesto 2011 http://www.welshlabour.org.uk/uploads/welsh-labour-manifesto.pdf

Labour and Plaid Cymru (2007) *One Wales: A Progressive Agenda for the Government of Wales* (An agreement between the Labour and Plaid Cymru groups in the National Assembly, 27th June 2007) (accessed 27th January 2012) http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/27_06_07_onewales.pdf

Laver, Michael and Kenneth A. Shepsle (1990) 'Coalitions and Cabinet Government' *American Political Science Review* 84: pp. 873-890

Laver, Michael and Norman Schofield (1990) *Multiparty Government: The Politics of Coalition in Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)

Leith, Murray and Martin Steven (2010) 'Party over Policy? Scottish Nationalism and the Politics of Independence' *The Political Quarterly* 81(2): pp. 263-269

Lim, Timothy C. (2006) *Doing Comparative Politics: An Introduction to Approaches and Issues* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers)

Lukes, Steven (2005) *Power: A Radical View 2nd Edition* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

Lynch, Michael (1992) *Scotland: A New History* (London: Pimlico)

Lynch, Peter (1995) 'From red to green: The political strategy of Plaid Cymru in the 1980s and 1990s' *Regional and Federal Studies* 5(2): pp. 197-210

Lynch, Peter (1996) *Minority Nationalism and European Integration* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press)

Lynch, Peter (2002) *The History of the Scottish National Party* (Cardiff: Welsh Academic Press)

Lynch, Peter (2006) 'Governing Governing Devolution: Understanding the Office of First Ministers in Scotland and Wales' *Parliamentary Affairs* 59(3): pp.420-436

Lynch, Peter (2009) 'From Social Democracy Back to No Ideology? The Scottish National Party and Ideological Change in a Multi-Level Electoral Setting' *Regional and Federal Studies* 19: pp. 619-637

Lynch, Peter (2013) *The History of the Scottish National Party 2nd Edition* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press)

Mair, Peter (1994) 'Party Organizations: From Civil Society to the State' in Katz, Richard S. and Peter Mair (eds) *How Parties Organize* (London: SAGE) pp. 1-22

Mair, Peter and Cas Mudde (1998) 'Thje Party Family and its Study' *Annual Review of Political Science* 1: pp. 211-229

Mair, Peter., Wolfgang C. Müller and Fritz Plasser (2004a) 'Conclusion: Political Parties in Changing Electoral Markets' in Mair, Peter., Wolfgang C. Müller and Fritzz Plasser (eds) *Political Parties and Electoral Change: Party Responses to Electoral Markets* (London: SAGE) pp. 264-274

Mair, Peter., Wolfgang C. Müller and Fritz Plasser (2004b) 'Introduction: Electoral Challenges and Party Responses' in Mair, Peter., Wolfgang C. Müller and Fritz Plasser (eds) *Political Parties and Electoral Change: Party Responses to Electoral Markets* (London: SAGE) pp. 1-19

Marr, Andrew (1992) *The Battle for Scotland* (London: Penguin)

Martin, Lanny W. and Randolph T. Stevenson (2001) 'Government Formation in Parliamentary Democracies' *American Journal of Political Science* 45: pp.33-50

May, John D. (1973) 'Opinion Structure of Political Parties: The Special Law of Curvilinear Disparity' *Political Studies* 21: pp. 135-151

Mayer, Magit and John Ely (1998) 'Success and Dilemmas of Green Party Politics' in Mayer, Magit and John Ely (eds) *The German Greens: Paradox Between Movement and Party* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press) pp. 3-26

McAllister, Ian (1981) 'Party Organization and Minority Nationalism: A Comparative Study in the United Kingdom' *European Journal of Political Research* 9(3): pp. 237-255

McAllister, Laura (2001) *Plaid Cymru: The Emergence of a Political Party* (Bridgend: Poetry Wales Press Ltd)

