REGIONALIST PARTY ELECTORAL OUTCOMES AND THE SUPPLY-SIDE OF PARTY POLITICS

by

CARY CHRISTOPHER FONTANA

A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Department of Political Science
and the Graduate School of the University of Oregon
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

September 2018

DISSERTATION APPROVAL PAGE

Student: Cary Christopher Fontana

Title: Regionalist Party Electoral Outcomes and the Supply-Side of Party Politics

This dissertation has been accepted and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in the Department of Political Science by:

Craig Parsons	Chairperson
William Terry	Core Member
Craig Kauffman	Core Member
Alexander Murphy	Institutional Representative

and

Janet Woodruff-Borden	Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

Original approval signatures are on file with the University of Oregon Graduate School.

Degree awarded September 2018

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

Cary Christopher Fontana

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Political Science

September 2018

Title: Regionalist Party Electoral Outcomes and the Supply-Side of Party Politics

This dissertation addresses two important questions: what constitutes regionalist party success and what factors explain this success? Regionalist parties are political parties that compete within a confined geographic region and focus on gaining greater political autonomy. This differentiates them from mainstream parties who prefer to emphasize traditional left-right political issues and compete across the entire country. I argue that to better understand the electoral outcomes of these parties, their results need a more nuanced categorization: breakthrough, failure, and persistence. Breakthrough occurs when a party has a large surge in support. Electoral failure happens when a party suffers a precipitous decline in vote shares, diminishing its political relevance. Persistence results when a party replicates its previous electoral outcome with minimal change.

I used a supply-side and demand-side theoretical framing to consider the influences on regionalist party outcomes. Demand-side or "bottom-up" based theories state that political parties are primarily responsive organizations that adapt to changes in public attitudes. Thus, they must respond and closely align with the social, cultural, and economic positions of the public. I hypothesized, however, that supply-side factors best explain a regionalist party's fate. Supply-side or "top-down" theories maintain factors

outside of public demand can shape elections. These include institutional arrangements and party strategies, such as the positions the parties take and salience they give to particular issues. In this framework, the choices parties make can impact citizens' voting. To explain breakthrough, failure, and persistence, I found three factors most relevant: the emphasis mainstream parties put on issues related to regional autonomy compared to left-right issues, the positions mainstream parties take on decentralizing power, and the positions that regionalist parties adopt regarding regional autonomy. When all of these align favorably in an election a party is more likely to breakthrough. In instances where all of them align unfavorably the probability of failure increases. Persistence is most probable when one or two of the factors is beneficial, but not all of them. I analyzed these questions using a mixed-methods approach that included multiple regression analyses and case studies of eight different elections in Scotland.

CURRICULUM VITAE

NAME OF AUTHOR: Cary Christopher Fontana

GRADUATE AND UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOLS ATTENDED:

University of Oregon, Eugene
Furman University, Greenville South Carolina

DEGREES AWARDED:

Doctor of Philosophy, Political Science, 2018, University of Oregon
Master of Science, Political Science, 2015, University of Oregon
Bachelor of Arts, Political Science and Economics, 2010, Furman University

AREAS OF SPECIAL INTEREST:

Comparative Politics

International Relations

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Water and Sanitation Extension Agent, Peace Corps Mali, 2010-2012

Graduate Teaching Fellow, University of Oregon, September 2012-June 2016, September 2017-June 2018

GRANTS, AWARDS, AND HONORS:

Fulbright-Schuman Grant- European Union, Department of State, 2016-2017

William Mitchell Award- Summer Research Award, University of Oregon 2016

William Mitchell Award- Summer Research Award, University of Oregon 2014

PUBLICATIONS:

Cotton, R., & Fontana, C. (2018). Party Competition and Institutional Change in the United Kingdom. *Contemporary British History*, 1-27.

Fontana, C., & Parsons, C. (2015). 'One Woman's Prejudice': Did Margaret Thatcher Cause Britain's Anti-Europeanism?. *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies, 53*(1), 89-105.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I owe so much to all of the people that made the completion of my Ph.D. possible over the previous six years. I would like to thank the following:

Dr. Craig Parsons has provided so much to this project and my education over the past six years. Every class, office hour, and skype meeting has moved this project along. His constant guidance and interest in this dissertation and my career meant so much. His willingness to meet so often and read draft after draft made this project a success. I hope to emulate his example as I move forward with my career in academia.

To the other members of the committee, Dr. William Terry, Dr. Craig Kauffman, and Dr. Alec Murphy, I extend my gratitude. Dr. Terry's constant engagement with the project, especially with the quantitative analysis taught me so much. Dr. Kauffman and Dr. Murphy your feedback and conversations drove this project forward.

To the Fulbright Commission, I thank you for the Fulbright-Schuman Research Grant. Without my year in Scotland and Catalunya, this project would not have been the same. I would also like to thank Dr. James Mitchel and Dr. Klaus-Jürgen Nagel for being my advisors at the University of Edinburgh and Universitat Pompeu Fabra. They provided useful insight into my project and connected me to so many people to interview.

To my friends, Roger Brubaker, Denise Silfee, William Hallgren, Alyssa Bonini, Josh Jennings, Shasta Jennings, Nicky Ulrich, Noah Simons, Josh Baker, and Kevin O'Hare, without all of you graduate school would have been a far less enjoyable experience. Thank you for pulling me away from my computer on a regular basis to help keep me going in the long run.

To my parents, Diane Follingstad, Lou Fontana, Al Scovern, and Virginia Williamson, you have provided guidance for so long in my life. In many ways, this feels like it is as much for all of you as it is for me. Your constant love and support buoyed me through.

Finally, to Sarah Lyons, my love. You have supported me through everything, even though it has meant such a long time not living in the same place. Without you, none of this would be possible. My life would not be the same without you.

FOR MY PARENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION, LITERATURE REVIEW, AND THEORY

INTRODUCTION

Regionalist parties emerged as a significant political force over the previous forty years in advanced democracies, and they influenced electoral outcomes at national, regional, and local levels. This type of political party differs from more traditional national mainstream parties[1] because it only competes within a confined geographical space and its primary agenda is achieving some form of greater regional autonomy. Regionalist parties are not rare across, with seventy-four competing in eleven countries and fifty-six regions across national and regional elections in Western Europe and Canada since 1970 (Massetti & Schakel, 2016). In certain instances, these parties' electoral strength has threatened the integrity of various states by producing devolution and independence referendums in several regions, including Scotland, Quebec, and Catalunya. Regionalist party electoral success was an important prerequisite for those events, and these parties continue to affect European and Canadian elections. However, defining what constitutes electoral success for regionalist parties remains relatively ambiguous. In addition to an underdeveloped conceptualization of regionalist party electoral success, the factors that contribute to that success need further research. Thus,

[1] I use the term mainstream party to refer to political parties that compete primarily at a national level, have the potential to form or lead coalition governments, largely paint themselves as big-tent parties, and focus primarily on left-right issues. I will discuss the difference between mainstream parties and regionalist parties in a subsequent section.

the two questions this dissertation addresses are what constitutes regionalist party electoral success and why do regionalist parties succeed in elections.

In order to answer these two questions, first electoral outcomes need a proper categorization, and then a mixed-methods analysis of the factors that produce the different results, using both large-N regression analysis and small-N case studies, can occur. Numerous metrics exist to assess regionalist party outcomes including national vote shares, regional vote shares, the index of electoral success, vote share thresholds, and participation in coalition governments (Gordin, 2001; Brancati, 2008; Loomes, 2014; Jolly, 2015). These measures, however, fail to capture regionalist party results adequately because they do not recognize regionalist electoral outcomes as three distinct processes: electoral breakthrough, electoral persistence, and electoral failure.[2] Electoral breakthrough occurs when regionalist parties first achieve electoral relevance and when they make subsequent large gains in support. Persistence occurs when they maintain their previous level of electoral relevance. Electoral failure occurs when parties experience a sharp decline in their support or become completely irrelevant players.

I hypothesize that different factors likely explain the different types of success. To assess the influences on electoral breakthrough, electoral failure, and electoral persistence, I consider the various explanations through a demand-side and supply-side framework (Mudde, 2007). Factors that belong within the demand-side family of explanations are those capable of fostering "bottom-up" changes in electoral support for regionalist parties. These would include economic and sociocultural factors like the unemployment rate, which can stimulate public satisfaction or discontent that translates

[2] As I will discuss below, the categorizations of electoral outcomes as electoral persistence and electoral breakthrough is underdeveloped in the literature, being used most in two studies on right-wing parties. See Coffé (2004) and Mudde (2007).

into changes in party support. Supply-side explanations of regionalist party success focus on elements that are less influenced by public demands with particular attention paid to institutional and party strategic variables. These would include factors such as the electoral system, mainstream party positions on issues, and regionalist party positions on issues. While initially I believed that two different types of supply-side factors, external and internal, would explain breakthrough and persistence separately, ultimately, I found, that the interplay of three supply-side influences played the biggest role in determining whether a regionalist party breaks through, fails, or persists. I will discuss these three influences and how they affect different outcomes more specifically below once I develop a more thorough definition of the election outcomes and the types of supply-side and demand-side explanations. I will highlight briefly how my hypotheses and findings differed but save a fully developed assessment for the conclusion.

I assess my research questions and hypotheses using a mixed-methods approach. My unit of analysis for both is individual national elections. Thus, I conduct regression analyses of regionalist party outcomes for twenty-six regionalist parties, in sixteen regions, across six countries in fifty different national elections. My analysis covers parties from regions in Belgium, Canada, Italy, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom (See Figures 1.1 and 1.2 for maps of the regions with regionalist parties in this dissertation and their highest vote share earned). For the case studies, I examine eight elections in Scotland to understand the influences on the Scottish National Party's (SNP) electoral returns. By adopting both large-N and small-N methods, I can leverage the analytical power that each offers to bolster my conclusions. In addition, with the

difficulty of conducting effective analysis of elections, a multi-methods approach can yield clearer results.

Figure 1.1: European Regions with Regionalist Parties in this Dissertation

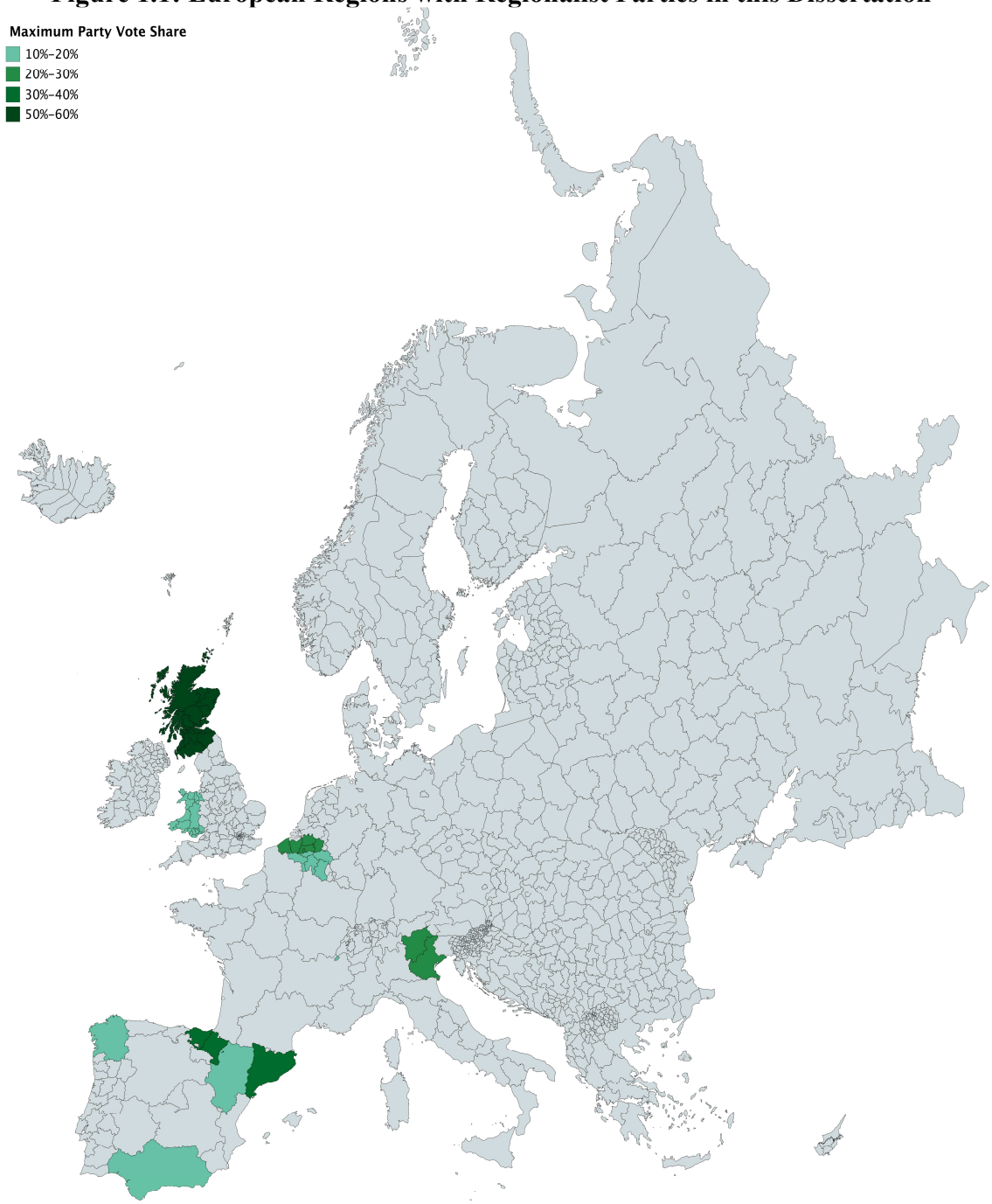


Figure 1.2: Canadian Regions with Regionalist Parties in this Dissertation

DEFINING AND CLASSIFYING REGIONALIST PARTIES

The regionalist party classification encompasses many parties with different political, economic, and cultural agendas (see Table 1.1 for the sample used in this dissertation) (Alonso, 2012). Some regionalist parties advocate for outright secession with an ultimate goal of forming an independent state. These parties, such as the Scottish National Party in the United Kingdom and Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya in Spain receive considerable attention largely based on the extreme nature of their objectives. Others, including Convergencia i Unio in Spain and Lega Nord in Italy pursued more tempered goals such as the establishment of a devolved parliament or assembly with

some semblance of control over certain policy issues or increased devolution once an assembly existed. Certain parties, such as the Union Democratique Bretonne in France, focus on promoting greater cultural autonomy by pushing for national recognition of the Breton language. Fearon and Van Houten (2002) develop a fairly effective definition that captures this diversity by classifying a regionalist party as a "party which nominates candidates for elections (including national elections) in a strict subset of the regions in a state (typically just one), and whose platform explicitly appeals to that subset" (14).

Fearon and Van Houten's (2004) definition can be improved by specifying the meaning behind their qualifier that a regionalist party's "platform explicitly appeals to that subset" (14). An unambiguous framing of this is that regionalist parties make the center-periphery issue dimension their primary focus in electoral competition. An issue dimension is a collection of related policy areas so the center-periphery issue dimension encompasses the range of issues focused on the where power resides, specifically the degree to which authority resides in the central state or peripheral regions (Alonso, 2012, p. 25). Regionalist parties' *raison d'etre* is the pursuit of greater regional autonomy, which means their primary concern is the location of power regarding economic, cultural, and institutional issues.

An effective way to demonstrate the unique aspects of regionalist parties and further clarify the definition is through a comparison with national mainstream parties. Mainstream parties have been defined as "the electorally dominant actors in the center-left, center, and center-right blocs on the Left-Right political spectrum" (Meguid, 2005, p. 348). Mainstream parties make the left-right issue dimension their primary focus in electoral competition. Since they compete primarily on left-right issues they have a

broader appeal and can stand in elections across the entire country, in comparison to regionalist parties that prioritize the center-periphery issue dimension, specifically as it relates to their geographic region.

Table 1.1: Regionalist Parties Included in this Dissertation

Party	Country	Region	Years (Number of Elections)
Volksunie	Belgium	Flanders	1954-1999 (15)
Vlaams Belang	Belgium	Flanders	1978-2010 (10)
Nieuw-Vlaamse Alliantie	Belgium	Flanders	2003-2010 (3)
Rassemblement Wallon	Belgium	Wallonia	1968-1981 (6)
Front Democratique des Francophones	Belgium	Brussels	1965-1991 (10)
Bloc Quebecois	Canada	Quebec	1993-2015 (8)
Lega Nord	Italy	Veneto	1992-2013 (7)
Sudtiroler Volkspartei	Italy	South Tyrol	2006, 2013 (2)
Partido Andalucista	Spain	Andalusia	1979, 1989-1993, 2000-2004 (5)
Partido Aragones	Spain	Aragon	1979, 1986-1993, 2000 (5)
Chunta Aragonesista	Spain	Aragon	2004, 2008 (2)
Coalicion Canaria	Spain	Canary Islands	1993-2016 (8)
Bloque Nacionalista Gallego	Spain	Galicia	1996-2011 (5)
Union del Pueblo Navarro	Spain	Navarre	2004-2008 (2)
Geroa Bai	Spain	Navarre	2011 (1)
Euska Herria Bildu	Spain	Basque Country	2015-2016 (2)
Euskadiko Ezkerra	Spain	Basque Country	1977-1989 (5)
Eusko Alkartasuna	Spain	Basque Country	1989-2008 (6)
Euzko Alderdi Jeltzalea	Spain	Basque Country	1977-2016 (13)
Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya	Spain	Catalunya	1977-2016 (13)
Convergencia I Unio	Spain	Catalunya	1979-2011 (10)
Democracia I Llibertat	Spain	Catalunya	2015 (1)
Convergencia Democratica de Catalunya	Spain	Catalunya	2016 (1)
Mouvement Citoyens Genevois	Switzerland	Geneva	2011 (1)
Scottish National Party	United Kingdom	Scotland	1992-2001, 2015 (4)
Plaid Cymru	United Kingdom	Wales	2015 (1)

Regionalist and mainstream parties do not simply compete on either the center-periphery or left-right issue dimensions respectively. They make the other dimension their secondary focus; often in an attempt to broaden their appeal and more effectively

compete with each other. Regionalist parties, in many instances, have a position on the left-right dimension, and mainstream parties adopt center-periphery positions as they "jealously guard their electoral territory" by establishing "some diluted form of the programme being propagated by the [regionalist] party" (Mitchell, 1996, p. 174-175).

Previous research that mainly focused on party competition in a unidimensional framework tried to subsume all issues within the left-right issue dimension or fit it within the materialist-post-materialist dimension (Warwick, 2002). The center-periphery issue dimension deserves its own categorization for several reasons. First, the issues related to the center-periphery dimension pre-date the materialist-post-materialist dimension. Second, the issues associated with the center-periphery dimension cross-cut the left-right issue dimension. Finally, by subsuming all issues, including the center-periphery dimension, under the left-right dimension, the meaning of the left-right dimension becomes ambiguous and becomes a less precise measure.

Regionalist parties, while different from mainstream parties, belong to a larger family of niche parties. Niche parties have been defined in several ways with the most simplistic definition claiming, "A niche party emphasizes policy areas neglected by its competitors," thus, it constitutes its own type of party (Meyer & Miller, 2015, p. 261). Regionalist parties belong in this categorization because they focus on the neglected center-periphery dimension. Far-left, far-right, and environmentalist parties also belong within the niche party family. Realizing the similarities between niche parties is important because it opens up the possibility that research on one specific type may have some applicability to others. Even with the commonality of introducing neglected issues to electoral competition, regionalist parties differ from far-left and far-right parties

because while they compete with mainstream parties from the extremes of the left-right dimension, regionalist parties introduce an entirely new dimension into the electoral arena.

In addition to defining and classifying regionalist parties, this section also justifies the usage of the term regionalist party. In different research agendas these parties have also been called ethnoregionalist parties, secessionist parties, and national movements. The ethnonationalist moniker derives from the concept of ethnoregionalism, which is a brand of "nationalism based on ethnic distinctiveness and territorial claims within established states" (Levi and Hechter, 1985, p. 128). A significant issue with this label is it excludes regionalist parties that do not derive their sense of national identity from belonging to a particular ethnic group. Rather, they have a civic nationalism that bases nationality on belief in a set of collective ideals rather than defining it through blood. The Basques represent an ethnonational group, while the Scottish embrace a civic nationalism. Problems also arise from the term secessionist party, because it severely limits the categorization of regionalist parties to those that are on the furthest end of the center-periphery issue dimension and favor outright independence. While this term may be useful if a study wants to explicitly focus on this group, it restricts a broader research agenda. Finally, studies on national movements do not refer exclusively to political parties, and often include civil society groups. This dissertation only examines political parties, so calling them regionalist parties provides a more specific definition. By adopting the term regionalist parties, it allows for a broader analysis of parties that prioritize the center-periphery dimension, but do not all have the same cultural, political, and economic objectives.

DEFINING ELECTORAL OUTCOMES

The concept of electoral success is understudied in niche parties. Scholarship that focuses on mainstream national parties faces little confusion in terms of defining success. National mainstream parties strive to govern so their capacity to win a plurality or majority and form a government, often dependent on the type of electoral system, determines the success or failure of a particular election. In national elections, regionalist parties generally cannot hope for this outcome based on the size of their population. For example, in the 2015 UK general election, the Scottish National Party won 56 of the 59 Scottish seats, but even if it had won all 59 that still would have constituted only 9% of the total seat share at Westminster. Regionalist parties, like all political parties, seek as many votes and seats as possible within their geographical constraints. The strategies a regionalist party can take to achieve their objectives after an election can be very different. In some instances, earning enough seats to force a party with a plurality to incorporate it into a governing coalition may be considered a success. This provides the regionalist party the opportunity to help play the role of kingmaker and affords its particular cause of greater regional self-government more gravity and attention because the national mainstream party that made it part of the coalition needs its support to maintain a government. In other cases, regionalist parties may opt to serve as a vocal opposition to a government (Sartori, 1976). They may perceive joining a governing coalition as a capitulation of their regionalist agenda because they will be forced to focus on other issues besides their primary cause to ensure the government continues to function. While participation or lack thereof in governments by regionalist party can be

an interesting measure of electoral success, this dissertation focuses on outcomes in terms of election results.

Electoral success, when conceived in terms of vote shares, needs to be distinguished into three processes: electoral breakthrough, electoral persistence, and electoral failure (Coffé, 2004; Mudde, 2007).[3] Electoral breakthrough, which has only been conceived of qualitatively and not quantitatively, occurs when a regionalist party first gains electoral relevance or when it makes a large electoral gain. In this framework, breakthrough happens not just when a regionalist party achieves an initial threshold of significance, but also occurs in later elections when regionalist parties make large surges and breakthrough the existing electoral barriers that prohibited previous growth. Electoral persistence refers to the ability of a party to maintain its electoral relevance relative to the previous election (Art, 2012). Like electoral breakthrough, electoral persistence needs a more precise quantitative definition. Electoral breakthrough and electoral persistence need differentiation because they "are two related but distinct processes that cannot always be explained by the same combination of variables" (Mudde, 2007, p. 202). In addition, failure, qualitatively, is understood as a loss of electoral relevance, and similar to breakthrough and persistence, no clear quantitative definition of the concept exists.

Previous attempts to codify and further develop the initial ideas of Coffé and Mudde provide the foundation for the precise definitions this dissertation will develop. Art developed a more concrete form of measuring electoral persistence. He focused more on persistence in his analysis of far-right parties arguing it was a more pertinent and

[3] Coffé (2004) and Mudde (2007) examine breakthrough and persistence, but do not explicitly categorize failure.

measurable form of electoral success. When using electoral persistence as the dependent variable, Art defines "success as receiving more than 5% of the vote in three successive national parliamentary elections" (Art, 2012, p. 4). This criterion ensures the presence of a party over a consistent period of time and indicates a level of staying power. The ability to maintain at least 5% of the vote shares does not directly ensure a particular number of seats in parliament, participation in government, or a direct influence on mainstream parties, but it can be a good indicator of these other elements that are deemed important for a niche party to achieve political success.[4] Art (2012) avoids using electoral breakthrough as a dependent variable because he argues that they "have been so varied that they are probably better viewed as contingent events rather than the result of similar processes," and in his research every party has "experienced some form of electoral breakthrough" making it a "starting point rather than [an] outcome of interest" (5). Although not explicitly defined, the implication of his contention is that a breakthrough occurs the first instance a party receives 5% of the vote share. Upon further scrutiny, additional clarification is needed because it is unclear at what point in time persistence begins. He implies that the first election where a party achieves the 5% threshold constitutes the breakthrough. My framing moves beyond defining breakthrough as this initial achievement. Where persistence begins is more difficult to distinguish. As defined above he says persistence occurs after three successive elections where a party won at least 5% of the vote. While the first election counts as the breakthrough and can be determined irrespective of successive elections, it is unclear if the two subsequent elections where the party achieves the 5% threshold and meets his

[4] For a good discussion on the success of niche parties in governing and their fate once they help form a government see Deschouwer (2008).

definition could be coded as electoral persistence retroactively. Clearly, any election after the third that continues to reach the 5% benchmark constitutes persistence, but whether the second and third count remains unclear. This poses problems not just in a small-N analysis like his, but it also needs clarification for a large-N analysis to develop a coding scheme. The categorization of outcomes and quantitative definitions of the new typologies address these shortcomings.

Art's measure of persistence and concerns about breakthrough fails to address significant potential swings in vote shares. By simply defining success as maintaining over 5% of the vote it omits the possibility for considerable variance in fortunes. For example, if a party were to win 5% of the vote in its first election, 15% in the second and 10% in the third, this would signal very different dynamics compared to a party that only won 5% of the vote across all three elections. Thus, my classification of outcomes as breakthrough, persistence, or failure offers a more nuanced understanding of these dynamics.

Loomes offers a definition of electoral success, but it suffers from greater deficiencies than Art's measurement. She (2012) contends, "A share of five percent of the vote or more is a sensible threshold over which anti-political establishment parties are considered to have systemic relevance" (32). This means of measuring "relevance," not electoral persistence or electoral breakthrough, provides only a starting point for assessing the success of smaller parties. By quantifying success in this manner, it is unclear how many successive elections a niche party must achieve 5% of the vote before establishing relevance. Loomes' definition of electoral success suffers from considerable

ambiguity and needs greater development. The definitions developed in this dissertation take her 5% threshold of electoral relevance as a starting point but develops it further.

Electoral breakthrough, failure, and persistence are distinct outcomes. Breakthrough occurs when a regionalist party gains electoral relevance or makes a significant gain in vote shares. Failure occurs when a regionalist party has a precipitous drop in support or becomes electorally irrelevant. Persistence occurs when a regionalist party is able to maintain its previous level of support. I develop the quantitative definitions of these three outcomes based on regionalist party outcomes in the next chapter when discussing the metrics for the dependent variables in the regression analysis.

EXPLAINING REGIONALIST PARTY ELECTORAL SUCCESS: SUPPLY AND DEMAND

Explanations of electoral outcomes can be categorized into a supply-side and demand-side theoretical framework. Supply-side and demand-side theories of electoral competition focus on the interplay between the public's support for a party that adopts and emphasizes positions reflective of its attitudes (demand) and the electoral strategies a political party employs coupled with the political opportunity structures of an election (supply). Many research agendas, this dissertation included, attempt to adopt either a supply-side or demand-side theoretical framework, but completely disentangling them to offer a one-sided explanation can prove challenging. Much of the complication can arise based on the sequence that supply-side and demand-side factors have an effect on electoral competition.

The supply-side and demand-side theoretical frameworks encompass a wide range of explanations of electoral outcomes. Demand-side explanations primarily focus on socio-economic and socio-cultural variables because they are salient to the public and can stimulate the public's desires for particular policy changes (March & Rommerskerchin, 2015, p. 41). These demands then get translated into party platforms and issue positions in order to attract votes in a responsive fashion. Supply-side explanations, which can be divided into two types, external and internal, focus on the "political-institutional and party-system factors as well as parties' own strategies" (March & Rommerskerchin, 2015, p. 41). Internal supply-side theories focus on the agency of political parties based largely on the electoral strategies they use that will alter the citizens' votes without their campaigns being a direct reflection of public attitudes. External supply-side theories emphasize political opportunity structures and the constraints they place on elections that may affect outcomes irrespective of citizens' demands.

My hypotheses are based on a supply-side theoretical framework. I will posit that different external and internal supply-side explanations can account for different regionalist party electoral. Before fully articulating my hypotheses, I detail the literature on supply-side and demand-side explanations of electoral success.

Demand-Side

Demand-side theories share the goal of identifying "the perfect breeding ground" capable of spawning support for particular issues, which in turn become translated into political party platforms (Fitjar, 2009, p. 202). Explanations of this type posit that in electoral competition, demand-side factors precede supply-side factor; that is, the emergence and success of parties depends almost exclusively on the attitudes of the

electorate. Thus, in demand-side accounts, political parties are responsive organizations that adapt to the will of the public, which is largely shaped by particular socio-economic or socio-cultural phenomena (Fitjar, 2010). Within demand-side approaches, the agency of parties, the institutional landscape, and the type of electoral competition are of secondary importance when compared to the desires of the citizenry for explaining why some parties succeed and others fail.

A few demand-side theories applied to the analyses of far-right parties have also been applied to regionalist parties: the single-issue thesis, the economic interest thesis, and the cultural thesis (Eatwell, 2003). The single-issue thesis, as applied to regionalist parties, maintains that regionalist parties' electoral support grows and falls as citizen's support for greater autonomy waxes and wanes. Thus, regionalist party electoral support depends on the demand of the citizenry for more pro-periphery positions (Miller, Sarlvik, Crewe, & Alt, 1977).

The economic interest thesis is not an individual thesis; rather, numerous contentions about the economic conditions that fuel regionalist party support exist. While explanations differ over which economic factors matter, most studies focus on the relative inequality between regions and the state as a whole (Zirakzadeh, 1989). Inequality can be measured in different ways, such as relative GDP per capita and relative unemployment rates. The influences of globalization also receive attention in the literature, often because its effect can produce inequality between states and regions.

Previous studies that offered economic explanations of regionalist party electoral support often emphasized economic inequality as a crucial factor (Zirakzadeh, 1989). Regional economic prosperity has been perceived as a key factor because as regional

economic prosperity increases in relation to the state it fosters a greater desire for more autonomy (Hechter, 1992; Sambanis & Milanovic, 2014). The rise in prosperity is hypothesized to produce greater regionalist party support for two reasons: First, a region would want greater control over its newfound economic prosperity to prevent a redistribution of that wealth back to the central state, and secondly, increasing regional prosperity would provide confidence to citizens that they could survive economically without the state. In the vein of economic viability, Sambanis and Milanovic argue that a major concern of citizens is the effective provision of public goods, and if a region's economic situation is favorable compared to the rest of the state, citizens of the region will often believe a regional government could execute these functions (Sambanis & Milanovic, 2014).

Globalization is another factor believed to alter the electoral fortunes of regionalist parties (Meadwell & Martin, 1996; Sorens, 2005). One contention is that globalization turned regional economies into the foundation of the international economy because, as globalization spread, it bypassed the central state emboldening regional support for greater autonomy and even independence, as they would become new states already integrated into the world economy (Ohmae, 1995). In Sorens' (2005) historical cross-national analyses he found "strong evidence that secessionist growth is stimulated by globalization" (747). In the study, regions that were more globalized and experienced greater economic growth than less globalized regions supported regional parties favoring secession at a greater rate.

Cultural conditions may play a significant role in regionalist party electoral success (Gordin, 2001). The presence and percentage of regional language speakers

often receives considerable attention when advancing an explanation of regionalist party success based on cultural distinctiveness. A distinct regional language is often used as one of the most salient measures of cultural identity because language provides the basis for societal interaction. Based upon the importance language has for fostering group identity, one contention is that simply the existence of a regional language increases a regionalist party's likelihood of success (Sorens, 2004; Massetti &Schakel, 2013). Another argument related to the influence of language is that as the percentage of regional language speakers increases, support for regionalist parties increases (Sorens, 2005).

In contrast, other scholarship on regionalist party success has posited that economic and cultural factors had relatively ambiguous effects (Wood, 1981). One foundational study argued that economic factors did not appear definitive in explaining regionalist party success because "relative deprivation by itself is a questionable device for explaining secessionist alienation, given the fact that there are many instances of economically worse-off people who do not attempt secession, as well as some cases of better-off peoples who do (Croatians, Ibos, Basques)" (Wood, 1981, p. 116). The influence of cultural factors was considered ambiguous as well because "the salience of cultural heterogeneity as expressed in secession-related consciousness varies greatly over time and space: almost always, there are intervening variables present which bring ethnicity to the fore or leave it quiescent" (Wood, 1981, 115). This research on regionalist parties highlighted the potential causes of secessionist movements but found those causes to be somewhat ambiguous in fostering regionalist party electoral success or failure.

When scholars adopt a demand-side theoretical framework, they argue that parties formulate their electoral campaigns and adjust their policy positions based on public desires (Downs, 1957; Lispet & Rokkan, 1967). For Downs (1957), parties gravitate toward the median voter on political issues to capture the greatest percentage of the vote share possible, thus, they would alter their position as the electorate shifted. Based on this conception, regionalist parties would alter their position on greater autonomy relative to the median voter's perspective on the issue. Lipset and Rokkan (1967) differed from Downs to some extent arguing that party positions and strategy depended on particular socioeconomic cleavages. Thus, a citizen's socioeconomic position indicated which party they were likely to support. Parties would then alter their positions and change their electoral strategy in response to class realignments. Party positions and messages in this framework reflect public demand and originate from mass attitudes.

Recognizing the Fundamental but Imprecise Importance of Demand-Side Perspectives

This dissertation adopts a supply-side perspective; thus, I argue that economic and cultural explanations, especially in relation to their effects on the electoral strategies of regionalist parties, fail to adequately explain regionalist party electoral outcomes. I concede that demand-side explanations that search for the perfect breeding ground seem more suited for identifying the preconditions for the creation of regionalist parties instead of explaining their performance in elections (Lipset & Rokkan, 1967). The electoral fortunes of regionalist parties may change dramatically from election to election, whereas important cultural and economic conditions, such as the number of regional language speakers or the relative prosperity of the region, often remain considerably more stable.

In contrast, supply-side factors have the potential to change rapidly, providing a better explanation of particular outcomes.

Even if party strategies and political opportunity structures can change electoral competition, demand-side influences likely play an essential role in the process of political party formation (Sorens, 2005). If a party does not exist, then there cannot be a party strategy that makes one extant. The landscape of party competition may have some degree of effect, if a party does not exist that represents a particular set of interests, however, this alone is unlikely to spur the creation of a novel political party. Parties often emerge when interested citizens coalesce around particular objectives and create an organization to pursue their policy agenda. Party formation regularly depends on some type of public demand. This study, however, assesses the electoral competition between parties once they exist and recognizes the importance of demand-side factors in party formation.

Supply-Side

Supply-side explanations of electoral competition examine the "top-down" factors that influence the potential political options available to the public irrespective of their preferred policy positions. In this framework, political opportunity structures and the ability of political parties to adopt policy positions not necessarily reflective of the public's demand are the most important predictors of electoral success. It is "the channeling of political options through institutional mechanisms," not cultural or economic conditions that produce groundswells in public opinion that matter (Bielasiak, 1997, p. 23). There are two types of supply-side explanations. Political opportunity structures are "external" supply-side factors because regionalist parties often cannot

control their influence on elections. The independent actions and influence of political parties are "internal" supply-side factors because they largely lie within a party's control (Mudde, 2007).

External supply-side explanations focus on factors outside a regionalist party's control such as the political system, electoral system, and strategic maneuvers by other parties. These external supply-side explanations, often labeled "political opportunity structures," are "consistent, but not necessarily formal or permanent, dimensions of the political environment that provide incentives for people to undertake collective action by affecting their expectations for success or failure" (Tarrow, 1994, p. 85). Political opportunity structures are not necessarily determinative for a political party, but they can constrain the manifestation of public demand. Political opportunity structures such as political systems, electoral systems, issue salience, and party positions[5] all have the potential to influence electoral outcomes.

Internal supply-side explanations focus on a party's electoral strategies, such as its positions on center-periphery and left-right issues, arguing that these influence the electoral success of a party (De Winter, 1998; Mudde, 2007). These explanations claim that a party's platform does not simply reflect the fulfillment of a public demand (Adams, Clark, Ezrow, & Glasgow, 2006). Rather, political parties make choices to change voter preferences based on their positions.

External Supply-Side

External supply-side arguments focus on political opportunity structures. They differ from demand-side conditions because they do not inherently foster "bottom-up"

[5] Issue salience is the amount a party stresses a particular issue dimension. Party positions are the stances parties take on a particular issue dimension. The importance of issue salience and party positioning will be discussed more below.

support for greater regional self-government. Political opportunity structures take various forms, but I concentrate on three types in this analysis: party strategic influences, political institutions, electoral institutions, and electoral geography.

The party-strategic factors that matter most are the mainstream party positions and salience regarding the center-periphery and left-right issue dimensions. I argue that these political opportunity structures, also called "electoral opportunity structures" matter significantly for assessing regionalist party electoral support (Van der Brug, Fennema, & Tillie, 2005, p. 546). I am particularly interested in whether claims developed in the far-right literature that electoral opportunity structures can change electoral outcomes because they "creat[e] or clos[e] political space for new competitors" applies to regionalist parties (Mudde, 2007, p. 238). The positions of mainstream parties on the center-periphery and left right issue dimensions may have the capacity to influence when regionalist parties perform better or worse. Previous studies have found that whether mainstream parties adopt more pro or anti-periphery positions can determine regionalist party electoral outcomes, with more accommodation on autonomy reducing support and more pro-central government positions increasing it (Meguid, 2008; Jolly, 2015). The center-periphery position of mainstream parties is not the only issue position that may matter, as their left-right position could influence regionalist parties as well. Previous analysis of right-wing parties found that higher levels of mainstream party polarization has a negative effect on their vote shares (Kitschelt, 1995). Polarization, however, may prove beneficial to regionalist parties, as they could move farther away from voters especially when voters consider their center-periphery position in tandem to their left-right position. In addition, the salience of the two issue dimensions may have an effect

on regionalist party outcomes as well (Maddens & Libbrecht, 2009). Parties will perform better when they emphasize the issue dimension they have greater ownership over, thus, mainstream parties benefit from focusing on the left-right dimension and suffer electorally when they prioritize the center-periphery dimension.

A country's political institutions can have a significant influence on regionalist party electoral fortunes. In particular, the decentralization of institutions and the level of supranational integration appear influential (Brancati, 2008; Alonso, 2012; Jolly, 2015). Some studies found that decentralized political systems create a permissive environment for regionalist parties because it establishes an environment where they are likely to find greater success at local and regional levels, which in turn can be translated to national level support (Tossutti, 2002; Cole & Loughlin, 2003; Brancati, 2008). Thus, this dissertation will assess the influence the devolution of authority and the creation of devolved institutions has on regionalist party electoral outcomes. In addition, integration into the European Union seemed to influence regionalist party outcomes in previous studies as it created confidence that if a region became independent the new country's viability would increase by becoming part of the EU.

Electoral institutions have the potential to be an important external supply side influence. One important factor in elections, that previous scholars focused on, was the number of effective parties competing in an election (Jolly, 2015). The more effective parties in an election, the greater the possibility that a regionalist party loses votes. Thus, examining the number of relevant parties in regions during national elections can serve as an important indicator of regionalist party electoral strength.

The electoral geography regionalist parties face provides opportunities and limitations on electoral outcomes (Alonso, 2012). Regionalist parties, as previously emphasized operate within a confined geographical space. This designated restriction on where they compete differentiates them significantly from other niche or anti-establishment parties. The purposeful restriction on where regionalist parties seek office makes their competition with mainstream parties different than others because they face more limited costs. A regionalist party faces a much smaller area in which it must vie with a mainstream party, thus, it must only influence the population of its region, not the entire nation.