McAllister, Laura and Michael Cole (2012) 'The 2011 Welsh General Election: An Analysis of the Latest Staging Post in the Maturing of Welsh Politics', *Parliamentary Affairs* (Advance Access July 2012)

McAngus, Craig (2013) 'Policy and Office at the Expense of Votes: Plaid Cymru and the One Wales Government' *Regional and Federal Studies* (advance online publication)

McAnulla, Stuart (2002) 'Structure and Agency' in Marsh, David and Gerry Stoker (eds) *Theory and Methods in Political Science 2nd Edition* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan) pp. 271-291

McConnell, Alan (2010) *Understanding Policy Success: Rethinking Public Policy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan

McDonnell, Duncan and James L. Newell (2011) 'Outsider parties in government in Western Europe' *Party Politics* 17(4): pp. 443-452

Meguid, Bonnie M. (2005) 'Competition Between Unequals: The Role of Mainstream Party Strategy in Niche Party Success' *American Political Science Review* 99(3): pp. 347-359

Meikle, Maureen (2001) 'Anne (1702-1714)' in Oram, Richard (ed) *The Kings and Quens of Scotland* (Stroud: Tempus Publishing Ltd.) pp. 223-227

Michels, Robert (1962 [1911]) *Political Parties: A Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy* (Toronto: Collier-Macmillan Canada Ltd.)

Mitchell, James (1996) *Strategies for Self-Government: The Campaigns for a Scottish Parliament* (Exeter: Short Run Press Ltd.)

Mitchell, James (2002) 'Political Parties' in *Nations and Regions: The Dynamics of Devolution, Quarterly Monitoring Programme, Scotland (August 2002)* (Accessed 2nd August 2013) http://www.ucl.ac.uk/constitution-unit/research/research-archive/dmr99-04/scotland_august_2002.pdf

Mitchell, James (2004) 'Scotland: Expectations, Policy Types & Devolution' in Trench, Alan (ed) *The State of the Nations 2004: Has Devolution Made a Difference?* (Exeter: Imprint Academic)

Mitchell, James (2009a) *Devolution in the UK* (Manchester: Manchester University Press)

Mitchell, James (2009b) 'From Breakthrough to Mainstream: The Politics of Potential and Blackmail' in Hassan, Gerry (ed) *The Modern SNP: From Protest to Power* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press) pp. 31-41

Mitchell, James (2010) 'The Narcissism of Small Differences: Scotland and Westminster' *Parliamentary Affairs* 63(1): pp. 98-116

Mitchell, James; Lynn Bennie and Robert Johns (2012) *The SNP: Transition to Power* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)

Montero, José Ramón and Richard Gunther (2002) 'Introduction: Reviewing and Reassessing Parties' in Gunther, Richard., José Ramón Montero and Juan J. Linz (eds) *Political Parties: Old Concepts and New Challenges* (Oxford: Oxford University Press) pp. 1-35

Morris, Marc (2008) *A Great and Terrible King: Edward I and the Forging of Britain* (London: Windmill)

Müller, Wolfgang C. and Thomas M. Meyer (2010) 'Meeting the Challenges of Representation and Accountability in Multi-Party Governments' *West European Politics* 35: pp. 1065-1092

Müller-Rommel, Ferdinand (1998) 'Ethnoregionalist Parties in Western Europe: Theoretical Considerations and Framework of Analysis', in De Winter, Lieven and Huri Tursan (eds), *Regionalist parties in Western Europe*, (London: Routledge) pp. 17-27

National Assembly for Wales (2009) 'Statement on the Referendum: Next Steps' *The Record of Proceedings Tuesday 3rd February 2009*

http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-third-assembly/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=115357&ds=2%2F2009#3?