The potential advantage of a regionalist party's electoral geography over other anti-establishment and niche parties becomes apparent when looking at an example like the United Kingdom.[6] In 2015, the Scottish National Party won 56 of 59 parliamentary seats in Scotland and 56 of the total 650 seats in the House of Commons, with only 4.7% of the national vote share. If the UK had a traditional proportional representation system, the SNP would have won about 30 seats. In contrast to the SNP's gains, the United Kingdom Independence Party (considered a far-right party) won 1 of 650 seats in the House of Commons with 12.7% of the national vote share. UKIP had to determine the number of seats to contest across the entire UK, ultimately standing a candidate in 624 out of 650. UKIP, however, lacks a defined region where its geographical support is more concentrated when compared to the SNP. The diffusion of support thus makes it difficult for it to capitalize on a large vote share because it lacks the concentration in

[6] Previous studies have found that neither first-past-the-post nor proportional electoral systems give regionalist parties a distinct advantage or disadvantage. See Lublin (2014).

particular areas necessary to win seats.[7] The SNP's electoral results look different when considering its electoral geography. In Scotland, the SNP won 50% of the vote, thus, what appears as a miniscule total at the national level, clearly indicates an electoral landslide at the regional level.

The electoral geography also imposes a limitation on a regionalist party. A regionalist party cannot hope to win an overall majority in government because it only contests seats within its particular region. Other niche or anti-establishment parties do not face this constraint. Although the prospect of a far-right or far-left party winning an overall majority is extremely farfetched, the prospect exists. The example of the UK above highlights this possibility as the SNP only contested 59 of 650 possible UK constituencies, but UKIP competed for 624 of 650 seats opening up the possibility that it could form a government or lead a coalition if successful in majority or plurality of the districts.

Internal Supply-Side

Internal supply-side arguments focus on the political parties of interest and their capacity to influence electoral outcomes. For my dissertation, this entails a concentration on regionalist party strategies. The influence of party strategies as a supply-side factor differs from demand-side approaches and this focus has received more attention in recent studies (De Winter, 1998; Mudde, 2007; Wagner, 2011; Sio and Weber, 2014). Rather than political parties adopting strategies that aim to fulfill a public demand, parties, in a supply-side framework, use electoral strategies to in an attempt to change citizens' perspectives and increase their probability of greater electoral success. Parties, with their

[7] This applies to certain proportional systems that even though they use vote shares to allot candidates, they also delegate seats by regional vote shares.

electoral strategies, have the capacity to manipulate electoral outcomes based on their ability to alter the way voters think about issue dimensions (Riker, 1986). The application of this perspective to national mainstream parties has become more popular, and only recently has the influence of regionalist and niche party strategies received more attention (Alonso, 2012).

Parties can be "active shapers of their own fates" and this is often possible because they compete on two issue dimensions (Berman, 1997, p. 103). Much previous research posits that party competition can be two dimensional for mainstream parties at times but is uni-dimensional for regionalist parties (Elias, Szocsik, & Zuber, 2015; Rovny, 2012). In this case, mainstream parties focus on the left-right issue dimension, with the capacity if necessary to position themselves on the center-periphery dimension. Regionalist parties, however, would only position themselves on the center-periphery dimension. Based on this restrictive perception, when mainstream and regionalist parties compete they do so only over the center-periphery.

Not all supply-side approaches acknowledge the possibility of electoral competition in multiple dimensions between mainstream and niche parties or that niche parties, such as regionalist parties, can alter their electoral fortunes through party strategies. Some studies contend that only parties considered mainstream possess the ability to change elections through strategic maneuvering (Meguid, 2005; Meguid, 2008; Loomes, 2012). Bonnie Meguid's research on regionalist parties embodies this approach and argues mainstream and regionalist parties only contest one issue dimension, while ignoring the capacity of niche parties, including regionalist parties, to implement electoral strategies capable of altering outcomes. She maintains that when mainstream

and regionalist parties compete they do so only over the center-periphery dimension. A regionalist party, like other niche parties, must adhere to their singular dimension because "any tactic that undermines the perceived relevance of that issue or the distinctiveness or credibility of the niche party's position on that dimension will result in niche party vote loss" (Meguid, 2008, p. 29). Regionalist parties in this scenario lack agency because they have no ability to alter their position on the center-periphery dimension nor can they compete on the left-right dimension. Thus, their success depends on the positions, "electoral opportunity structures," adopted by the mainstream parties. A regionalist party's fate then rests on whether a mainstream party is accommodative or adversarial about a regionalist party's position on the center-periphery dimension. In a similar vein, Loomes (2012) contends, "Not all parties have the resources available to them to be able to act as independent actors within the process of party system change … instead, it is only the core [mainstream] parties that are able to engage in strategies to influence their own fate" (7). From this perspective, only those parties that target the entire electorate and focus primarily on the left-right issue dimension can strategize and campaign in a manner capable of altering an election outcome. The assertion that only mainstream parties have the capacity to influence electoral outcomes has significant consequences when analyzing regionalist parties.

Debates over the number of issue dimensions in an electoral competition are not a recent development. Early research on party competition often contended that parties competed on a single-issue dimension and strategized accordingly. Mainstream parties received the majority of scholarly attention so the left-right issue dimension became the focus. A single-issue dimension, however, was not synonymous with a focus on a

singular policy. Numerous policy issues fit under the left-right dimension including various positions on economic issues, favorability towards democracy, and social issues. Based on the aggregation of a party's policy positions it could "be assigned a position on [the] left-right scale" (Downs, 1957, p. 132). This approach, however, subsumes all issues to the left-right issue dimension, which is not the case. Incorporating all issues into the left-right issue dimension obscures the reality of multidimensional electoral competition.

Many critiques of the Downsian approach still fit within the uni-dimensional framework, thus, while they attempt to address issues of Downs' theory, they still have shortcomings. Stokes (1963) argues that electoral campaigning focuses on valence issues, but the framing of these issues is distinctly within the left-right issue dimension (373). Budge and Farlie (1983) contend parties compete and message more through issue saliency than issue position, but even with this concern for saliency over position they are still concerned about the salience of issues within the left-right issue dimension. Directional theories of voter decision making that contend the electorate chooses a party to support based on heuristics regarding whether the party is on "the same side or opposite side of an issue" also falls within the uni-dimensional framework because the "sides" are considered on the left-right issue dimension (Rabinowitz & Macdonald, 1989, p. 96).

Before considering the electoral strategies of regionalist parties in two dimensions, I show shortcomings of thinking about them as uni-dimensional. The only strategic option for regionalist parties in this framework is to adjust their position on the center-periphery dimension. Altering the salience of their position is not a viable option

because they only have the one issue dimension to campaign upon, so choosing not to emphasize it would be electoral suicide. Positional changes are not without peril in a uni-dimensional space as well. The position of a regionalist party on the center-periphery issue dimension often cannot be modified without consequences in a uni-dimensional space whether it moves further toward the periphery or more toward the center. A move to the center could jeopardize a party's credibility, as any weakening of its platform may be considered a challenge to its *raison d'etre*. A move toward the periphery could also cause problems because a radicalization of the party agenda, considered only in the context of the center-periphery issue dimension with other issues excluded from consideration, could create too much policy space between the party and the electorate.

Regionalist parties do not compete on only one issue dimension (Alonso, 2012). They almost always compete with mainstream parties over both the center-periphery and left-right issue dimensions. The programmatic agendas and manifestos of regionalist parties contain policy positions for regionalist parties on a host of center-periphery and left-right issues that allow them to clearly indicate their electoral strategies in both areas. Mainstream parties adopt positions on both dimensions as well, and contrary to Meguid's (2008) contentions, they compete with regionalist parties across both dimensions. Regionalist parties have to address both issue dimensions because they need "to grow enough to become a threat to mainstream parties and force them to react," and they can do this because campaigning across two issue dimensions allows them to reach "beyond the niche of voters" who support them simply based on their center-periphery position (Alonso, 2012, p. 36). Regionalist parties must compete on their secondary left-right issue dimension.

When parties compete over two dimensions, they prioritize one dimension over the other, choosing to emphasize the issue dimension they have the greatest ownership and credibility over. For regionalist parties, their primary focus is the center-periphery dimension while the left-right dimension constitutes the secondary dimension. Mainstream parties prioritize the issue dimensions differently with left-right as the primary dimension and center-periphery as the secondary dimension. Regionalist parties prioritize the center-periphery because they continue to exist based on their desire to achieve particular policy outcomes related to this dimension. Mainstream parties often dominate the left-right dimension because their primary competition in elections comes from other mainstream parties that focus on that dimension as well.

The process parties undertake to ensure they adopt a message that can expand their pool of voters can be quite challenging. When regionalist parties compete with mainstream parties, the focus becomes how to draw more voters in. In a two-dimensional campaign, the introduction of the center-periphery dimension means voters must factor in additional considerations when making their choice. Alonso summarizes the decision-making process of a voter across these two dimensions well:

> "If the median voter gives more relevance to class than to territory, she will choose the class party that is closest to her preferences and therefore, class parties will get more support than centre-periphery parties. If the median voter considers territorial identity as the more fundamental of the two identities, she will choose the centre-periphery party that best represents her territorial preferences and therefore, centre-periphery parties will have an advantage over class parties. If the median voter feels equally intense about her class and territorial identities and given that we have assumed that parties convey positions only in their primary dimension of competition she will be unable to prioritize one identity over the other and will decide her ballot attending to cues other than the ideological and identity ones" (Alonso, 2012, p. 34).

Voters in regions with regionalist parties, however, cannot often clearly disentangle these two positions. Thus, regionalist parties and state parties must adopt

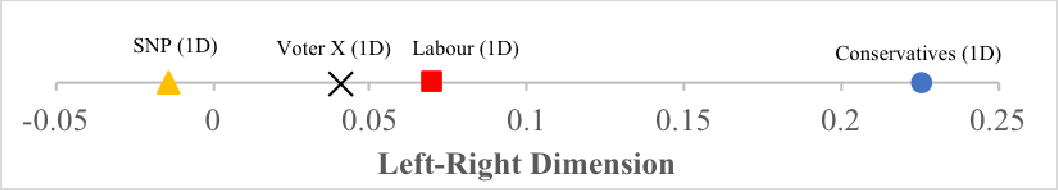
strategies that "persuade the electorate that they can take care of the voters' multiple identities *simultaneously*" (Alonso, 2012, p. 34).

To conclude our discussion regarding the influence regionalist party electoral strategies can have on outcomes, I develop an example to highlight the effect a regionalist party's strategy can have in a two-dimensional electoral space. Voter preferences may change when new dimensions are added to electoral campaigns. If analysis of vote selection is based only on the left-right dimension, one can miss the capacity of the electorate to alter their support in response to the introduction of the center-periphery dimension.

By looking at the Comparative Manifestos Project (CMP) data, a better understanding of how a voter's preferences might change based on the introduction of a new dimension becomes apparent.[8] Consider, as an example, the left-right positions of the Labour Party, the Conservative Party, and the Scottish National Party in the 1997 United Kingdom general election. According to the CMP, which scales parties on a left-right dimension from -1 to 1 with -1 being the most left 1 being the most right and 0 being absolutely centrist, Labour scored 0.06, the Conservatives scored 0.22, and the SNP scored -0.01(see Figure 1.1 for a visual depiction of the parties on the left-right dimension). Now imagine Voter X's position on the left-right dimension, if quantified, equals 0.04. Based on this uni-dimensional perspective, Voter X would favor Labour.

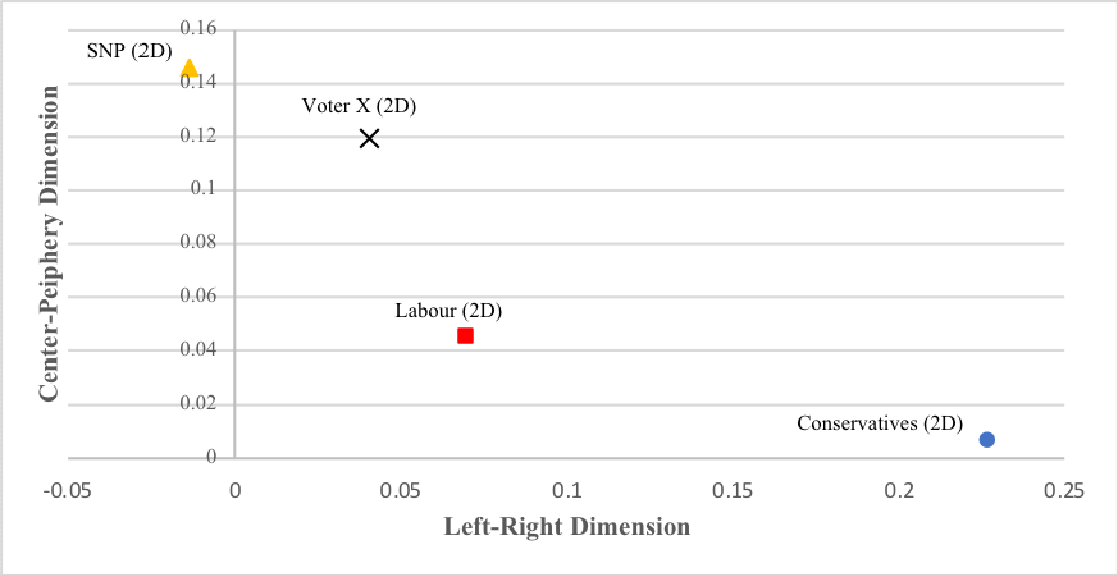
[8] The Comparative Manifestos Project will serve as the basis for my measurements of regionalist and mainstream party positions on the left-right and center-periphery issue dimensions.

Figure 1.3: Party and Voter Left-Right Positions in a Uni-Dimensional Space



The introduction of a new dimension may change Voter X's party of choice. In the same year, I can construct the center-periphery positions of the three parties using the CMP data. In this instance a score of -1 equates to absolute central government control and 1 represents total regional control. In 1997, Labour scored a 0.04, the Conservatives scored a 0.006, and the SNP scored a 0.14. Now consider these positions in accompaniment with each party's position on the left-right dimension (see Figure 1.2). The center-periphery position of Voter X equates to 0.12. The introduction of this second dimension, changes the position of Voter X and she is now closer to the SNP than Labour, contrary to the uni-dimensional framework. Based on the new position, Voter X is 0.06 units away from the SNP and 0.08 units away from Labour. While this example does not consider the saliency of the two issues which could influence how these positions might be weighted in Voter X's mind, thinking about the addition of a dimension and the shift in a voter's position highlights the importance of considering multiple dimensions, especially when a regionalist party contests an election.

Figure 1.4: Party and Voter Left-Right and Center-Periphery Positions in Two-Dimensional Space



IMPLICATIONS OF THE THEORY

With the supply-side and demand-side theoretical frameworks outlined, and a more precise definition of electoral success developed, I can advance my theoretical propositions. As discussed above, I posit that an analysis of regionalist party electoral outcomes from a supply-side perspective is likely to provide a better explanation than demand-side arguments. However, electoral success is not a uniform concept and many different theories exist within the supply-side framework. In this dissertation, I attempt to explain electoral breakthrough, electoral failure, and electoral persistence. My initial expectations, as I will further develop below, were that external supply-side factors explain when regionalist parties experience electoral breakthrough, internal supply-side factors explain electoral persistence, and that either external or internal supply-side factors can produce failure. These hypotheses reflect my initial theoretical formulation, but the initial results of my early quantitative and qualitative analyses were ambiguous. I tested all of these hypotheses, but, to some extent, based on the outcomes, I reframed my

theoretical propositions. I will discuss the changes, the justification for my decision, and the challenges posed by it after detailing my original hypotheses for the sake of methodological transparency.

External Supply-Side Hypotheses

External supply-side factors are more likely to explain electoral breakthrough because changes in the political opportunity structures can provide openings in the electoral landscape. I argue that "electoral opportunity structures," such as mainstream parties' positions on the center-periphery and left-right issue dimensions and salience mainstream parties give to those two issue dimensions, will be more likely to explain electoral breakthrough. In addition, the institutional landscape can influence whether a regionalist party breaks through. Finally, external supply-side factors can also produce regionalist party failure.

H1: *The likelihood of a regionalist party experiencing electoral breakthrough will increase when the leading mainstream party adopts a more restrictive position on greater regional autonomy.*

I hypothesize that electoral breakthrough is more likely to occur when the leading mainstream party at the national level adopts a more restrictive position on autonomy because it can empower the regionalist party. Regionalist parties' primary issue dimension is the center-periphery dimension so when a national party adopts a more adversarial position on that dimension it can potentially drive voters towards it (Meguid, 2008). The less accommodative position highlights the differences between regionalist and mainstream parties and can make the issue more salient as it will likely produce a more combative electoral environment over the center-periphery dimension.

H2: *The likelihood of a regionalist party experiencing electoral breakthrough will increase when polarization on left-right issues increases between the two leading mainstream parties.*

I posit that mainstream party polarization will open up opportunities for regionalist parties to breakthrough. Increased polarization heightens competition between the mainstream national parties. While initially this may seem to increase the stakes of an election and encourage voters to become entrenched on the left and the right, the escalation may actually turn voters toward other issue dimensions who find the tensions distasteful. Voters may turn instead to focus on the center-periphery issue dimension that cross-cuts the left-right divide as an escape.

H3: *The likelihood a regionalist party experiencing electoral breakthrough will increase when mainstream parties increase the salience of the center-periphery issue dimension.*

I argue that an increase in the salience of the center-periphery dimension by mainstream parties will improve a regionalist party's likelihood of breaking through because of the increased attention to a regionalist party's primary issue dimension. Regionalist parties have a greater degree of ownership over the center-periphery dimension so when mainstream parties attempt to compete with them, mainstream parties are at somewhat of a disadvantage. In addition, when mainstream parties give greater attention to the center-periphery issue dimension, it increases the public's exposure to it. This can, in turn, enhance the probability of a large regionalist party electoral gain.

H4: *The likelihood of a regionalist party experiencing electoral breakthrough will increase when a moderate degree of devolution has occurred.*

Regionalist parties will benefit from moderate levels of devolution because at low levels of devolution the effects of more regional autonomy will not be realized and at a higher level of devolution a degree of satisfaction with regional autonomy will arise. At

a moderate amount of devolution, the power of greater self-government will be understood by a greater proportion of the populace, but the policy areas where regional authority is lacking will receive more attention. Inadequacies in regional autonomy will stand in sharper relief where partial authority already exists.

H5: *The likelihood of a regionalist party experiencing electoral failure will increase when mainstream parties adopt more accommodating positions on regional autonomy.*

Regionalist party failure has the potential to occur when mainstream parties co-opt the center-periphery issue dimension. Mainstream parties have the potential to neutralize an electoral threat if they consider the prospects of greater devolution. A more conciliatory position on regional autonomy can draw voters away from supporting regionalist parties. One potential reason for this is that mainstream parties, have the capacity to form a government, which means they have the capacity to change the laws required to grant more autonomy if they win. By demonstrating support for devolution, they can possibly sway voters to support them who want legislation on the issue.

Internal Supply-Side Hypotheses

Internal supply-side factors are more likely to explain electoral persistence. After a political space has opened through an electoral breakthrough, regionalist parties have a better opportunity to control their own fates. In this dissertation, the primary way regionalist parties can change their electoral fortunes and produce electoral persistence is through the effective manipulation of their positions on the center-periphery and left-right dimensions. By competing across multiple dimensions, regionalist parties can expand their pool of voters and secure votes from citizens who might not support them if the terms of the election were cast in a uni-dimensional framework. Regionalist parties can,

however, bring about their own failure when they take the wrong positions on issue dimensions.

H6: *The likelihood of a regionalist party experiencing electoral persistence will increase when it takes a more pro-periphery positions on the center-periphery issue dimension.*

Once a regionalist party has experienced electoral breakthrough, the chances it has to influence its own fate through effective party strategy becomes more likely. Regionalist parties can clearly differentiate themselves from mainstream parties with positions that support greater regional autonomy. When regionalist parties favor more autonomy, they force mainstream parties to engage with them on their primary issue dimension, and it maintains a public discourse on their objectives. Regionalist parties with more moderate positions may risk losing the attention of the public and the media. The pro-autonomy positions will also allow them to signal their distinction from the traditional left-right conception of politics.

H7: *The likelihood of a regionalist party experiencing electoral persistence will increase when it adopts either a farther left or farther right position on the left-right issue dimension.*

Regionalist parties adopt positions on both the center-periphery and left-right issue dimensions. Their position on the left-right dimension has to capacity to influence their ability to persist as well. Regionalist parties that move farther to the right or left can provide another means of distinguishing themselves from mainstream parties. Mainstream parties often attempt to moderate their positions to a certain extent in an attempt to garner more votes, so if a regionalist party was to occupy a position farther to the right or left it could broaden its voting bloc. While the left-right dimension is its secondary dimension, it could play a crucial role in allowing it to maintain enough support to persist.