National Assembly for Wales (2010) *Proposed Welsh Language (Wales) Measure Stage 1 Committee Report*
http://www.assemblywales.org/cr-ld8168-e.pdf

National Assembly for Wales (2011) 'Legislative Statement on the Proposed Welsh Language Legislative Competence Order' *The Record of Proceedings Tuesday 8th March 2011*
http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-chamber/bus-chamber-third-assembly-rop.htm?act=dis&id=212108&ds=3%2F2011#dat1

Norris, Pippa (1995) 'May's Law of Curvilinear Disparity Revisited: Leaders, Officers, Members and Voters in British Political Parties' *Party Politics* 1: pp. 29-47

O'Neill, Michael (1997) *Green Parties and Political Change in Contemporary Europe: New Politics, Old Predicaments* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Ltd)

Osmond, John (2012) 'The Day Labour Became Welsh' *ClickonWales* (accessed 13th February 2012)
http://www.clickonwales.org/2012/03/the-day-labour-became-welsh/

Panebianco, Angelo (1988) *Political Parties: Organization and Power* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)

Pedersen, Helene Helboe (2010) 'How intra-party power relations affect the coalition behaviour of political parties' *Party Politics* 16(6): pp. 737-754

Peräkylä, Anssi (2008) 'Analyzing Talk and Text' in Denzin, Norman K. and Yvonna S. Lincoln (eds) *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials* (Los Angeles: Sage Publications) pp. 351-374

Plaid Cymru (2001) *2001 Conference Minutes.* Cardiff: Plaid Cymru

Plaid Cymru (2003) *Annual Conference Minutes* (Plaid Cymru)

Plaid Cymru (2007a) 'CC 12/07 Motion from the NEC – One Wales' *National Council, Pontrhydfendigaid Pavillion, 7th July 2007*

Plaid Cymru (2007b) *Make a Difference: National Assembly Election Manifesto 2007* (Plaid Cymru)

Plaid Cymru (2011a) *Cyfansoddiad/Constitution* (Plaid Cymru, 19 September 2011)

Plaid Cymru (2011b) *Cyfansoddiad/Constitution* (Plaid Cymru, 31st May 2011)

Plaid Cymru (2011c) *A revolution needed in S4C* (accessed 19th June 2012)

http://www.english.plaidcymru.org/the-slate/2011/07/11/a-revolution-needed-in-s4c/

Plaid Cymru (2011d) *A route map for constitutional change* (accessed 19th June 2012)
http://www.english.plaidcymru.org/the-slate/2011/06/13/a-route-map-for-constitutional-change/

Plaid Cymru (2011e) 'Lessons from the SNP?' PlaidTV (accessed 20th June 2012)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jJPfDUFdbJc

Plaid Cymru (2011f) *Moving Forward 2011: Renewing Plaid for Wales Conference* (accessed 3rd July 2012)
http://www.plaidcymru.org/uploads/Conference_documents/PC_2011_cyfan.pdf

Plaid Cymru (2011g) *Gweithlen January-February 2011* (Information pamphlet circulated amongst members)

Plaid Cymru (2012a) *Moving Forward: Renewing Plaid for Wales* (Plaid Cymru)

Plaid Cymru (2012b) *Our vision for culture, heritage and language* (accessed 17th July 2012)
http://www.english.plaidcymru.org/our-vision-for-culture-heritage-and-language/

Plaid Cymru (2012c) *Welsh: A Language for an Independent Wales* (accessed 17th July 2012)
http://en.leannewood.com/?page_id=427

Plaid Cymru (2012d) *Proposed Amendments for Moving Forward Report, Presented to National Council Meeting, 3rd March 2012, Aberystwyth*

Plaid Cymru (2012e) *Minutes from Meeting of National Council, 3rd March 2012, Aberystwyth*

Pogunkte, Thomas (2002) 'Green Parties in National Governments: From Protest to Acquiescence?' *Environmental Politics* 11(1): pp. 133-145

Rahn, Wendy M. (1993) 'The Role of Partisan Stereotypes in Information Processing About Political Candidates' *American Journal of Political Science* 37: pp. 472-496

Rihoux, Benoît and Wolfgang Rüdig (2006) 'Analysing Greens in Power: Setting the Agenda' *European Journal of Political Research* 45: pp. S1-S33

Riker, William H. (1962) *Theory of Political Coalitions* (New Haven: Yale University Press)

Rokkan, Stein and Derek Urwin (1983) *Economy, Territory, Identity: Politics in West European Peripheries.* London: Sage

Rüdig, Wolfgang (2006) 'Is government good for Greens? Comparing the electoral effects of government participation in Western and East-Central Europe' *European Journal of Political Research* 45(s1): S127-S154

Russell, Meg (2005) *Building New Labour: The Politics of Party Organisation* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan)

Salmond, Alex (2007) *First Minister's Address to Annual SNP Conference 28th October 2007* (accessed 30th August 2012) http://www.snp.org/media-centre/news/2007/oct/first-ministers-address-annual-snp-conference

Salmond, Alex (2011) *Address to Conference by First Minister and SNP Leader Alex Salmond 22nd October 2011* (accessed 7th September 2012) http://www.snp.org/blog/post/2011/oct/alex-salmond-delivers-keynote-speech

Salmond, Alex (2012) *The Guardian 8th Hugo Young Lecture, 24th January 2012* (accessed 15th September 2012) http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rf0y7QOI7ss

Sandry, Alan (2011) *Plaid Cyrmu: An Ideological Analysis* (Cardiff: Welsh Academic Press)

Sartori, Giovanni (1976) *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis* (Colchester: ECPR Press)

Scarrow, Susan (1996) *Parties and their Members: Organizing for Victory in Britain and Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)

Schlesinger, Joseph (1994) *Political Parties and the Winning of Office* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press)

Scotsman, The (2002a) *Nationalists create their own worst nightmare* (accessed 18th January 2013) http://www.scotsman.com/news/nationalists-create-their-own-worst-nightmare-1-846784

Scotsman, The (2002b) *Swinney faces mutiny after activists' revolt* (accessed 18th January 2013) http://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/top-stories/swinney-faces-mutiny-after-activists-revolt-1-608973

Scott, John (1990) *A Matter of Record: Documentary Sources in Social Research* (Cambridge: Polity)

Scottish Government (2007a) *Principles and Priorities: The Government's Programme for Scotland - September 2007* (Edinburgh: Scottish Executive)

Scottish Government (2007b) *Choosing Scotland's Future – A National Conversation: Independence and Responsibility in the Modern World* (Edinburgh: Scottish Executive)

Scottish Government (2009) The Scottish Government Response to the Recommendations of the Commission on Scottish Devolution (accessed 10th September 2012)
http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/11/09152544/1

Scottish Government (2010) *Scotland's Future: Draft Referendum (Scotland) Bill Consultation Paper* (Edinburgh: Scottish Executive) (accessed 15th September 2012)
http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/303348/0095138.pdf

Scottish Government (2012) *The Scottish Government Response to the Recommendations of the Commission on Scottish Devolution* (Edinburgh: Scottish Government)

Scottish Parliament (2008a) *Scottish Parliament Fact Sheet: Scottish Parliament Legislation Session 1* (accessed 10th January 2013)
http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/Research%20briefings%20and%20fact%20sheets/Scottish_Parliament_Legislation_Session_1.pdf

Scottish Parliament (2008b) *Scottish Parliament Fact Sheet: Scottish Parliament Legislation Session 2* (accessed 10th January 2013)
http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/Research%20briefings%20and%20fact%20sheets/Scottish_Parliament_Legislation_Session_2_NEW_VERSION.pdf

Scottish Parliament (2008b) *Scottish Parliament Fact Sheet: Scottish Parliament Legislation Session 2* (accessed 10th January 2013)
http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/Research%20briefings%20and%20fact%20sheets/Scottish_Parliament_Legislation_Session_2_NEW_VERSION.pdf

Scottish Parliament (2011) *Scottish Parliament Fact Sheet: Scottish Parliament Legislation Session 3* (accessed 10th January 2013)
http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefingsAndFactsheets/Factsheets/Scottish_Parliament_Legislation_Session_3_NEW_VERSION.pdf