H8: *The likelihood of a regionalist party experiencing electoral failure will increase when it adopts a position that favors greater central government control on the center-periphery issue dimension.*

Regionalist parties' primary issue dimension is the center-periphery dimension and they derive much of their political support based on their differences between themselves and mainstream parties in this area. When a regionalist party favors greater pro-central government control, it diminishes the purported importance of its existence. If regionalist parties do not clearly differentiate themselves with a pro-periphery position they can become obsolete as either mainstream parties will co-opt their positions or by favoring central government control, they hinder their own credibility.

Reframing My Theory

As alluded to above, the theoretical framework of this dissertation changed as the analysis proceeded. I include a discussion of the change here to foreground the development of the dissertation. I formulated my hypotheses based on previous literature, but ultimately, I found evidence for the need to change my theoretical framework from the quantitative analysis of Chapter Two and from some of the case studies. Whereas I predicted that external supply-side factors would be most likely to produce electoral breakthrough, internal-supply-side factors would be most likely to produce electoral persistence, and either external or internal-supply side factors could produce failure, my quantitative and qualitative analysis did not reveal such clear distinctions. Thus, a reframing of my theory was warranted. My new explanation for regionalist party outcomes is that two external supply-side factors, mainstream party issue salience and mainstream party center-periphery positions, and one internal-supply side factor, regionalist party center-periphery positions matter most. I argue that the

alignment of these different factors explains regionalist party outcomes. Breakthrough becomes more likely when mainstream party issue salience, mainstream party center-periphery positions, and regionalist party center-periphery positions are all advantageous in the same election. Failure is more probable when all three of these factors align unfavorably. Persistence occurs when either one or two of the factors is favorable but not all of them.

Reframing my theory will likely bring up concerns regarding curve-fitting and *post-hoc* explanations. Scholars have reasonable justification to consider all of the problems that emerge when a theoretical framework is driven by the results, as it makes testing the new supposition difficult (Ordeshook, 1993; Green & Shapiro, 1996). Mixed-methods approaches, however, appear to be a useful means to overcome this potential issue. The back and forth between the quantitative and qualitative research opens up the opportunity to further develop a theory and test in in new ways. With multiple case studies and the ability to incorporate new variables into the quantitative analysis, the problems of *post-hoc* explanations become less severe. Mixed-methods are ideal for resolving the important issue that "unless a given retroductive account is used to generate hypotheses that survive when tested against other phenomena, little empirical significance has been established" (Green & Shapiro, 1996, p. 35-36). This study at different points increased the number of cases and included new variables into the quantitative analysis and qualitative analysis to derive and test my theoretical framing in a fashion that avoids some of the pitfalls of curve-fitting and *post hoc* explanations.

CONCLUSION

This introduction presented the research questions of the dissertation, defined regionalist parties, discussed types of regionalist party electoral outcomes, reviewed the explanatory frameworks for election analyses, and outlined my theoretical propositions, including a discussion of how they changed over the course of the project. The dissertation proceeds as follows. In Chapter Two, I discuss the data and methods of the large-N analysis and then conduct the regressions. This section shows the results related to the testing of my initial hypotheses and provides evidence for the theoretical reframing that I discuss more in Chapter Three. Chapter Three sets-up the qualitative methodology, provides context for the eight Scottish election case studies, and discusses the reformulation of my theory based on the results revealed from the quantitative and qualitative analysis. Chapters Four evaluates the electoral breakthroughs of the SNP in February 1974, October 1974, and 2015 elections. Chapter Five examines the electoral failure of the SNP in 1979. Chapter Six analyzes the SNP's persistence in the 1997, 2001, 2005, and 2010 elections. Finally, I conclude with Chapter Seven by summarizing the findings in the large and small-N analyses, discussing the contribution of this dissertation, and outlining future research prospects.

CHAPTER II

THE QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

This dissertation uses a mixed-methods approach, which includes pooled cross-sectional time series regressions and case studies, to evaluate the effects of supply-side and demand-side factors on regionalist party electoral outcomes. The chapter proceeds as follows. First, I discuss the merits of a multi-method research design. Second, I describe the data, variables, and methods used in the regression analyses of regionalist party electoral success. Finally, I perform the quantitative analysis and discuss the results.

MULTI-METHODS RESEARCH DESIGN

Multi-methods research designs have many benefits. While multi-methods can use a myriad of approaches, this dissertation leverages the advantages that come from combining large-N regressions with small-N within-case process tracing. The usage of these two methodologies offers three major ways to explain regionalist party electoral outcomes. First, using the large-N and small-N together allows for both internal and external validity (Lijphart, 1971; Lieberman, 2005). The case studies investigate particular events to examine how certain factors produce particular electoral outcomes, while the regressions reveal generalizable correlations across cases. Second, this approach provides an effective method of establishing causality and identifying causal mechanisms (Goertz & Mahoney, 2006; Mahoney, 2010). Regression analysis can demonstrate which factors may be associated with outcomes and process tracing determines whether we can follow causal links between them. In turn, process tracing may reveal causal mechanisms omitted from or found insignificant in regression analysis that warrant greater consideration. Third, there is no prioritization of a type of causal

inference, with an incorporation of both the causes of effects and effects of causes (Goertz & Mahoney, 2006). A causes of effects approach takes particular cases and seeks to identify the factors that may be causal for the outcome (small-N), while an effects of causes approach examines singular causal factors and the effect they have on outcomes (large-N). This dissertation uses all of the described advantages to gain as much analytical purchase as possible in the investigation of regionalist party electoral outcomes.

One potential issue related to my mixed-methods research design that needs addressing relates to my case studies. All eight are elections I examine are in Scotland. This raises a potential concern about the degree of variation as my cases all occur within one state and one region. Previous mixed-methods studies and even a major work on regionalist parties, have used only one geographic context for their case studies (Jolly, 2010). While the geographic constraint remains the same, variation exists within all of my major variables that I consider and they occur in four different decades. I take note, however, that these results are suggestive of possible relationships elsewhere. The future inclusion of additional cases from other regions can further test the generalizability.

In addition, endogeneity issues can be a major problem in electoral studies. Concerns about which factors actually drive election results is an important consideration, especially regarding my focus on party strategies and increasing national autonomy. In relation to party strategies, much debate revolves around the independent capacity for parties to adopt new positions based on their own considerations or whether parties are primarily responsive organizations that shift their positions with the changes in public opinion (Berman, 1997; Fitjar, 2009; Alonso, 2012). While either extreme

position is unlikely, this dissertation fits with the scholarship that argues parties have the capacity to shift their positions and salience to some extent independent of public demand. Thus, they can influence their levels of support. In addition, the question of how much separatist voting is driven by increases in national autonomy or vice versa deserves consideration. This dissertation proceeds with the assumption that the independent variables below do not have this issue.

QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

This quantitative analysis includes twenty-six different regionalist parties, from sixteen regions, in six countries, across fifty different national elections. Even with this array of 146 observations in Belgium, Canada, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom, a precise evaluation of the determinants of electoral outcomes is difficult. Many challenges exist related to classifying regionalist party success and identifying the factors that contribute to it. This section breaks down the study of regionalist parties in a more nuanced manner by identifying particular conditions related to particular types of outcomes. The results reveal insights that are useful not only for this study, but also related to the broader research program that examine elections. In relation to my study, the results of the quantitative analysis provided some support for various hypothesized relationships, yet, much remains uncertain. The regression results serve more as a plausibility probe and provide partial evidence for certain relationships rather than a definitive assertion of particular conditions producing particular outcomes. Parsimonious theoretical expectations, unsurprisingly, do not yield perfectly clear results in a world of multi-causality. The case studies of different elections are a means to dig deeper into the various correlations to better understand the hypothesized relationships. I investigate

other issues regarding the quantitative analysis after detailing the various dependent and independent variables.

Dependent Variables

This study uses several dependent variables to assess regionalist party success and failure. An analysis of electoral success using my differentiated categories of electoral persistence, electoral breakthrough, and electoral failure serves as the crux of this study. I also assess regionalist party performance in a similar vein as previous studies, with the incorporation of new important variables. In the first set of regressions, I use regional vote shares in national elections as the dependent variable, and in the second set I use a categorical dependent variable that represents the three outcomes: electoral breakthrough, electoral persistence, and electoral failure.[9]

For the first set of regressions, I used regionalist party vote shares in national elections. The purpose of conducting an analysis of the factors that influence regionalist party success without differentiating types of outcomes is to provide a basis to compare and justify the new typology of success and failure and to evaluate previous analyses by including important omitted variables that can influence regionalist party outcomes. I conduct the analysis using vote shares first to show how this study builds on previous literature and to foreground the differences once vote shares are broken down into three categories. An alternative measure of electoral outcomes was considered as well, the Index of Electoral Success (Gordin, 2001). The Index of Electoral Success is a measure used to assess regionalist parties relative to the other parties in a region. The formula for the measure is as follows:

[9] The Appendix contains a graphical display of the vote shares and their classification as electoral breakthrough, electoral persistence and failure for all of the regionalist parties in this study by region.

$$IES = \frac{Regionalist\ Party\ Vote\ Share}{Leading\ Party\ Vote\ Share}$$

While I considered the measure, I determined that vote shares are a better dependent variable both for the undifferentiated assessment of regionalist party success and for the construction and classification of breakthrough, persistence and failure. The primary reason was that by constructing the IES using the leading party's vote share as the denominator it creates the possibility for fluctuations in the regionalist party's IES, even if there is no change in a regionalist party's vote share. For example, the leading mainstream party could lose voters to another mainstream party while a regionalist party's vote share remained the same, yet its IES would increase. Vote shares provides a more direct measure of a regionalist party's support. Table 2.1 provides the summary statistics for regionalist party vote shares.

Table 2.1: Summary Statistics for Regionalist Party Vote Shares

Variable	Observations	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Regionalist Party Vote Shares	146	0.166	0.108	0.017	0.5

For the second set of regressions, I quantify the typologies of success: breakthrough, persistence, and failure. I coded each outcome as a dummy variable initially before combining them together as a categorical variable for analysis, the reason for which I will discuss in the methods section later in the chapter. I determined instances of electoral breakthrough based on several criteria (descriptive statistics are in Table 2.2 with electoral failure and electoral persistence).[10] One result that counts as a breakthrough occurs when a party does not have a regional vote share of 0.05 or above in the election immediately before the observed election, and in the observed election it

[10] I ran regressions on different thresholds of breakthrough, persistence and failure to determine whether the significant relationships between the independent and dependent variables held up across different specifications.

earns a vote share above 0.05. This constitutes breakthrough, as it indicates a party achieved an initial level of electoral relevance. The second way that a party breaks through is if it increases its regional vote share by 0.05 or greater compared to the previous election. I selected a vote share increase of 0.05 to create a sufficiently large hurdle for a regionalist party to meet. Thus, parties that make significant electoral gains even after their first instance of becoming relevant can achieve breakthrough. Based on these criteria, parties can have successive breakthroughs provided their regional vote share continues to increase by more than 0.05 in each subsequent election. Any outcome where a party does not achieve initial relevance by earning a vote share more than 0.05 where previously it had been below this level or does not increase in its vote share by 0.05 or greater is not breakthrough and is either persistence or failure.

Electoral Breakthrough

(Vote Share >0.05 & Previous Vote Share < 0.05) & Vote Share ≥ Previous Vote Share + 0.05

Electoral failure occurs under two conditions. First, any election where a regionalist party does not earn a vote share of at least 0.05 is failure. A regionalist party below this threshold neither persists nor breaks through and has little electoral relevance. Second, if a regionalist party earns a vote share less than 0.03 relative to the previous election it is a failure. This version of failure accounts for a regionalist party's inability to maintain its previous levels of success even if it does not become irrelevant

Electoral Failure

Vote Share < 0.05 & Vote Share ≤ Previous Vote Share-0.03

I code election results as persistence based on the following criterion. First, a party must have earned a vote share of at least 0.05 in the previous election. A result below the minimum relevance threshold cannot count as persistence. If a party receives a vote share below 0.05 it must experience electoral breakthrough again before it can

persist again. Second, a party can achieve persistence if it remains within a vote share range relative to the previous election. This means that for a party to persist it cannot receive a vote share less than 0.03 relative to the previous election and its vote share must be less than the 0.05 threshold established for electoral breakthrough. I selected the lower threshold of 0.03 to make the quantitative value of persistence more difficult to meet.

Electoral Persistence

Vote Share ≥ Previous Vote Share – 0.03 & Vote Share < Previous Vote Share + 0.05

Table 2.2: Summary Statistics for Breakthrough, Persistence, and Failure

Variable	Observations	Num. of Occurrences	Mean
Electoral Breakthrough	146	36	0.246
Electoral Persistence	146	67	0.458
Electoral Failure	146	43	0.294

The table detailing the descriptive statistics of electoral breakthrough, electoral persistence, and electoral failure indicates number of elections that the different outcomes occur. Breakthrough occurs 26.2% of the time, persistence happens in 45% of elections, and failure 28.9% of the time.

Challenges of Quantifying Breakthrough, Failure, and Persistence

In the conversion of my theoretical framework of breakthrough, persistence, and failure into quantitative values for the regression analysis, many challenges emerged. First, I had to determine whether to use vote shares or the Index of Electoral Success to define the particular thresholds of each concept. Ultimately, as discussed above, I settled on using vote shares because directly captures a regionalist party's outcome and does not undergo the same significant changes that can occur to the IES based on the outcomes of other parties. Upon choosing vote shares to use as my foundation, I had to select the vote share thresholds that would define the different concepts. I wanted to ensure that I

selected numerical values of the concepts objectively and not based on whether they supported my hypotheses. While I did not invent the concepts of breakthrough, failure, and persistence, two previous scholars used them in their analysis of far-right parties, their qualitative definitions were left vague and they were not quantified (Coffé, 2004; Mudde, 2007). Thus, I tested four different specifications to determine patterns regarding which variables had relationships with breakthrough, failure, and persistence across the range of definitions (see Table 2.3). Each specification is different based on the size of the increase in vote shares required to constitute breakthrough, either 0.03 or 0.05, and the lower bound of persistence that indicates the acceptable decrease in vote shares from a previous election before failure occurs, either 0.03 or 0.05. I deemed variables that reoccurred as significant across multiple categorizations more likely to be explanatory instead of those that were significant in only one, as this indicated the influence of the variable more than the effect generated by a particular specification of breakthrough, failure, or persistence.

As I will discuss below in the methods section, three regression models were necessary for each quantitative specification of breakthrough, persistence, and failure. Table 2.3 indicates for each definition how many times a variable was significant across all three models. Ultimately, I chose the most restrictive quantitative definition of breakthrough, persistence and failure, where a vote share increase of 0.05 was necessary for breakthrough and a regionalist party could only lose more than 0.03 of its vote share before failing. The main focus was to make breakthrough a difficult threshold to meet, to define persistence more stringently to restrict its possible continued influence on elections, and to recognize failures. With the specification I selected, breakthrough

requires a higher threshold to occur, persistence has a smaller lower bound to make its occurrence more difficult, and failure can occur more easily. Only one variable, the supranational government index, is significant (p-value<0.1) in my selected specification that is not significant in any others. In addition, mainstream party issue salience was significant in all three other specifications, but not in my chosen quantitative definition.

Table 2.3: Significant Relationships for Different Specifications of Breakthrough Persistence and Failure

Variable	Breakthrough>0.03 & Failure<0.03	Breakthrough>0.03 & Failure<0.05	Breakthrough>0.05 & Failure<0.03	Breakthrough>0.05 & Failure<0.05
Center-Periphery Position	2/3	1/3	2/3	1/3
Left-Right Position	1/3	0/3	1/3	1/3
Left-Right Position Squared	1/3	1/3	1/3	1/3
Mainstream Accommodation	1/3	2/3	1/3	0/3
Mainstream Polarization	0/3	0/3	0/3	0/3
Mainstream Issue Salience	1/3	2/3	0/3	2/3
Effective Number of Parties	2/3	2/3	0/3	2/3
Supranational Government Index	0/3	0/3	1/3	0/3
Regional Authority Index	2/3	2/3	2/3	3/3
Regional Authority Index Squared	2/3	2/3	2/3	2/3
Relative Unemployment	0/3	0/3	0/3	0/3
Relative GDP per Capita	0/3	0/3	0/3	0/3

Independent Variables

This dissertation maintains that internal supply-side party strategic variables and external supply-side party strategic variables play a significant role in determining when regionalist parties experience breakthrough, fail, or persist. The regressions also have

demand-side variables to control for their possible influence. The summary statistics for all the independent variables are in Table 2.4.

One potential issue this dissertation faces is omitted variable bias. Omitted variable bias is an issue every study must consider but resolving it completely is nearly impossible (Clarke, 2005). To avoid this, particularly in the quantitative analysis, I base my variable selection on previous literature (Sorens, 2005; Meguid, 2008, Jolly, 2015). In addition, I avoid attempting to overfit the model with excessive controls to prevent other forms of measurement error.

Table 2.4: Summary Statistics for Independent Variables

Variable	Observations	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Regionalist Center-Periphery	146	0.153	0.092	-0.0401	0.386
Regionalist Left-Right	146	-0.077	0.123	-0.312	0.454
Regionalist Left-Right Squared	146	0.021	0.028	1.94e-07	0.206
Mainstream Accommodation	146	0.003	0.026	-0.095	0.076
Left-Right Polarization	146	0.211	0.116	0.008	0.636
Mainstream Salience	146	0.823	0.156	0.458	1.213
Effective Number of Parties	146	4.346	1.244	2.452	10.531
Supranational Government Index	146	0.281	0.177	0	0.464
Regional Authority Index	146	17.993	6.503	1	26.5
Regional Authority Index Squared	146	365.757	198.317	1	702.25
Relative GDP per Capita	146	1.105	0.231	0.713	2.168
Relative Unemployment	146	0.916	0.317	0.328	1.755

Internal Supply-Side Variables

The internal supply-side party strategic variables used in this dissertation are regionalist party positions on the center-periphery issue dimension and the left-right issue

dimension. Regionalist party positions receive little attention from previous scholars who neglect to either discuss the possibility that regionalist party positions can influence their electoral outcomes or assume that other factors play a more significant role overriding the possibility that regionalist parties influence their own fate (Meguid, 2005; Meguid, 2008; Brancati, 2008; Jolly, 2015).

I use the Comparative Manifestos Project (CMP) to construct regionalist party positions, as previous studies used it extensively for mainstream parties.[11] The CMP measures particular party positions by analyzing political party manifestos and dividing them into quasi-sentences or clauses, which they then classify as a predetermined sub-topic. A sub-topic receives a value by dividing the number of quasi-sentences in that category by the total number of quasi sentences in the entire manifesto. While this provides measures of position, a somewhat similar equation allows the construction of issue salience measures, and I measure this in the discussion of external supply-side variables (Alonso, Cabeza, & Gómez, 2015). The CMP provides the best measure available for regionalist party electoral strategies because it constructs positions directly from the official party platform. An important issue to consider, however, is that the CMP only scores the manifestos of parties that earn at least 5% of the vote share nationally or those deemed worthy of special consideration, an open-ended categorization (Volkines, Lehmann, Matthieß, Merz, Regel, & Weßels, 2018). This limits the number of observations and may explain their omission in previous studies, even though this reason is not directly given.

[11] Sonia Alonso, Laura Cabeza, and Braulio Gómez (2015) developed measures of the center-periphery and left-right issue dimension from the CMP data.

The limitations regarding the CMP's choice not to score regionalist party manifestos in every election creates some concerns but does not merit its exclusion from an analyses of regionalist party electoral outcomes. Two critiques for including the CMP scores of regionalist parties are that it leaves a small sample size and it creates a potentially biased sample that only includes "successful" regionalist parties. With a sample size of 146 observations across 26 different parties, this exceeds many previous studies that have had as few as 29 observations (Meguid, 2008). The concern about a biased sample based on the inclusion of only "successful" parties merits considerations. Of my sample, however, there are 17 instances (11%) where regionalist parties do not achieve 5% of the vote, and based on my definition of electoral failure, parties do not breakthrough or persist in 28.9% (43) of my observations. My sample has more instances of regionalist party failure (28.9%) than electoral breakthrough (26.2%). This highlights that while it may seem the CMP is biased towards including successful parties, a more detailed analysis reveals a sample that does not favor a particular type of regionalist party outcome.