Scully, Roger (2013a) 'Visibility of Politicians in the Bay' *ClickonWales* (accessed 2nd August 2013)
http://www.clickonwales.org/2013/07/visibility-of-politicians-in-the-bay/

Scully, Roger (2013b) 'More Scottish than Welsh? Understanding the 2011 Devolved Elections in Scotland and Wales' *Regional and Federal Studies* (advance online access)

Scully, Roger and Anwen Elias (2008) 'The 2007 Welsh Assembly Election' *Regional and Federal Studies* 18: pp.103-109

Scully, Roger and Richard Wyn Jones (2012) 'Still three Wales? Social location and electoral behaviour in contemporary Wales' *Electoral Studies* 31(4): pp. 656-667

Shipton, Martin (2011) *Poor Man's Parliament: Ten Years of the Welsh Assembly* (Bridgend: Seren)

Shortridge, Sir Jon (2010) 'New Development: The Evolution of Welsh Devolution' *Public Money and Management 30*(2), pp. 87-90

Smith, Jennifer K. (2009) 'Campaigning and the Catch-All Party: The Process of Party Transformation in Britain' *Party Politics* 15(5): pp. 555-572

Smith, Rodney and Anika Gauja (2010) 'Understanding Party Constitutions as Responses to Specific Challenges' *Party Politics* 16(6): pp. 755-775

SNP (date unknown (a)) *Rules on Vetting and Selection of Potential Parliamentary and Local Government Candidates*

SNP (date unknown (b)) Standing Orders for National Conference

SNP (2003) *John Swinney Comments on Election Results* (accessed 20th November 2012)
http://voteforscotland.snp.org/media-centre/news/2003/may/john-swinney-comments-election-results

SNP (2007) *Manifesto – It's Time to Move Forward* (accessed 14th December 2012)
http://www.politicsresources.net/area/uk/ass07/man/scot/snp.pdf

SNP (2004a) *Paper to National Executive Committee: A Draft Constitution for the SNP* (10th January 2004)

SNP (2004b) *SNP Special National Conference – Final Agenda* (Aberdeen, 23rd-24th April, 2004)

SNP (2009a) *Constitution of the Scottish National Party* (SNP, 16th October 2009)

SNP (2009b) *SNP outlines plan for independence referendum* (accessed 15th September 2012)
http://www.snp.org/media-centre/news/2009/sep/snp-outlines-plans-independence-referendum

SNP (2010) *Economy and jobs at heart of independence* (accessed 15th September 2012)
http://www.snp.org/media-centre/news/2010/oct/economy-jobs-heart-independence

SNP (2011a) *Re-Elect a Scottish a Scottish Government Working for Scotland: The Scottish National Party Manifesto 2011* (accessed 5th October 2012)

http://votesnp.com/campaigns/SNP_Manifesto_2011_lowRes.pdf

SNP (2011b) *SNP Surge to Holyrood Poll Lead* (accessed 5th June 2013) http://www.snp.org/media-centre/news/2011/feb/snp-surge-holyrood-poll-lead

SNP (2011c) *What has the Scottish Government ever done for us? 84 of 94 Headline Pledges* (accessed 6th June 2013) http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/15_04_11_snpdocument.pdf

SNP (2012a) *Reports of the National Office Bearers and Others 2011-2012*

SNP (2012b) *2012 Annual Conference Final Agenda*

SNP (2012c) *Resolutions: "The Social Union" - Saturday - SNP Spring Conference 2012* (accessed 13th June 2013) http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gx2vo07mw-4

Ştefuriuc, Irina (2009) 'Explaining Government Formation in Multi-Level Settings: Coalition Theory Revisited – Evidence from the Spanish Case' *Regional and Federal Studies* 19: pp. 97-116

Strøm, Kaare (1984) 'Minority Governments in Parliamentary Democracies: The Rationality of Nonwinning Cabinet Solutions' *Comparative Political Studies* 17: pp. 199-227

Strøm, Kaare (1990) *Minority Government and Majority Rule* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)

Strøm, Kaare (2008) 'Delegation and Accountability in Parliamentary Democracies' *European Journal of Political Research* 37: pp. 261-289

Strøm, Kaare and Wolfgang C. Müller (1999) 'Political Parties and Hard Choices' in Müller, Wolfgang C. and Kaare Strøm (eds) *Policy, Office or Votes: How Political Parties in Western Europe Make Hard Decisions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) pp. 1-35

Sturgeon, Nicola (2010) *Nicola Sturgeon's address to SNP Conference 16th October 2010* (accessed 15th September 2012) http://www.snp.org/media-centre/news/2010/oct/nicola-sturgeons-address-snp-conference

Sturgeon, Nicola (2010) *Nicola Sturgeon's address to SNP Conference 21st October 2012* (accessed 3th June 2013) http://www.snp.org/blog/post/2012/oct/snp-conference-address-nicola-sturgeon-msp

Sundberg, Jan and Niklas Wilhelmsson (2008) 'Moving From Movement to Government: the Transformation of the Finnish Greens' in Deschouwer, Kris (ed) *New Parties in Government: In Power for the First Time* (London: Routledge) pp. 121-134

Swinney, John (2003) *John Swinney MSP address to National Council 07/06/03* (accessed 29th January 2013) http://www.snp.org/media-centre/news/2003/jun/john-swinney-msp-address-national-council-070603

Swinney, John (2004) *John Swinney's keynote address to Spring Conference* (accessed 17th January 2013) http://voteforscotland.snp.org/media-centre/news/2004/apr/john-swinneys-keynote-address-spring-conference

Tashakkori, Abbas and Charles Teddlie (2008) 'Quality of Inferences in Mixed Methods Research: Calling for an Integrative Framework' in Bergman, Manfred Max (ed) *Advances in Mixed Methods Research* (London: SAGE) pp. 101-119

Teddlie, Charles and Abbas Tashakkori (2009) *Foundations of Mixed Methods Research: Integrating Quantitative and Qualitative Research Approaches in the Social and Behavioural Sciences* (Los Angeles: SAGE)

Thomas, Alys and Martin Laffin (2001) 'The First Welsh Constitutional Crisis: The Alun Michael Resignation' *Public Policy and Administration* 16(1): pp. 18-31

Torrance, David (2009) *'We in Scotland': Thatcherism in a Cold Climate* (Edinburgh: Birlinn Limited)

Toubeau, Simon (2011) 'Regional Nationalist Parties and Constitutional Change in Parliamentary Democracies: A Framework for Analysis' *Regional and Federal Studies* 21(4-5): pp.427-446

Trystan, Dafydd; Roger Scully and Richard Wyn Jones (2003) 'Explaining the 'Quiet Earthquake': Voting Behaviour in the First Election to the National Assembly for Wales' *Electoral Studies* 22: pp. 635-650

UK Parliament (2012) *Scotland Act 2010-12* (accessed 1st October 2012) http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-12/scotland.html

Van Atta, S. A. (2003) "Regional Nationalist Parties and the New Politics: The Bloque Nacionalista Gallego and Plaid Cymru", *Regional and Federal Studies*, 13: pp. 30-56

Van Der Brug, Wouter., Cees van der Eijk and Mark Franklin (2007) *The Economy of the Vote: Economic Conditions and the Vote in Fifteen Countries* (New York: Cambridge University Press)

Van Der Eijk, Lees and Mark N. Franklin (2009) *Elections and Voters* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan)

Van Houten, P. (2009) 'Multi-Level Relations in Political Parties: A Delegation Approach' *Party Politics* 15(2): pp. 137-156.