Another potential concern is that this analysis of regionalist party electoral fortunes only includes regionalist parties. Many previous studies of regionalist parties only examine the influences on electoral performances with a sample of exclusively regionalist parties (Sorens, 2005; Meguid, 2008; Brancati, 2014; Massetti & Schakel, 2015). This, however, has the potential to bias the estimators. Only analyzing a select sample of regionalist parties from the CMP may not provide a complete evaluation of the different variables influences on electoral outcomes, as the outcomes of other types of

parties, particularly mainstream parties are omitted. However, this study exclusively focuses on regionalist parties and follows he precedent of previous scholarship.

In addition to the limitations posed by the amount of CMP data, this dissertation excludes regionalist parties that compete in an entirely regionalized space. This is a region where national mainstream parties have all but foregone standing candidates. Examples of these regions include Greenland (Denmark), the Aaland Islands (Finland), the Faroe Islands (Denmark), and the Isle of Man (United Kingdom). In these areas, multiple regionalist parties often exist, and regionalist parties always win elections. They do not face same dynamics where regionalist parties compete against national mainstream or other niche parties.

Where CMP data exists for regionalist parties, I construct their center-periphery and left-right positions. For the center-periphery issue dimension position (*c_p_pos*), I used the various sub-topics in the CMP related to center-periphery issues and the formula for constructing the position that both come from Sonia Alonso's previous analysis (Alonso, 2012; Alonso, Cabeza, & Gómez, 2015). The specific sub-topics used that measure center and periphery issues are included in Table 2.1.

Table 2.5: Comparative Manifestos Project Center-Periphery Issue Dimension

Center-Periphery Dimension	CMP Classification	CMP ID Number
Center	Centralization	Per302
	National Way of Life: Positive	Per601
	Multiculturalism: Negative	Per 608
Periphery	Decentralization	Per301
	National Way of Life: Negative	Per602
	Multiculturalism: Positive	Per 607

With the identified sub-topics that represent either favorability toward the central or the peripheral, Alonso's formula constructs the center-periphery position.

$$Center\ Periphery\ Position = \frac{(Periphery\ Quasi\ Sentences - Center\ Quasi\ Sentences)}{Total\ Number\ of\ Manifesto\ Quasi\ Sentences}$$

For the above formula, the center-periphery position is constructed by subtracting the total number of quasi-sentences that fit into the center category from the total number of quasi-sentences that fit into the periphery category then dividing this by the manifesto's total number of quasi sentences. The resulting measure produces values from negative one to one with one representing the most autonomous position and negative one representing the most centralist position.

The position of a regionalist party on the left-right issue dimension (*l_r_pos*) comes from a similar derivation of the CMP datasets values. The table below shows the variables that cumulatively construct a party's left-right position (Alonso, 2012; Budge & Laver, 2016).

Alonso developed the following formula to calculate the left-right position:

$$Left\ Right\ Position = \frac{(Right\ Quasi\ Sentences - Left\ Quasi\ Sentences)}{Total\ Number\ of\ Manifesto\ Quasi\ Sentences}$$

In the formula to create a left-right position, a party's score equals the total number of quasi-sentences favorable to right-wing policies minus the total number of quasi-sentences favorable to left-wing policies divided by the total number of quasi-sentences in the manifesto. The left-right position measure creates a similar score to the center-periphery dimension ranging from negative one to one. For this measure, a score of one represents a completely right-wing party and a score of negative one indicates a completely left-wing party. These positions would never actually occur, but we can determine that a party with a larger score is further right while a lower score indicates a more left-wing party. If a party had a score of zero, it would be perfectly centrist.

Table 2.6: Comparative Manifestos Project Left-Right Issue Dimension

Left-Right Dimension	CMP Classification	CMP ID Number
Left	Anti-Imperialism	Per103
	Military: Negative	Per105
	Peace	Per106
	Internationalism: Positive	Per107
	Democracy	Per202
	Market Regulation	Per403
	Economic Planning	Per404
	Protectionism: Positive	Per406
	Controlled Economy	Per412
	Nationalization	Per413
	Welfare State Expansion	Per504
	Education Expansion	Per506
	Labour Groups: Positive	Per701
Right	Military: Positive	Per104
	Freedom and Human Rights	Per201
	Constitutionalism: Positive	Per203
	Political Authority	Per305
	Free Enterprise	Per401
	Incentives	Per402
	Protectionism: Negative	Per407
	Economic Orthodoxy	Per414
	Welfare State Limitation	Per505
	Traditional Morality: Positive	Per603
	Law and Order	Per605
	Social Harmony	Per606
	Labour Groups: Negative	Per702

External Supply-Side Variables

External supply-side party strategic variables, which I hypothesize are more likely to affect the probability of electoral breakthrough, receive considerable attention in the literature. The three most important are the center-periphery and left-right positions of the two largest mainstream parties and mainstream party issue salience on those two dimensions. I included several other external supply-side variables as well.

The receptiveness of mainstream parties to regional autonomy has been the focus of several works (Meguid, 2005; Meguid, 2008; Jolly, 2015). In order to measure

receptiveness, first the center-periphery positions of the two mainstream parties with the largest vote shares at the national level were calculated using the same formula that measured regionalist party center-periphery positions. Two options exist to use as a quantitative measure for mainstream party accommodation. A previous scholar, Seth Jolly, measured accommodation using the score of the mainstream party that had the most receptive position to greater regional autonomy (*alonso_accomm*). The other option to measure accommodation is to select the least receptive mainstream party center-periphery position (a*lonso_adver*). There is theoretical merit to selecting the least accommodating position instead of the most accommodating position because in elections regionalist parties will focus more heavily on the mainstream party that favors the greatest centralization of authority. The least accommodating party demonstrates the greatest contrast with the regionalist party and if the least accommodating party wins the election it represents the most worst-case scenario for additional devolution. Thus, regionalist parties have a greater concern with the least accommodating party compared to the most accommodating party.

The other external supply-side variable based on mainstream party positions relates to the overall level of polarization on left-right issues between the two largest mainstream parties. Again, based on Jolly's approach, I calculate the measure as the difference between the left-right positions (*alonso_p_diverg*) of the two major national mainstream parties. Below is the formula to determine polarization on left-right issues:

$$Party\ Polarization = (Leading\ \ Left/Right\ Position - Second\ Left/Right\ Position$$

A small party divergence score means that the mainstream parties are closer to each other in terms of their positions on the left-right issue dimension, while a larger score indicates more polarized positions.

In addition to party positions, a mainstream party issue-saliency measure is necessary. For regionalist parties, their main dimension of emphasis is center-periphery, while for mainstream parties they emphasize the left-right dimension most. The relative emphasis of left-right issues and center-periphery issues by mainstream parties may influence the success of regionalist parties. For the regressions, I construct my measure of salience in two steps. First, I determine the salience of the left-right and center-periphery issue dimensions for the two largest mainstream parties in a region using the CMP data. The equation is as follows:

$$Center\ Periphery\ Salience\ = \frac{(Periphery\ Quasi\ Sentences + Center\ Quasi\ Sentences)}{Total\ Numbers\ of\ Manifesto\ Quasi\ Sentences}$$

$$Left\ Right\ Salience\ = \frac{(Right\ Quasi\ Sentences + Left\ Quasi\ Sentences)}{Total\ Numbers\ of\ Manifesto\ Quasi\ Sentences}$$

Mainstream left-right and center-periphery saliency scores are constructed in a somewhat similar manner to issue positions. The only difference is that the number of quasi sentences that focus on left-right and center-periphery issues are added rather than subtracted before being divided by the total number of quasi sentences in the manifesto. This yields a possible range of scores from zero to one, where zero means a particular issue dimension receives no attention from a party and a one means the party only focuses on that issue dimension. This is an important distinction, as a measure of saliency needs to capture how much a party focuses on a particular dimension. Thus, by adding left-right or center-periphery issues, we can get an idea of the totality of the mainstream parties' emphasis on each dimension.

The new measures of salience for the two mainstream parties on left-right and center-periphery issues can be used to construct a useful measure of the relative salience of left-right issues to center-periphery issues. This will demonstrate the level of emphasis

on left-right and center-periphery issues by mainstream parties that regionalist parties face in electoral competition. The first step is to add the left-right salience scores of the mainstream parties together for an aggregate left-right salience and then to repeat the process for center-periphery saliency. Once the aggregate saliency of left-right issues and the aggregate saliency of center-periphery issues are created, I subtract the aggregate center-periphery saliency from the aggregate left-right saliency (*issuesal*).

$$Issue\ Salience = (Mainstream\ Left/Right\ Salience - Manistream\ Center/Periphery\ Salience$$

The measure creates a possible range of values from -2 to 2. The value is never negative, as mainstream parties never emphasize center-periphery issues more than left-right issues. The measures value comes from its ability to show the relative extent to which mainstream parties emphasize left-right issues over center-periphery issues. A lower score indicates a more similar emphasis on left-right and center-periphery issues, while a higher value indicates a relatively greater emphasis on left-right issues.

Another important external supply-side variable I include is the effective number of parties (*effnumparty*). The effective number of parties appears in many studies focused on explaining political party success (Laakso & Taagepera, 1979; Neto & Cox, 1997; Jolly, 2015). The variable provides a useful metric regarding the number of viable parties competing in an election. The number of potential viable competitors has the capacity to limit or increase a regionalist party's ability to breakthrough, persist, or fail (Laakso & Taagepera, 1979; Jolly 2015). In this dissertation, I calculate the effective number of parties at the regional level in national elections. [12] The formula is as follows:

[12] A potential criticism of the effective number of parties measure is that it includes the regionalist party. The literature does not directly address this issue, but even when 1 is subtracted from the measure; it yields the same regression results.

$$Effective\ Number\ of\ Parties = \frac{1}{\Sigma(Individual\ Party\ Vote\ Shares\ in\ a\ Region)^2}$$

This means that the effective number of parties equals the inverse of the sum of every party's vote shares in the region squared (Laasko & Taagepera, 1979).

Institutional arrangements that influence regional authority need consideration as possible external supply-side influences, and this analysis uses two measures. The first is the supranational government index (*supragovindex*) that measures the level of supranational integration for European Union member countries on 28 policy issue areas, including economic, social, and other areas.[13] The variable goes beyond a basic categorization of whether a country is in the EU or not, and classifies the extent of that integration in an ordinal manner. Each policy area receives a score from 1-5 with 1 indicating all decisions are made at the national level on a policy issue and 5 meaning all decisions are made at the EU level. The measure averages the scores on all 28 issues and rescales them from zero to one. While this creates a measure that is uniform across countries and regions when they become part of the European Union, the index allows for an analysis of whether regionalist parties perform better when more European integration has occurred across time. This will provide an important test of previous research that argued integration into the EU plays a significant role in explaining regionalist party success (Jolly, 2015).

The second institutional variable I use is a measure of regional decentralization (*tier_rai*) (Hooghe, Marks, Schakel, Osterkatz, Niedzwiecki, & Shair-Rosenfield, 2016). The Regional Authority Index dataset factors in decentralization for several policy areas including indicators for levels of fiscal autonomy, lawmaking autonomy, and institutional

[13] Seth Jolly (2015) uses the index created by Hooghe, Marks, Schakel, Osterkatz, Niedzwiecki, and Shair-Rosenfield (2016).

autonomy. Initially, all of these subcategories of regional autonomy receive individual scores, and then they are aggregated into a score from 0-27, with 27 representing the highest level of autonomy. The measure used in this dissertation, however, is squared value of the aggregate Regional Authority Index (*tier_rai_squ*). The reason for using a squared value of the Regional Authority Index, and not a linear variable, is theoretical. It may be advantageous for a regionalist party when the levels of regional authority are moderate, in contrast to very little or significant amounts of devolution.

Demand-Side Variables

In order to test the supply-side hypotheses, I compare them with potential demand-side factors that could predict electoral outcomes. One of the most often used is the relative rate of unemployment (*relrt_q2*). This measure accounts for the unemployment rate of a region in contrast to the unemployment rate of the entire state:

$$Relative\ Unemployment\ Rate = \frac{Regional\ Unemployment\ Rate}{National\ Unemployment\ Rate}$$

Relative unemployment may stoke grievances at a regional level producing regionalist party support. When the relative rate of unemployment increases, citizens in highly affected regions may believe the central government considers their economic concerns as less important. Thus, a poor economy may drive support for regionalist parties who place concerns for their geographical region first.

An important variable that I include, which previous studies emphasized, is the relative GDP per capita ratio (*relgdppc*). I calculate the relative GDP per capita as follows:

$$Relative\ GDP\ Per\ Capita = \frac{Regional\ GDP\ Per\ Capita}{National\ GDP\ Per\ Capita}$$

Relative GDP per capita appears in many studies that assess regionalist parties' electoral fortunes as another means to account for economic conditions. It serves a useful metric to assess relative disparity between a region and the state as a whole. Arguments that regions with lower GDP per capita have more successful regionalist parties (relative depravity thesis) and contentions that regions with higher GDP per capita support regionalist parties to a greater extent (relative abundance thesis) both exist in the literature, so predicting the impact seems unresolved.

Quantitative Methods

I use multiple regression models to examine the supply-side and demand-side variables' influence on electoral outcomes. Initially, in this section, I discuss the starting point of the analysis. Then, I conduct the first set of regressions, which resemble previous analyses of electoral success by using regionalist party vote shares as the dependent variable. This provides a baseline to compare with the assessments of electoral breakthrough, electoral failure, and electoral persistence later in the section. Subsequently, I evaluate the influences on breakthrough, persistence, or failure. These analyses provide the primary quantitative assessment of the hypotheses I advanced regarding regionalist party electoral outcomes. Finally, I contrast the findings of the electoral breakthrough, electoral persistence, and electoral failure models with the regional vote shares models.

Starting Point of the Analysis

This dissertation begins with an analysis of regions that already have an extant regionalist party. I do not begin by investigating the factors the influence whether regionalist parties emerge or not. A two-stage analysis could be performed to analyze the

factors likely to produce the formation of regionalist parties and subsequently determine whether those factors have a long-term effect and influence regionalist party electoral outcomes. While this would be a worthwhile endeavor in another study, I limit my scope to investigating regionalist parties once they already exist. My focus is on redefining regionalist party success and explaining the factors that contribute to it, which already has considerable challenges. A two-stage analysis of the causes of regionalist party emergence and subsequently an analysis of the factors that produce electoral success is a worthwhile study, however, I leave that endeavor for a future study. This study follows previous research in their starting point of analyzing regionalist parties that already exists and then makes the novel contribution of redefining success, as well as explaining the factors that produce it, including influences not extensively used in previous analyses.

Regionalist Party Vote Share Regressions

While this dissertation emphasized the shortcomings of analyses that failed to differentiate between electoral outcomes, I begin with an analysis that uses a uniform measure of electoral success, regionalist party vote shares, to assess my time-series cross-sectional data (TSCS). This allows for a more direct comparison with previous studies and provides a framework to compare the results with breakthrough, persistence, and failure to determine whether my new typology has merit. The models for the vote shares and the differentiated typology of outcomes use all of the same independent variables except one. The only difference is that I include a lagged measure of the vote share in the vote share analysis as an independent variable. I use a lagged dependent variable to control for the possibility of serial correlation (Durbin, 1970).

I considered two different types of regressions for my analyses: a panel corrected standard errors model and a fixed effects OLS regression. Ultimately, I use the fixed effects OLS regression as my final model. When using a fixed effects model for TSCS data two major complications can arise: serially correlated standard errors that bias estimates and limitations regarding the inclusion of time-invariant variables (Wawro, Samii, & Kristensen, 2011). These are not insurmountable obstacles as robust standard errors and a lagged dependent variable can address some of the issues associated with serial correlated standard errors. In addition, prioritizing variables that are time invariant over the issues associated with unit effects can produce incorrect inferences about an independent variable's relationship with the dependent variable (Wawro, Samii, & Kristensen, 2011). Ultimately, the concern with failing to account for unit-effects played a major role in choosing the fixed-effects analysis over the panel-corrected standard error model (see footnote below for additional information).[14]

The OLS fixed-effects regression needs to control for time. One solution is the inclusion of every individual time unit as a dummy variable, thus, every election year. Opting for this solution would produce a tremendous reduction in the degrees of freedom (Beck, Katz, & Tucker, 1998; Jolly, 2015). With an already limited number of observations, this would significantly restrict the model. Other options that consume far fewer degrees of freedom can also address concerns associated with time. One method involves creating time variables that exist at larger intervals (Beck, Katz, and Tucker,

[14] A detailed discussion on the debate between using a fixed-effects model versus a panel-corrected standard error model can be found in Wawro, Samii, and Kristensen (2011). In addition, as the various specifications were considered, I contacted Jonathan Katz, whose seminal article with Nathaniel Beck (1995) "What To Do (And Not To Do) with Time-Series Cross-Section Data," emphasized the value of panel-corrected standard errors models for time-series cross-section data. From our correspondence, he also recommended a fixed-effects model instead of a panel-corrected standard error model.

1998; Jolly, 2015). This still provides the necessary control for time specific effects, without overburdening the model. In each model, I included decade dummies, as many previous studies have done, to resolve the time dependency issue (Leblang, 1996; Beck, Katz, & Tucker; Posner, 2004; Jolly, 2015). However, when using decade dummies, one decade must be omitted to serve as the base comparison.

For the fixed effects model, I also include Huber/White robust standard errors. Including robust standard errors has several advantages. One benefit is that it helps control for a lack of independence within units. In addition, robust standard errors help address issues of clustering and unequal variances across the data (Williams, 2000). Finally, the technique allows researchers to calculate unbiased standard errors even under conditions of heteroscedasticity (Cameron & Miller, 2010).

For my analysis that uses regionalist party vote shares as the dependent variable, I use three models that successively add more variables. The first model includes demand-side variables and external supply-side variables, excluding all party strategic variables. This model represents the regionalist party studies that omitted party strategic factors (Sorens, 2005; Brancati, 2008; Sorens, 2012). The second model uses everything from the first model plus the mainstream party strategic variables, which includes the least accommodative position on the center-periphery dimension, the degree of left-right polarization, and the measure of relative mainstream party issue salience on the two issue dimensions. Previous research that included mainstream party positions omitted any measure of salience (Meguid, 2008; Jolly, 2015). The final model for vote shares incorporates the internal supply-side variables represented by the regionalist party's position on the center-periphery and left-right issue dimensions.