Van Der Zwet, Arno (2012) *A comparison of civic and ethnic national identities in the Scottish National Party and Frisian National Party and their impact on attitudes towards European integration, immigration and multiculturalism* (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Strathclyde)

Vowles, Jack (2010) 'Making a Difference? Public Perceptions of Coalition, Single-Party and Minority Governments' *Electoral Studies* 29: pp. 370-380

Wagner, Markus (2012) 'Defining and measuring niche parties' *Party Politics* 18(6): pp. 845-864

Ware, Alan (1996) *Political Parties and Party Systems* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)

Warwick, Paul V. (1996) 'Coalition Government Membership in West European Parliamentary Democracies' *British Journal of Political Science* 26: pp. 471-499

Warwick, Paul (2001) 'Coalition Policy in Parliamentary Democracies: Who Gets How Much and Why' *Comparative Political Studies* 34(10): pp. 1212-1236

Weiss, Robert S. (1994) *Learning from Strangers: The Art and Method of Qualitative Interview Studies* (New York: Maxwell Macmillan International)

Welsh Government (2007a) *Priorities for the Heritage Portfolio* (accessed 5th July 2012)
http://wales.gov.uk/about/cabinet/cabinetstatements/2007/021007rgt/?lang=en

Welsh Government (2007b) *Appointment as Deputy First Minister – Ieuan Wyn Jones Statement* (accessed 6th July 2012)
http://wales.gov.uk/about/cabinet/cabinetstatements/2007/1570294/?lang=en

Welsh Language (Wales) Measure (2011) (Cardiff: National Assembly for Wales)
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/mwa/2011/1/pdfs/mwa_20110001_en.pdf

Western Mail (2007) *Plaid rainbow coalition edges closer, 21st May 2007* (accessed 24th January 2012)
http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/plaid-rainbow-coalition-edges-closer-2252803

Western Mail (2010) *Last-minute addition to language law welcomed, 8th December 2010* (accessed 29th January 2012)
http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/2010/12/08/last-minute-addition-to-language-law-welcomed-91466-27786764/

Western Mail (2011) *Elis-Thomas attacks 'mindless' Plaid election strategy, 12th May 2011* (accessed 13th July 2012)

http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/welsh-politics/assembly-election-2011/election-2011/2011/05/12/elis-thomas-attacks-mindless-plaid-election-strategy-91466-28679421/

Williams, Gwyn Alf (1985) When Was Wales? The History, People and Culture of an Ancient Country (London: Penguin Group)

Wilson, Gordon (2009) *SNP: The Turbulent Years 1960-1990* (Stirling: Scots Independent (Newspapers) Ltd)

Wright, Daniel B. (1997) *Understanding Statistics: An Introduction for the Social Sciences* (London: SAGE Publications Ltd)

Wright, William E. (1971) 'Comparative Party Models: Rational-Efficient and Party Democracy' in Wright, William E. (ed) *A Comparative Study of Party Organization* (Ohio: Columbus) pp. 17-54

Wyn Jones, Ieuan (2002) Keynote Speech to Plaid Cymru Annual Conference September 2002 (accessed 14th April 2013)
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/2270944.stm

Wyn Jones, Ieuan (2011) *Speech to Plaid Cymru Conference 9th September 2011* (accessed 20th June 2012)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q4D0V4zkSNU

Wyn Jones, Richard (2009) 'Plaid Cymru and Europe: From Utopia to Reality' *Nations and Nationalism* 15: pp. 129-147

Wyn Jones, Richard and Roger Scully (2004) 'Minor Tremor but Several Casualties: The 2003 Welsh Election' *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties* 14: pp. 191-207

Wyn Jones, Richard and Roger Scully (2007) *Wales Devolution Monitoring Report, September 2007.* (London: Constitution Unit) (Accessed 14th April 2013)
http://www.ucl.ac.uk/constitution-unit/research/research-archive/wales07.pdf

Wyn Jones, Richard and Roger Scully (2012) *Wales Says Yes: Devolution and the 2011 Welsh Referendum* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press)

Yin, Robert K. (2009) Case Study Research: Design and Methods 4th Edition (London: SAGE)