Table 2.7: Vote Share Regression Results

VARIABLES	(1) Model I	(2) Model II	(3) Model III
Regionalist Party C-P Position			0.257**
			(0.119)
Regionalist Party L-R Positions			-0.0929
			(0.0719)
Regionalist Party L-R Position Squared			0.675**
			(0.249)
Mainstream Party Accommodation		0.0865	0.178
		(0.258)	(0.302)
Mainstream Party Polarization		0.00555	-0.0275
		(0.0818)	(0.0744)
Mainstream Party Issue Salience		0.0760	0.0702
		(0.0687)	(0.0621)
Effective Number of Parties	-0.00502	-0.00289	-0.00669
	(0.00983)	(0.00902)	(0.00900)
Supranational Government Index	0.153	0.227	0.156
	(0.130)	(0.133)	(0.125)
Regional Authority Index	0.00491	0.00727	0.0113*
	(0.00741)	(0.00706)	(0.00603)
Regional Authority Index Squared	1.21e-05	-9.32e-05	-0.000328
	(0.000371)	(0.000360)	(0.000306)
Relative GDP Per Capita	-0.0265	-0.0284	-0.0158
	(0.0919)	(0.0957)	(0.108)
Relative Unemployment	-0.0213	-0.0187	-0.0152
	(0.0386)	(0.0420)	(0.0392)
Lagged Vote Share	0.206*	0.232**	0.252**
	(0.104)	(0.0926)	(0.0925)
Fifties	0.0876	0.134**	0.0406
	(0.0640)	(0.0591)	(0.0837)
Sixties	0.132**	0.173***	0.0850
	(0.0506)	(0.0519)	(0.0774)
Seventies	0.157**	0.183***	0.0918
	(0.0608)	(0.0498)	(0.0686)
Eighties	0.0901*	0.112**	0.0705
	(0.0516)	(0.0461)	(0.0544)
Nineties	0.0616	0.0727*	0.0563
	(0.0413)	(0.0367)	(0.0408)
Aughts	0.0163	0.0197	0.0175
	(0.0356)	(0.0341)	(0.0350)
Constant	0.00818	-0.107	-0.0971
	(0.167)	(0.183)	(0.187)
Observations	146	146	146
R-squared	0.231	0.242	0.322
Number of Parties	26	26	26

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Model I revealed no significant relationships between demand-side and external supply-side variables and a regionalist party's vote shares, except the lagged vote shares. The lack of significant correlations indicates that additional independent variables may be needed to explain changes in regionalist party vote shares. Model II introduces the mainstream party strategic variables. With their inclusion, I found that the supranational government index was significant but only at the 0.1 level with regionalist party vote shares. The relationship was positive indicating that the more integrated a country is into the European Union, the more a regionalist party's vote share increases. The inclusion of the party strategic variables does not produce any new significant or substantive changes in the other variables, and the lagged dependent variable remains significant. As only the supranational government index having a significant relationship with regionalist party vote shares, I include a final additional set of explanatory variables to account for variation. Model III adds the internal supply-side variables, those most often excluded from previous analyses. This final model finds three variables significant, regionalist party positioning on the center-periphery dimension, the quadratic variable of regionalist party positioning on the left-right issue dimension, and the regional authority index. The regionalist party center-periphery position has a positive significant relationship ($p<0.05$), which indicates that as a regionalist party adopts a more pro-periphery position, it will increase its vote shares. The squared value of the regionalist party's left-right position also is positive and significant at the 0.05 level. This indicates that as regionalist parties move either farther to the right or farther to the left it will increase its vote shares. Finally, the regional authority index has a positive significant relationship with

regionalist vote shares, but only at the 0.1 level. Thus, the relationship should be regarded with some caution.

Discussion

This section evaluates regionalist party electoral success in the more traditional vein to provide an improved comparison with previous analyses, while including internal supply-side variables. By building the model in three successive steps and testing the relationships between the demand-side and supply-side variables against a larger sample of regionalist parties, the importance of including internal supply-side factors becomes clear. Model I revealed no significant relationships and Model II's only significant relationship was above the generally accepted p-value threshold of 0.05. Those two models highlighted the importance of the internal supply-side variables in Model III, as with the addition of regionalist party positions two of the three significant relationships had an acceptable level of significance. Below I will discuss the meaning of the relationships in greater depth, however, I will conclude by discussing the potential limitations of Model III based on the possibility of different results once I divide electoral outcomes into three categories.

The positive significant relationship between the regionalist party position on the center-periphery dimension and regionalist party vote shares indicates that on average for a one unit increase in the regionalist party's center-periphery position, it will increase its vote share by 0.257 or 25.7%. The center-periphery dimension is measured on a scale from negative one to one, so thinking about this value in smaller terms is a better way of understanding the measure, especially since regionalist parties do not ever increase their center-periphery position so drastically. If a regionalist party increases its center-

periphery position by 0.1, then, on average, it will increase its vote shares 0.0257 or 2.57%. The relationship found in this initial regression analysis provides some evidence to support Hypothesis 6 that when regionalist parties adopt a more pro-periphery position they are more likely to persist and it is an important, relatively novel, finding. Its relationship with persistence will be further investigated below. More importantly, however, is that many studies have ignored regionalist party positions, and this demonstrates the capacity for regionalist parties to play an important role in influencing their own electoral fate. Most previous studies either omitted party strategic variables completely or only focused on mainstream parties, however, these findings fit with the growing literature that consider the influence regionalist parties have on their own fate more seriously. The ability of regionalist parties to influence their own fate comes from their capacity to introduce a different issue dimension to elections (Alonso, 2012). Regionalist parties, with their primary focus on the center-periphery dimension, have the capacity to introduce a novel element to electoral competition that cuts across the traditional left-right issue dimension that mainstream parties primarily compete on. When a regionalist party adopts a more pro-periphery position, it can distinguish itself clearly from mainstream parties. As a party favors more regional autonomy, it increases the number of policy areas in the center-periphery dimension it focuses on. This often leads to mainstream parties engaging regionalist parties on an issue dimension that they do not have issue ownership over, resulting in greater support for the regionalist party.

The positive significant relationship between a regionalist party's position on the left-right issue dimension squared and regionalist party vote shares indicates a concave upward quadratic relationship. Since the CMP scales the left-right positions of the

regionalist parties from -1 to 1 and the quadratic relationship between vote shares and the left-right positioning of regionalist parties has a vertex of 0.0687, this suggests that regionalist parties with either a farther left or farther right position will increase their vote shares. This finding also provides some initial evidence for Hypothesis 7 regarding a regionalist parties' ability to move farther right or left to increase their chances of persistence. The significant quadratic relationship contrasts with previous studies that either argued regionalist parties were single issue parties, ignoring the left-right dimension and past research that argued regionalist parties perform poorly when they do not subsume the left-right dimension to the center-periphery dimension (Meguid, 2008; Massetti & Schakel, 2013). Based on the emerging literature that emphasizes the need to consider regionalist party left-right positions and my theoretical expectations, the fact that regionalist parties can influence their electoral fate based on their left-right positioning is a reasonable finding. Even though a regionalist party's advantage comes from its positioning on the center-periphery dimension and its capacity to introduce a new issue dimension, its positioning on the left-right dimension matters because this is the primary issue dimension that most elections are fought on. By moving to the left or right a party can potentially compete better against mainstream parties.

The Regional Authority Index had a positive significant relationship with regionalist party vote shares, although the relationship is somewhat tenuous with a p-value of 0.078. The relationship indicates that for every unit increase in the Regional Authority Index, regionalist vote shares increase by 0.01 or 1%. The Regional Authority Index has values from 0 to 27, and the regression results indicate that further increasing regional autonomy will result in greater support for regionalist parties. This differs

somewhat from my theoretical expectation in Hypothesis 4 that a quadratic relationship would exist between regionalist party left-right positions and breakthrough, however, with vote shares as the dependent variable it is not an ideal measure. Finding a positive relationship between the Regional Authority Index and regionalist party vote shares is a different result than found in previous studies (Massetti & Schakel, 2013). Massetti and Schakel (2013) found that with greater decentralization of authority, regionalist parties earned lower vote shares in national elections. The positive relationship in Model III, while it must be regarded with caution based on its significance level, contradicts the previous finding. An explanation for this could be that increasing regional authority emboldens regionalist parties and enhances their credibility rather than acting as an accommodative measure by mainstream parties in an attempt to coopt the center-periphery dimension. Alternatively, Massetti and Schakel do argue that decentralization helps regionalist parties in regional elections, which in turn enhances their stature and translates to greater support in national elections. My analysis may be picking up that effect, however, a more detailed analysis could reveal this dynamic.

Model III produced results that differ from much of the previous literature on regionalist party electoral success. I found that regionalist parties adopting more pro-periphery positions increase their vote share, that when regionalist parties move farther to the left or right they increase their vote share, and that as a region gains greater autonomy regionalist parties' vote shares are likely to increase. Regionalist party electoral outcomes need a more nuanced analysis. Understanding when a regionalist party's position on the left-right or center-periphery dimension is more likely to matter is important. While the various influences may be similar in electoral breakthrough,

electoral failure, and electoral persistence, additional analysis that regresses them on each outcome is needed.

Electoral Breakthrough, Electoral Persistence, and Electoral Failure Regressions

A primary focus of this thesis is to determine whether electoral outcomes for regionalist parties need to be broken down into breakthrough, persistence, and failure to adequately understand when certain factors influence regionalist parties differently. My division of outcomes results in three possibilities. One option for analyzing breakthrough, failure, and persistence would be to conduct fixed-effects logit regressions on each outcome independently coding them as dummy variables. The major issue with this approach is that it would result in the outcome of interest receiving a code of 1 and the other two outcomes having a code of 0. Since I argue that there are theoretical expectations likely to explain each one, grouping two together as the same outcome may obscure the relationships. Instead, the appropriate model is a fixed-effects multinomial regression model.

Multinomial regressions are best for analyzing categorical dependent variables. For this analysis, I classify breakthrough, persistence, and failure as distinct categories of electoral outcomes, yielding three potential values of the dependent variable. A multinomial regression produces results that compare the odds of one outcome occurring relative to another. In a multinomial regression, the researcher selects a base outcome (any of the possible values of the dependent variable) to which the regression compares the influence of the independent variables relative to the other possible outcomes independently. For example, in my analysis when I select persistence as the base outcome it compares the likelihood of the independent variables explaining breakthrough

relative to persistence and failure relative to persistence separately. This will reveal whether a change in an independent variable is more likely to produce persistence relative to breakthrough or persistence relative to failure. I present the regression results not as coefficients, but as odds ratios.[15] Odds ratios indicate the odds that a unit increase in an independent variable will increase or decrease the odds of the observed outcome happening relative to the base outcome occurring. Odds ratios greater than one indicate that an increase in an independent variable, will increase the likelihood that the observed outcome occurs relative to the base outcome. If the odds ratio is less than one, an increase in the independent variable will decrease the likelihood that the observed outcome occurs relative to the base outcome. From the odds ratio, the percentage chance that an outcome occurs relative to the base outcome is equal to:

$$Probability\ of\ an\ outcome\ relative\ to\ the\ base\ outcome = Odds\ Ratio - 1$$

For example, in this analysis, my initial multinomial regression analysis set persistence as the base outcome. The regression output produces results that compare failure to persistence and breakthrough to persistence. If a significant relationship with an odds ratio greater than one existed for a regionalist party's center-periphery position in the column comparing failure to persistence, this would indicate that ceteris paribus an increase in a regionalist party's center-periphery position would increase the likelihood of a regionalist party failing relative to persisting.

With three types of success, there are three possible regression results: failure relative to persistence, breakthrough relative to persistence, and failure relative to

[15] Without specifying that the regression output should yield odds ratios, it produces coefficients that represent the logarithm of the relative risk ratio. One can calculate the odds ratio from the coefficient as exp(coefficient) or in scientific notation $e^{coefficient}$. Odds ratios are an easier measure to interpret in a multinomial regression so I use them instead.

breakthrough. I ran two sets of regressions to attain all three potential combinations of results, as setting persistence as the base outcome in my analysis only provides results for failure relative to persistence and breakthrough relative to persistence. I run the regression again setting breakthrough as the base to find the results for the outcome failure relative to breakthrough. If the base outcome was replaced with a different type of outcome, the regression results would be the converse. For example with a base of persistence I would have a result that is a measure of failure relative to persistence. If I set failure as the base, the results for persistence relative to failure would be the opposite of the failure relative to persistence result.

My multinomial regressions to assess breakthrough, persistence, and failure are similar to the regressions that use vote shares as the dependent variable. Since I have panel data, I used a fixed-effects multinomial logit regression. Similar to the fixed-effects OLS regression, I want to address unit-effects, serial correlation, and unobserved heterogeneity. In addition, I also include decade dummies to account for the influence of time. Finally, I adopt robust standard errors to make the model more stringent.

The three regressions compare failure relative to persistence, breakthrough relative to persistence, and breakthrough relative to failure. Distinct results exist across the three elections, which lends credence to the focus of this dissertation on differentiating regionalist party electoral outcomes. Each regression has significant results that I will consider in reference to my hypotheses.

Table 2.8: Electoral Breakthrough, Electoral Failure, and Electoral Persistence Regression Results

VARIABLES	(1) Failure Relative to Persistence	(2) Breakthrough Relative to Persistence	(3) Failure Relative to Breakthrough
Regionalist Party C-P Position	1436.1*	2.54e+07***	0.00005
	(4.271)	(4.850)	(6.910)
Regionalist Party L-R Positions	2611***	378.9	26.2
	(2.332)	(3.815)	(4.561)
Regionalist Party L-R Position Squared	7.10e-11*	0.002	2.6e-07
	(13.99)	(10.74)	(11.35)
Mainstream Party Accommodation	3.9e-08	1.1e-12**	35471.5
	(14.62)	(12.83)	(13.92)
Mainstream Party Polarization	1.157	0.81	1.42
	(2.873)	(4.078)	(5.451)
Mainstream Party Issue Salience	0.129	50.3	0.002
	(3.527)	(2.952)	(4.273)
Effective Number of Parties	1.124	1.67	0.72
	(0.311)	(0.326)	(0.594)
Supranational Government Index	0.00002	2.25e-06*	11.1
	(10.10)	(6.922)	(9.197)
Regional Authority Index	0.846	2.68***	0.31***
	(0.256)	(0.317)	(0.284)
Regional Authority Index Squared	0.998	0.95***	1.04***
	(0.0142)	(0.0146)	(0.0138)
Relative GDP Per Capita	6.257	3.34	1.87
	(4.646)	(3.123)	(5.014)
Relative Unemployment	5.972	4.57	1.3
	(1.471)	(1.734)	(1.902)
Fifties	2.1e+10***	1495.8	1.68e+07***
	(5.701)	(5.017)	(5.577)
Sixties	6.84e-16***	46155**	1.48e-20***
	(5.568)	(4.864)	(6.103)
Seventies	0.025	0.01	1.43
	(4.491)	(4.052)	(5.039)
eighties	0.055	0.01	5.46
	(4.003)	(2.957)	(3.783)
Nineties	0.075	0.12	0.61
	(1.993)	(1.592)	(2.133)
Aughts	1.64	1.42	1.15
	(1.084)	(0.850)	(1.213)
Observations	141	141	141
Pseudo R2	0.340	0.340	0.340

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

The first regression examines the influence of the supply-side and demand-side variables in relation to failure relative to persistence. I find three significant independent variables: the regionalist party's center-periphery position, the regionalist party's left-

right position, and the quadratic term of the regionalist party's left-right position. Of these three, only the regionalist party's left-right position has a p-value below 0.05. The odds ratio greater than one indicates that as a regionalist party adopts a more pro-periphery position the likelihood that it will fail relative to persist increases. A regionalist party also increases its probability of failure relative to persistence if it moves further to the right on the left-right issue dimension. Finally, the probability of failing decreases and the likelihood of persisting increases when regionalist parties adopt more centrist positions on the center periphery issue dimension.

The second regression assesses the likelihood of breakthrough relative to persistence. Five significant relationships exist, with the supranational government index at the 0.1 level, the degree of accommodation from the mainstream parties at the 0.05 level, and the regionalist party center-periphery position, the Regional Authority Index and the Regional Authority Index squared at the 0.01 level. The odds ratio of the regionalist party center-periphery position is greater than one indicating that as regionalist parties adopt more pro-periphery positions its chances of breakthrough increase relative to persisting. For mainstream party accommodation the odds ratio is less than one, which indicates that as the mainstream party with the most restrictive position on the center-periphery dimension adopts a more pro-periphery position the likelihood of breakthrough decreases and the probability of persistence increases. The supranational government index (p-value<0.1) has an odds ratio less than one which implies that as a country becomes more integrated into the European Union the likelihood of breakthrough decreases relative to persistence. The Regional Authority Index has a quadratic relationship for failure relative to breakthrough with an odds ratio less than one.

This indicates probability of breaking through relative to persisting decreases when a region either has very little or a significant amount of autonomy.

The third regression demonstrates the relationship of the independent variables with failure relative to breakthrough. In this regression, only the Regional Authority Index and the Regional Authority Index squared are significant. The odds ratio greater than one on the quadratic term indicates that a concave parabolic relationship so that whether a region has very little or considerable devolved power its likelihood of failing relative to breaking through increases.

Discussion

The results of the first regression that assessed the independent variables with failure relative to persistence produced two unexpected relationships. First, based on Hypothesis 6, I expected that as regionalist parties adopted more pro-periphery positions, their odds of persisting would increase. This was based on the theoretical foundation that a distinctive center-periphery position would effectively distinguish regionalist parties and allow them to maintain a baseline level of supporters. While the significance is only at the 0.1 level, it indicates that regionalist parties are less likely to maintain their previous level of support and potentially more likely to lose supporters if they increase their support for more regional autonomy.[16] I had expected this important internal supply-side dynamic to increase the likelihood of regionalist party persistence. This finding, while weak, counters Hypothesis 8 that failure would be more likely when a regionalist party adopted a more pro-central authority position.

[16] As I will discuss below, based on the second regression, breakthrough relative to persistence, when a regionalist party adopts a more pro-periphery position it is more likely to breakthrough than to persist and there does not appear to be a significant relationship a regionalist party's center-periphery position and failure relative to breakthrough.

The first regression also reveals a potential curvilinear relationship, as predicted by Hypothesis 7, between a regionalist party's left-right position and the probability of failure relative to persistence. The quadratic term has a p-value of 0.095 indicating a weaker relationship. The relationship indicates that the odds of failing increase the more centrist on the left-right issue dimension a regionalist party's position. Thus, the more a party moves to the left or right its likelihood of persisting increases. The vertex, however, is slightly right of center at 0.1685. While the predicted relationship is that as parties move farther left or right of a left-right position of 0.1685 their likelihood of failing decreases and their odds of persisting increase. Within my sample, however, only seven observations occur to the right of the 0.1685 vertex. This suggests the weakness of the relationship between the quadratic term and failure relative to persistence.

The second regression that tests the relationships of the independent variables with breakthrough relative to persistence has the greatest number of statistically significant relationships. The first significant relationship is the center-periphery dimension with breakthrough relative to persistence. The relationship indicates that when a regionalist party adopts a more pro-autonomy position its chances of breaking through relative to persisting increases. This finding differs somewhat from my theoretical expectation as I hypothesized that internal supply-side factors would be more likely to explain persistence or failure rather than breakthrough. This finding, however, indicates that regionalist parties may increase their probability of breaking through if they make the choice to support additional regional autonomy. A potentially bold strategic maneuver of taking a more extreme position could change the electorates focus. By favoring more autonomy or independence, a regionalist party can significantly

distinguish itself from the mainstream national parties, allowing it to potentially reframe an election and draw in additional supporters.

The significance and direction of the mainstream party with the most restrictive center-periphery position and breakthrough relative to failure matches Hypothesis 1 regarding the influence on external supply-side dynamics to influence a regionalist party's electoral outcome. I hypothesized that when the mainstream party with the most pro-central authority position became more accommodating and moved toward a more pro-periphery position this could effectively neutralize the possibility of a regionalist party breaking through, and conversely when it became more restrictive it would increase the likelihood of a regionalist party break through. Mainstream parties have the capacity to influence regionalist parties' electoral fates, especially through the positions they adopt. By opting to consider more devolution, they can diminish the distinction between themselves and the regionalist party. While moving towards the regionalist party's position will not necessarily lead to the electoral collapse of the regionalist party, it can draw away enough prospective supporters to reduce the likelihood of a breakthrough. If mainstream parties, particularly the party whose position is most antagonistic to greater autonomy, become more unwilling to consider devolution and favor even greater central government control it can backfire. This move allows regionalist parties to exploit the differences on the center-periphery dimension to a greater extent, highlighting a mainstream parties lack of concern for a region, and driving a regionalist party breakthrough.

The supranational government index has an odds ratio less than one, which indicates that as a country becomes more integrated into the European Union, the

prospects of a regionalist party breaking through decrease while the probability of a regionalist party persisting increases. This finding, while somewhat tenuous based on its p-value, contradicts previous analysis to some extent. Previous research found a significant positive relationship between greater European Union integration and an increase in vote shares. This result, however, suggests that rather than providing the impetus for surges in greater support, greater EU integration helps a regionalist party persist and maintain its previous level of support. The relationship between increased EU integration and a decline in the probability of breakthrough relative to persistence may result from a complex dynamic. Further EU integration and the EU's emphasis on subsidiarity may neutralize the prospects of breakthrough as it provides an additional outlet for seeking regional aid and autonomy outside of the central government. This could then diminish the regional dynamic to some extent and limit the possibility of a larger increase in vote shares. A regionalist party may increase its likelihood of persisting, however, when greater EU integration occurs as a base level of supporters may wish to ensure that a regionalist party provides a connection between the EU and the region.

The Regional Authority Index has a quadratic relationship with breakthrough relative to persistence and an odds ratio less than one. The quadratic relationship indicates that the likelihood of a regionalist party breakthrough increases relative to a regionalist party persisting when a moderate level of devolution has occurred. The Regional Authority Index has a scale from 0-28 and the vertex of the concave downward parabolic relationship is 12.06. This means that when very little or significant amounts of devolution have occurred, a regionalist party's odds of persisting are much higher. This

finding fits with the theoretical expectation of Hypothesis 4 that predicted a greater probability of breakthrough when a moderate amount of devolution had occurred. The relationship found by the regression analysis may be quadratic because a moderate level of regional autonomy could represent an unsatisfactory level of autonomy. When devolution is almost non-existent, that lack of regional authority may receive less attention. At very high levels of regional decentralization, a degree of satisfaction with devolution may emerge, as citizens feel that regional issues are handled more extensively by a regional government. When devolution is moderate, the deficiencies in powers given to a regional government may be most apparent. If a regional government were to have fiscal and institutional autonomy but lack significant lawmaking autonomy, then it may generate a greater concern over devolution in contrast to when a region has had no experience with any form of devolved authority or when many forms of autonomy already exist at the regional level.

In the third regression that examines failure relative to breakthrough, I found a significant quadratic relationship with the Regional Authority Index and an odds ratio greater than one. This indicates that failure is more likely relative to breakthrough when a region has little or considerable devolved power. This also provides evidence for Hypothesis 4 that a moderate degree of devolution increases the possibility of breakthrough occurring. Regionalist party failure becomes more likely at either very high or very low levels of devolution. The relationship here corresponds to some degree with the finding of the second regression that found breakthrough more likely relative to persistence at moderate levels of devolution. Regionalist parties may have a greater likelihood of failing when more power is devolved as it can diminish the center-periphery

dimensions importance and cut into a regionalist party's *raison d'etre*. This fits with previous analysis that found decentralization as an effective means of diminishing regionalist party vote shares (Massetti & Schakel, 2013). In addition, when very little authority has been devolved, regionalist parties may have a difficult time establishing their importance and relevance in electoral competition. Once devolution occurs, especially the creation of a devolved parliament, regionalist parties can compete in regional elections and potentially enhance their stature in regional governments. This can translate into success in national elections (Massetti & Schakel, 2013).

Comparing the Results of Regionalist Party Vote Shares with Electoral Breakthrough, Electoral Failure and Electoral Persistence

The results of the regressions with regionalist party vote shares and the differentiated outcomes of breakthrough, failure, and persistence demonstrates the importance of a more nuanced framing of regionalist party outcomes and that supply-side influences are more important than demand-side influences whether results are differentiated or not. With regionalist party vote shares as the dependent variable, three different independent variables were statistically significant, although only two with a p-value that provides enough confidence in the finding. In contrast, across the three regressions used to evaluate the influences on breakthrough, failure, and persistence seven different variables were significant, and five of those had p-values below the 0.05 level. In all four regressions, only supply-side variables were significant. Table 2.9 lists the significant independent variables (including those that constitute a trend) and the direction of the relationship with each dependent variable.

Table 2.9: The Significant Independent Variables and the Direction of Their Relationship with Vote Shares, Breakthrough, Failure, and Persistence

Variable	Regional Vote Shares	Failure Relative to Persistence	Breakthrough Relative to Persistence	Failure Relative to Breakthrough
Center-Periphery Position (Internal Supply Side)	+	+	+	
Left-Right Position (Internal Supply-Side)		+		
Left-Right Position Squared (Internal Supply-Side)	+	-		
Mainstream Accommodation (External Supply-Side)			-	
Supranational Government Index (External Supply-Side)			+	
Regional Authority Index (External Supply-Side)	+		+	-
Regional Authority Index Squared (External Supply-Side)			-	+

Table 2.9 reveals that none of the significant variables were statistically significant across all four regressions. The table shows that while a few potential similarities exist, the decision to divide up different types of outcomes is justified. The regression with regionalist party vote shares as the dependent variable has some similarities with the regressions that divide electoral outcomes into three categories. The variables where a degree of similarity exist are the center-periphery dimension and the left-right position squared.

A regionalist party's center-periphery position has a similar relationship with regionalist party vote shares as it does with breakthrough relative to persistence. The relationship, however, is different in relation to explaining failure relative to persistence. For the dependent variables, regionalist party vote shares and breakthrough relative to

persistence, the relationship with a regionalist party's center periphery position indicates that as a regionalist party adopts a more pro-autonomy position it will make large electoral gains. While I expected regionalist parties to have the capacity to influence their own fate based on their positioning on the center-periphery dimension, I predicted that moving on the dimension could increase their likelihood of persisting, which means they could have fairly significant electoral gains even if it was less than the 5% threshold. The regression that assesses the influence of the center-periphery position for failure relative to persistence yields somewhat different results than the vote shares and breakthrough relative to persistence regressions. The relationship in this regression indicates that the probability of failing relative to persisting increases as a regionalist party adopts a more pro-autonomy position. This contradicts the other two regressions as they both predict regionalist parties with more pro-periphery positions will increase their vote shares. The nature of this contradictory finding can be questioned base on its level of significance with a p-value equal to 0.089.

The other variable that demonstrates a degree of similarity with regionalist party vote shares and at least one outcome of the differentiated typology of success is the left-right position of the regionalist party squared. A positive quadratic relationship exists between the left-right position and vote shares while failure relative to persistence has a quadratic relationship with an odds ratio less than one, indicating a negative relationship. This is similar between the two because the negative relationship with failure relative to persistence means that a party is more likely to maintain its previous level of electoral support when a regionalist party has a farther left or farther right position on the left-right issue dimension. The relationship, however, is somewhat tenuous as the p-value equals

0.095. For the vote shares regression, a farther right or father left position increases the regionalist party's vote share. These findings counter previous studies that argued centrist positions by regionalist parties increase their vote shares (Massetti & Schakel, 2013).

Even with the two variables that demonstrated similar relationships between regionalist party vote shares and the differentiated outcomes, a number of unique relationships exist with differentiated typologies indicating the need to consider different types of electoral outcomes. The shape of the relationship between the Regional Authority Index and the dependent variable differed depending on whether it was regionalist party vote shares or a differentiated form of regionalist party outcomes. When I used regionalist party vote shares as the dependent variable, I found a positive, but statistically weak, relationship between the linear term. This indicated that as regionalist autonomy increased, regionalist party vote shares increased. The differentiated electoral outcomes demonstrated a quadratic relationship with electoral breakthrough becoming more likely at moderate levels of devolution. The degree of accommodation by the most restrictive mainstream party had a significant negative relationship with breakthrough relative to persistence but was not significant when regionalist party vote shares were the dependent variable. In addition, the supranational government index had a negative, although statistically weak, relationship with breakthrough relative to persistence. This relationship did not appear in the regionalist vote shares regressions.

Overall, I found initial evidence to support some of my hypothesized relationships, but not all of them. Even with the evidence, however, I still consider my findings tentative based on the complexities associated with the quantitative analysis of

elections. My regression analysis revealed indications that when mainstream parties become more restrictive on the center-periphery dimension the probability of breakthrough increases, thus, lending credence to Hypothesis 1. Hypothesis 2 stated that greater polarization on the left-right issue dimension between the two largest mainstream parties would increase regionalist vote shares, but I found no evidence in any regression to support this. I discovered no relationship between the relative mainstream party issue salience on the left-right and center-periphery issue dimensions, thus, contradicting Hypothesis 3. The regressions revealed some indications that Hypothesis 4, regarding moderate amounts of devolution and an increased probability of breakthrough, had merit. Hypothesis 5 advanced the argument that mainstream party accommodation on the center-periphery dimension would increase the likelihood of failure, but I did not observe any correlation. My analysis revealed evidence counter to Hypothesis 6 that a more pro-periphery position would increase the likelihood of persistence, and instead, although weak, I found a more pro-periphery position increased the probability of failure relative to persistence. Evidence for Hypothesis 7 emerged, suggesting that when regionalist parties move left or right they can improve their chances of persisting. Finally, I found weak evidence that the opposite of Hypothesis 8 is true and that regionalist parties do not increase their odds of persisting when they adopt a more pro-periphery position.

CONCLUSION

This chapter explained the reasoning behind using a mixed-methods approach, discussed the data and methods used for the quantitative analysis, conducted various regression analyses, and considered the implications of their results. The quantitative analysis, with its many caveats, yielded mixed results. Evidence for some of the

hypothesized relationships existed, including the influence of mainstream party accommodation and a regionalist party's center-periphery position, but the results were not definitive. The complexity of effectively measuring the various independent variables then explaining breakthrough, failure, and persistence posed a significant challenge. The regressions served as a useful plausibility probe into the relationships across cases but the case studies will allow an investigation into the process by which the different influences matter temporally and whether they produce particular outcomes.

CHAPTER III

THE QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY

The quantitative analysis revealed some expected and some unexpected results, while also demonstrating the complexity of explaining electoral outcomes for regionalist parties, even when considering the particular conditions that produce certain outcomes. Since the quantitative analysis was more suggestive than confirmatory, the case studies of individual national elections will provide a more in-depth analysis to investigate the hypothesized relationships and to understand the process by which different factors effect outcomes. This chapter includes a justification for using case studies, an explanation of the selection process, a detailing of the data collected and the methodology employed, an outline of the Scottish context of the various elections analyzed, and a discussion of my theoretical reframing that the qualitative and quantitative analyses revealed. The exploration of my new theoretical framework comes at the end of this chapter, as it helps structure the three subsequent chapters that investigate breakthrough, failure, and persistence.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CASE STUDIES AND THE CASE SELECITON PROCESS

This dissertation includes case studies based on their merits as a research method in their own right and because of the analytical advantages they offer when included in mixed-methods studies. Case studies are important because they allow for a causes of effects analysis, an investigation of causal links, and they can address issues of causal

complexity. Analyses that use a causes of effects approach can effectively assess the factors that produce particular outcomes. The process of identifying links can be challenging, as issues such as equifinality and multiple interactions arise. Case studies, however, are the best methodology for resolving these issues and moving towards an identification of causal mechanisms. Based on these attributes, case studies can provide effective insight into explaining the results for regionalist parties in particular elections.

Case studies also matter for this dissertation because, when paired with regression analysis, they offer additional insight into research questions. They complement the quantitative research by performing either a confirmatory or an exploratory role depending on the regression results (Gerring, 2004; Lieberman, 2005). When the quantitative analysis in a mixed-method design yields robust relationships that reflect the theoretical expectations and the hypotheses, case studies can function as confirmatory by examining the correlative relationships in particular instances. If the quantitative analysis reveals unexpected relationships or produces insignificant results, which occurs in this dissertation, case studies can identify new potential factors to consider (Lieberman, 2005).

Since this dissertation recognizes the importance of case studies independently and as part of a mixed-methods research design, the process of selecting elections reflects both of these considerations. I used a combination of approaches to choose the cases, including the important/influential selection method and the on-the-line/off-the-line selection method (Gerring, 2004; Lieberman, 2005). In addition, as I want to investigate the dynamics that produce breakthrough, failure, and persistence, I selected elections that represent these different outcomes. While this may lead to criticism that the case studies

select on the dependent variable, this is not an issue for this study. Since the focus of the case studies is within-case analysis and not an assessment of a frequency association, I use process tracing to ascertain which influences generate particular outcomes that I am interested in (Collier, Brady, & Seawright). While considering the need to investigate instances of breakthrough, failure, and persistence, I selected my cases because they are appealing across these two selection methods, even if they are not ideal types of either one. Based on these considerations, I chose the national elections in Scotland for Westminster seats in February 1974, October 1974, 1979, 1997, 2001, 2005, 2010, and 2015, focusing on the Scottish National Party's results.

Certain important/influential cases warrant explanations regardless of whether they precisely reflect general theoretical proposals. The Westminster elections in Scotland held in February 1974, October 1974, 1979, 2005, and 2010 represent such cases. In Scotland, the two elections of 1974 represented the largest breakthrough for the SNP in its history to that point. After the October election, the SNP finished second in vote shares for the first time. The two elections changed the political landscape and produced the first Scottish devolution referendum. The 1979 election was important as it represented a significant failure for the SNP after improving in three subsequent elections in the 1970s. The failure left the SNP in the political wilderness and it would not recover until 1992. The 2005 and 2010 elections were the third and fourth instances of SNP persistence without failing or breaking through. It is important to understand how the SNP managed this feat especially as the Conservative Party won the 2010 election nationally.

Mixed-methods research designs have some standardized means of selecting cases. One approach, especially when the quantitative analysis comes first, is to select cases based on their relative proximity to the regression line based on their residuals (Collier, Brady, & Seawright, 2010). This approach calls for considering cases that are either "on" or "off" the regression line. On-the-line cases represent observations that closely match the predicted relationship, while off-the-line observations do not fit the model as well. Evan Lieberman recommends selecting on-the-line cases when the regression analysis produces outcomes that match the theorized relationship, thus, the case studies perform a type of model testing. If the regression analysis does not produce robust results or the correlations fail to match the predicted theory then on-the-line or off-the-line case studies can be used, with off-the-line cases serving to discover factors that can be reincorporated into the quantitative model. The quantitative analysis in this dissertation produced results that were mixed, thus, warranting both on and off the line cases. The Westminster elections in Scotland that represent an approximation of on-the-line cases occurred in 1997 and 2001. Conversely, the 2015 election represented a suitable off-the-line case.

QUALITATIVE DATA

The qualitative data collected for this dissertation provides the foundation for the case studies on the Scottish National Party. The case study data comes from semi-structured interviews, archival research, and scholarly literature. The data from each can yield useful insights independently but using a "triangulation" approach to combine the insights from the various sources provides greater analytical purchase (Davies, 2001).

I conducted semi-structured interviews with thirteen individuals in Scotland. I selected interviewees who were former party members, current party members, social movement organizers, and academics. Each interview had a list of predetermined questions; however, I opted for a flexible structure to allow for answers that are more extensive. As the investigator, I understood the possibility for the interviewee to "teach [me] what the problem, the question, [and] the situation is" (Dexter, 1970, p. 7). The semi-structured interviews provided an effective middle ground because some aspects had a specific form and line of questioning, but also allowed new subjects to emerge (Leech, 2002, p. 665).

Elite interview data has four potential uses in my research. The data can corroborate other sources, establish what a group thinks, allow for inferences about a larger populations characteristics and decisions, and aid in the reconstruction of events (Tansey, 2007, p. 766). The fourth use of interview data, the reconstruction of events, permits interview data to serve as a crucial element for within-case process tracing. Interviews can fill in gaps along the causal chain to provide greater insight into the causal mechanisms at play. Important considerations, such as the reliability of interviewees' memories, need accounting for, but the data can illuminate significant gaps that other data sources cannot fill.

In this dissertation, interviews served to corroborate other sources, establish what a group thought, and helped in the reconstruction of events. The interviews I conducted in Scotland provided both novel insight and reaffirmed the findings of other sources. Thus, I use them as both direct evidence and as important background information. In addition, as I conducted interviews with many SNP politicians, it allowed me to develop

a sense of the party's perspective. The interviews also provided an important framing for how certain events, particularly the in the 1970s elections, transpired.

Archival research provided another source of data. I sought party manifestos, campaign pamphlets, party minutes, internal party memos, and other party ephemera. These data give insight where information from interviews is unattainable and the scholarly literature may not have explored (George & Bennett, 2005, p. 6). These party documents provided another means to investigate the inner workings of parties and the process by which they construct party strategy. The party documents also provide the thoughts and positions of party members and parties at the time of the actual event. Unlike interviews, where some of the events may have occurred over forty years in the past, archival documents capture the particular moment in time. While archival documents provide a snapshot of the era, using them still requires an objective approach that situates them within their proper context. In conjunction with the interviews and other sources, the archival research will provide an important component in my triangulation approach.

QUALITATIVE METHODS

I explore these case studies using a within-case process tracing approach. This method, unlike the regression analysis employed in the large-N analysis, provides a better understanding of the causal mechanisms that may produce the correlative relationships of the statistical analysis (Goertz & Mahoney, 2006). Using this approach allows for a causal sequencing of the events related to the Scottish National Party's electoral breakthrough, failure, and persistence (Goertz & Mahoney, 2006). For this dissertation, I process trace the different elections chronologically, however, I do not organize the

various elections sequentially. Rather, the subsequent chapters focus on breakthrough, failure, and persistence, independently, and the elections are evaluated in the chapter that they fit within.

The case studies will provide an in-depth analysis to explain the outcomes of the particular analysis and to investigate further whether the correlations found in the regression analysis revealed potentially causal relationships. The large-N analysis provided an important initial plausibility probe into the independent variables related to the different types of electoral success across a myriad of cases. The results of the fixed-effects multinomial regression analyses, while not particularly explicit, yielded some evidence for certain theoretical expectations. The findings that regionalist party center-periphery positions, the regionalist party left-right position, mainstream party center-periphery positions, the degree of supranational integration, and the Regional Authority Index all had significant relationships with electoral breakthrough, failure, and persistence is useful for the case studies. Knowing these factors may have some relationship with the various outcomes, I examine the election to understand the sequencing of events and uncover the causal mechanisms at work (Goertz & Mahoney, 2006). This will demonstrate whether particular factors have more than just a correlative relationship with particular outcomes.

THE SCOTTISH CONTEXT AND CASES

The Scottish National Party changed the course of Scottish history and continues to serve as a serious political threat to the continued existence of the United Kingdom. The SNP's fortunes over the previous fifty years varied greatly, with times of large breakthroughs, instances of persistence, and occasionally significant failures. The SNP

first became a significant party in the 1970s before suffering a tremendous setback with the failure of the 1979 devolution referendum. In the 1980s, the party wandered in the political wilderness searching for a message that could rebuild its electoral support. The party remerged to a large extent in the 1990s and found a greater voice in Scottish affairs after the creation of the Scottish Parliament. By 2010, the SNP won a plurality of the seats in the Scottish Parliament and was second in terms of the Scottish Westminster vote share. By 2011, the party changed UK politics when it secured an electoral majority in the Scottish Parliament and forced an independence vote in 2014. Even though the independence referendum resulted in Scotland remaining part of the UK, in 2015, the party surged to previously unimagined levels of electoral support at Westminster winning 56 of 59 seats and it remains the largest party in Scotland.

The origins of Scottish separatism began to emerge almost immediately after it ceased being an independent country in 1707. The modern political incarnation of the independence movement emerged in 1934 with the founding of the Scottish National Party after the National Party of Scotland and its political rival the Scottish Party merged. The party, however, "was decidedly non-ideological, vague on Scottish self-government and with few clear policies" (Lynch, 2002, p. 45). While the membership of the newly formed party could agree on the need for Scottish autonomy, it disagreed considerably whether devolution or independence was the ultimate goal and whether the party should adopt left or right-wing policies. The SNP, with its significant internal divides and poor organization, struggled to remain politically relevant, only managing to become an electoral threat in 1970.

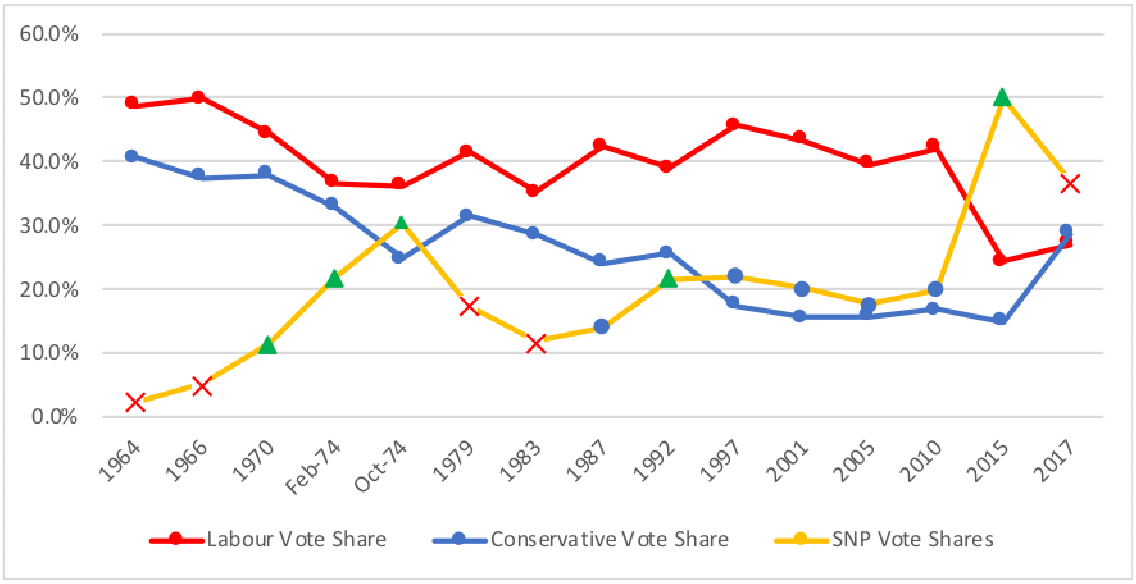
The attitudes and positions of the two major United Kingdom parties, Labour and the Conservatives, changed significantly regarding devolution. Labour was the first party to consider the prospect of Scottish "home rule," with the party's founder, Keir Hardy, supporting the policy. Labour abandoned this position by the late 1950s, so both major parties were against devolution by 1967. After an important 1967 by-election that the SNP won, the two parties diverged in their positions. The Conservatives, who had never supported any form of devolution, opted to consider the establishment of a Scottish Convention. Labour, however, remained steadfastly against the prospect. The Conservatives won the 1970 election, but never pushed legislation on any devolution proposals and by 1975, with Thatcher's election as leader of the party, the party removed it from its platform. Labour only began favoring the establishment of a Scottish Assembly by September 1974, in between the two elections of 1974, when it feared a significant SNP electoral gain without some form of accommodation on the issue. Labour passed legislation to hold a referendum on the prospect of Scottish devolution in 1979, which the party had mixed internal support for. The Conservatives were almost entirely unified in opposition to the referendum. When the referendum did not pass, the Conservatives became even more stridently anti-devolution, while Labour remained committed to the prospect of a Scottish Assembly. Labour, when it regained power in 1997, created a Scottish Parliament after another devolution referendum. The Conservatives opposed this proposal. Between 2001 and 2010, both parties agreed that the 1997 devolution measures should remain and even considered additional measures to increase Scottish autonomy. In 2012, even though Conservative Prime Minister opposed Scottish independence he passed legislation to hold an independence referendum. Labour

and the Conservatives joined forces to campaign against it, and they were ultimately successful in keeping Scotland in the UK.

The Conservatives and Labour, experienced very different political trajectories in Scotland, even though by 2015 both lagged far behind the SNP in terms of electoral support (see Figure 3.1 below). The Conservative Party earned about 38% of the vote share in the 1970 election, but saw that number sharply decline by the 1980 and 1990s along with its seat share. The Tories only returned to a vote share above 20% and a seat share more than single digits in 2017. Labour, in contrast, surged in its support by the end of the 1970s and grew tremendously by the late-1980s as a reaction to Margaret Thatcher and the Conservatives. Labour even had a brief period in the late 1990s and early 2000s where it was the most popular party in both general elections and the Scottish Parliament elections. Labour's support collapsed by the 2015 general election and in 2017 it finished behind the Conservatives in terms of vote share and seat share for the first time since 1955.

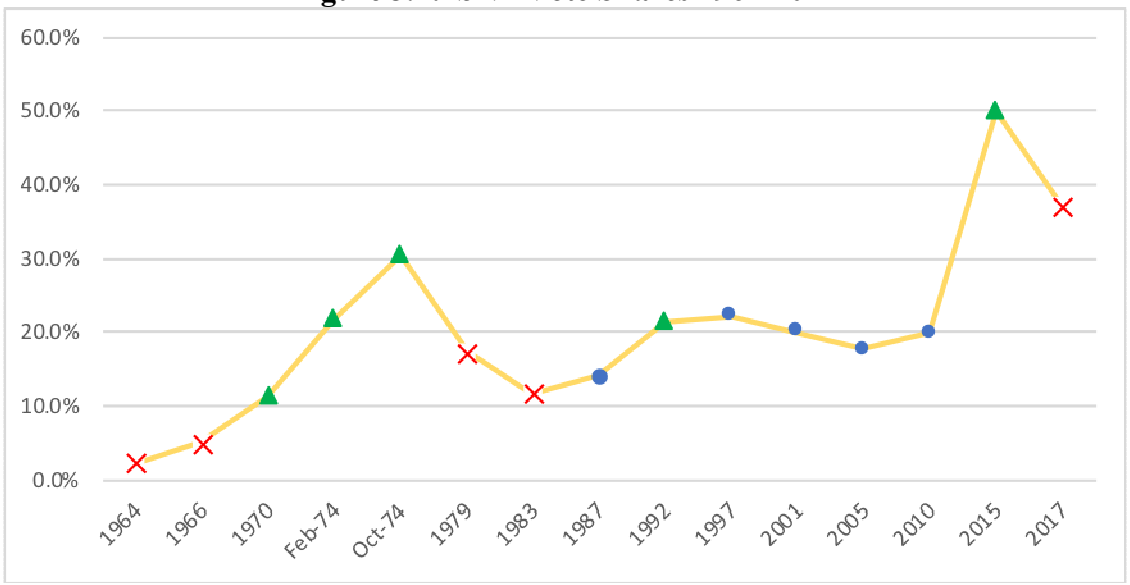
The eight elections I examine explain the breakthroughs, failures and persistence of the SNP through a supply and demand theoretical framework of political party success. I selected several elections that fit within the three types of electoral outcomes. For electoral breakthrough, I investigate the two elections of 1974 and the election of 2015. To examine my theoretical expectations regarding electoral failure, I examine the 1979 election. The SNP persisted in four consecutive elections in 1997, 2001, 2005, and 2010, so I conduct an analysis across the four elections to understand the drivers of persistence. Figure 3.2 shows SNP vote shares in every election from 1964-2017 and depicts the occurrence of breakthrough, persistence, and failure.

Figure 3.1: Vote Shares in Scotland for Labour, the Conservatives, and the SNP 1964-2017



Note: The red Xs denote failure, the green triangles denote breakthrough, and the blue squares denote persistence

Figure 3.2: SNP Vote Shares 1964-2017



Note: The red Xs denote failure, the green triangles denote breakthrough, and the blue squares denote persistence.

As discussed in the previous chapter, I selected the particular elections to analyze for several reasons, one of those being that they represented the range of potential outcomes for regionalist parties. This does not create a selection on the dependent

variable problem because I am focused on within-case analysis (Collier, Brady, & Seawright, 2010). Since I want to understand the processes that explain a particular instance of breakthrough, failure, or persistence, I have to focus on the particular outcome of interest. A random selection of elections would not enable the same analytical leverage gained by process tracing cases that produce the desired outcome I need to study.

While I am interested in explaining why each outcome occurs, I consider breakthrough the most important to explain, followed by electoral failure, and finally persistence. Breakthrough is my primary interest as it represents some of the greatest shocks to the electoral system. Explaining the emergence of an electorally relevant regionalist party or a large gain in its vote share matters because it can change the political landscape of a region. I focus on failure next, as it too has major ramifications. A precipitous decline in a regionalist party's vote share can greatly diminish the prospects of greater regional autonomy. Persistence, while important to explain, represents the maintenance of a previous level of success.

THEORETICAL REFRAMING

Through an examination of the case studies and in consideration with the quantitative analysis, I reframed my theoretical propositions. I argue that regionalist party outcomes depend most on the confluence of mainstream party issue salience, mainstream party center-periphery positions, and regionalist party center-periphery positions. This change to my original theory came from the quantitative and qualitative analysis that resulted in incorporating more cases into both and the testing of my new suppositions after my original expectations regarding external supply-side factors

exclusively explaining breakthrough, internal-supply side factors explaining persistence, and either producing failure proving somewhat unclear. Three factors, two external supply-side and one internal supply-side, proved most important, especially regarding the interaction between the them. I found that when mainstream parties increased the salience of center-periphery issues relative to left-right issues, when mainstream parties adopted more restrictive positions on regional autonomy, and when regionalist party's adopted unambiguous pro-periphery positions all in the same election, breakthrough became more likely. Conversely, as mainstream parties focused more on left-right issues, became more accommodating to regional governance, and regionalist parties had either ambiguous or more pro-centrist positions the probability of breakthrough grew. Persistence resulted when only one or two of the factors was favorable, but not all of them.

This theoretical framework was effective at identifying a consistent pattern of factors that predicted when the SNP broke through, failed, or persisted. These influences were the positions of Labour and the Conservatives on the center-periphery issue dimension (external supply-side), the salience given to left-right issues relative to center-periphery issues by Labour and the Conservatives (external supply-side), and the position of the SNP on the center-periphery issue dimension (internal supply-side). The SNP experienced breakthrough when these conditions were advantageous. Thus, when Labour and the Conservatives favored less devolution, the two parties increased the salience of the center-periphery dimension relative to the left-right dimension, and the SNP adopted a clear center-periphery position that favored increased autonomy all in the same election, breakthrough occurred. Failure occurred when none of these conditions were

present. Thus, when Labour and the Conservatives were accommodative towards devolution, when they increased the salience of the left-right issue dimension relative to the center-periphery issue dimension, and when the SNP had an ambiguous position on the center-periphery dimension, failure happened. Persistence was more likely when one or two of these factors occurred, but all three did not materialize. In addition, the SNP's position on the left-right issue dimension was another condition that mattered for persistence but did not seem to matter significantly for explaining breakthrough. In the four elections I examine that the SNP persisted it helped prevent its failure on several occasions.

Electoral breakthrough is explained best by the confluence of three external and internal supply-side factors: the positions taken by mainstream parties on the center-periphery dimension, the salience given to the center-periphery issue dimension by the mainstream parties, and the position of the regionalist party on center-periphery issues. I expected that when Labour and the Conservatives became more adversarial to the prospect of regional autonomy, the probability of SNP breakthrough would increase. Thus, I focused on the positions both parties took on the center-periphery dimension, that indicated their willingness to grant greater autonomy. In addition, the coherence and clarity of these positions matters because when a mainstream party shifts to become either more adversarial or more accommodative, this must be discernable or else the move by the party may not be recognized by voters. In addition, I expected that as Labour and the Conservatives increased the salience of the center-periphery dimension the probability of an SNP breakthrough would increase. The SNP also increased its chances of breaking through by adopting clear pro-periphery positions on the center-

periphery issue dimension in the three elections. Based on my expectations, I found across the two elections of 1974 and the election of 2015 that the SNP breakthroughs occurred when all three conditions were favorable. First, Labour and the Conservatives increased the salience of the center-periphery dimension in these three elections and gave it more attention relative the left-right dimension than in the previous election. Second, Labour and the Conservatives would not consider the creation of a Scottish Assembly until just before the second election in 1974 and in 2015 the Conservatives wanted to move past center-periphery issues believing the independence referendum failure settled the Scottish issue. Finally, in both 1974 elections and in 2015, the SNP chose positions on the center-periphery issue dimension that helped it win supporters. In 1974, the party did so by connecting the potential benefits of Scottish North Sea oil with the prospects of independence. In 2015, the party increased its credibility to fight for further devolution after the independence referendum.

I found that when the SNP faced an unfavorable electoral landscape regarding Labour and the Conservatives' center-periphery position, the mainstream parties' level of emphasis on left-right issues over center-periphery issues, and poor positioning by the SNP on the center-periphery dimension all occurred simultaneously, failure was the result. In terms of internal supply-side influences, if regionalist parties do not adopt pro-autonomy positions, this will increase the likelihood of failure as abandoning its pro-periphery position would constitute an abandonment of its most important distinguishing feature from mainstream parties. Second, several external supply-side dynamics affected the SNP's failure. As Labour and the Conservatives became more receptive to regional autonomy, especially the party that was most antagonistic, the probability of regionalist

party failure increased. In addition, when the two parties increased the salience of the left-right issue dimension relative to the center-periphery dimension failure became more likely. In my investigation of the 1979 election, all three conditions for failure were present as the SNP adopted a muddled position on the center-periphery issue dimension, Labour and the Conservatives' increased their focus on left-right issues, and Labour maintained its willingness to create a devolved assembly, even after the devolution referendum result. The SNP struggled to unify around a single message on autonomy with some prospective MPs promoting the prospect of greater devolution, while others wanted outright independence. At the same time Labour and the Conservatives became more intensely focused on traditional left-right debates, especially with Thatcher's neoliberal agenda. Finally, Labour, who had been most antagonistic toward creating a Scottish Assembly in the 1970s agreed to create one if it was elected despite the results of the devolution referendum only two months before.

The SNP persisted when some of the conditions needed to produce a breakthrough were present, but not all of them. Thus, when either Labour and the Conservatives were adversarial, the two parties elevated the center-periphery dimension, the SNP had a clear pro-autonomy position, or two of these three occurred the SNP persisted. In addition, another internal supply-side factor allowed the SNP to persist that did not have a significant influence on whether it broke through. When the SNP moved farther left on the left-right issue dimension it increased its chances of persisting. This fit with my theoretical expectation that when regionalist parties moved farther left or right it could enhance their chances of persisting. I examine the SNP's persistence across the four elections of 1997, 2001, 2005, and 2010, and I found that none of the three necessary

conditions for breakthrough occurred simultaneously, nor did all of the conditions align to cause an electoral failure. Rather, some of those three conditions and the SNP's position on the left-right issue dimension were advantageous to the party only at certain points. With mixed electoral circumstances, the SNP could only persist.

Since I investigate eight elections across four decades and I am primarily interested in explaining why breakthrough, failure, and persistence occur, I adopt a slightly unconventional approach to organize my qualitative analysis. Each of the following chapters focuses exclusively on one type of electoral outcome. Thus, I only examine the Scottish elections that belong to that category in that chapter, meaning there are considerable time gaps between the various elections. In each chapter, however, I process trace particular election outcomes and determine whether the various supply-side and demand-side dynamics influenced the result.

CONCLUSION

This chapter provided the foundation for the qualitative analysis I will conduct on electoral breakthrough, electoral persistence, and electoral failure. First, I emphasized the importance of case studies in their own right and when used in a mixed-methods study. Second, I discussed the three reasons for selecting eight Scottish elections based on their representativeness of the three types of outcomes, the individual importance of particular outcomes, and that some were on-the-line/off-the-line cases. Third, I detailed the data I used from various primary and secondary sources, as well as the process tracing approach I employed. Fourth, I provided some initial context to the elections I investigated with a brief historical overview of Scotland's political system and the major

parties involved. Finally, I explained the reframing of my theory about the factors that produced breakthrough, failure, and persistence to better set-up the actual case-studies.

CHAPTER IV

ELECTORAL BREAKTHROUGH

Electoral breakthroughs occur when a regionalist party's vote share grows significantly relative to the previous election. These large surges in support are important to understand because they can pose a considerable threat to mainstream parties. As regionalist parties increase their support and representation it can make the center-periphery issue dimension more prevalent, something national parties try to avoid as they have greater issue ownership over the left-right issue dimension. In addition, surges in regionalist party support may affect a mainstream party's ability to form a government for seats lost to a regionalist party in a close national election could prevent a majority of seats from being attained or force the creation of unwanted coalitions. The quantitative analysis began to reveal insights into breakthrough, but case studies are necessary to understand the dynamics behind it more completely. Thus, I investigate three cases of SNP electoral breakthrough in Scotland. First, I explore the two elections of 1974, which happened less than eight months apart due to the Labour minority government calling an election. With such close proximity, I examine them together as they share very similar dynamics. Second, I analyze the 2015 election. The two 1974 elections and the 2015 election were the three largest electoral gains in the SNP's history, so understanding its outcomes is important.

As discussed in the qualitative analysis chapter, electoral breakthrough is more likely to occur when three conditions, two external supply-side and one internal supply-side, exist simultaneously. In the two elections of 1974 and 2015, Labour and the

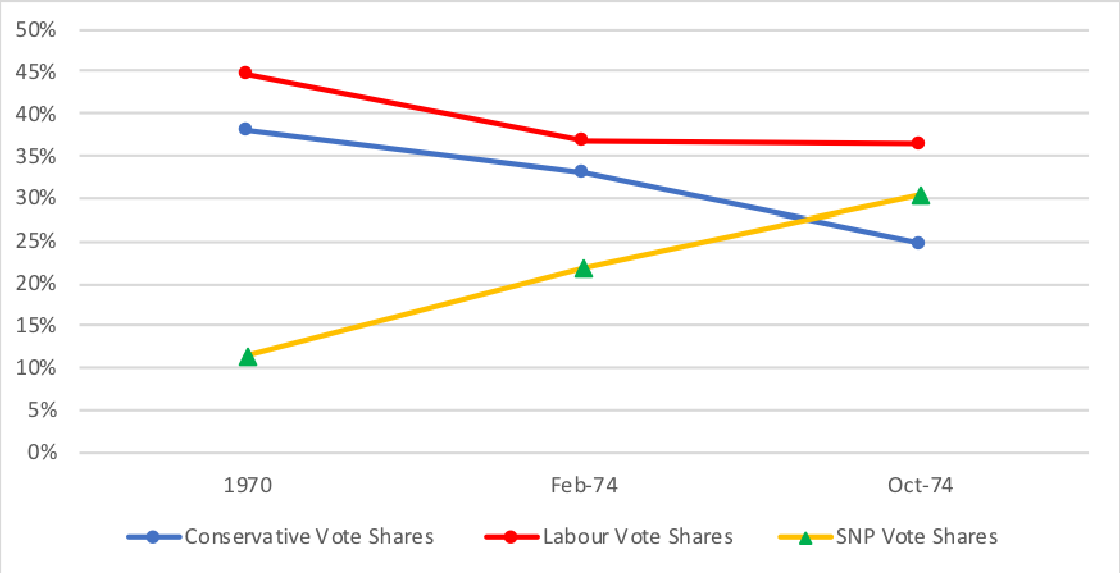
Conservatives had positions on the center-periphery issue dimension that benefited the SNP, they increased the salience of the center-periphery issue dimension relative to the left-right issue dimension, and the SNP adopted clear pro-autonomy positions. In the three elections, the party with the least accommodating center-periphery position became more uncompromising, with Labour opposing the creation of a Scottish Assembly for much of 1974 and the Conservatives adopting the position that the UK should move beyond the "Scotland issue" in 2015. Labour and the Conservatives paid more attention to the center-periphery issue dimension and the issue of Scottish autonomy was more of a focus for both parties in all three elections. The SNP's unambiguous pro-periphery positions in 1974 focused on the capacity of North Sea oil to facilitate Scottish independence and in 2015 after the failed independence referendum it made its position securing as much autonomy as possible.

THE TWO ELECTIONS OF 1974

Two general elections occurred in 1974 and the SNP had electoral breakthroughs in both. The February election resulted in significant gains in comparison to 1970, and it improved further in the October election (See Figure 4.1). These two results were far better than its previous best of 11.4% of the vote share, and after the October 1974 election it was the second most popular party in terms of vote shares. The SNP struggled to have any electoral relevancy until the late 1960s, and the significant concern both the Conservatives and Labour demonstrated after the February 1974 election highlighted the relevance of its breakthrough. Even the doubling of its vote shares in the 1970 election relative to 1966 did not match these significant feats.

The two general elections of 1974 marked only the second time two Westminster elections occurred during the same calendar year (the previous was 1910). The Conservatives called the first election in February, but no party won a majority. Labour won a plurality of the seats, however, the Conservatives attempted to end the hung parliament by organizing a coalition with the Liberal Party and the Ulster Unionist Party. The maneuvering by the Conservatives failed leading Labour to form a minority government, a rarity in British politics. Labour's minority government functioned capably for several months ending a major miner's strike; yet, it realized this approach would be untenable for a four- to five-year term. Labour called a second election in October, and proceeded to win an outright majority, but only by three seats.

Figure 4.1: The February and October 1974 General Election Results



Note: The red Xs denote failure, the green triangles denote breakthrough, and the blue squares denote persistence

This section examines the periods before each election and the campaigns through a supply-side and demand-side framework to assess which factors had the greatest influence on the SNP's breakthroughs. Three major influences shaped the elections and facilitated the SNP's success. I found that two external supply-side factors played a

significant role: mainstream party accommodation and mainstream party polarization. First, Labour's highly centrist position and its unwillingness to consider any form of Scottish Assembly until two months prior to the October 1974 election benefited the SNP. Second, center-periphery issues received greater attention in Scotland, especially as the Conservative leader Edward Heath diminished the party's focus on the left-right issue dimension. The internal supply-side factor that mattered most was the SNP's center-periphery position. The party's more pro-periphery position, encapsulated by its "It's Scotland's Oil" campaign, increased its support in both elections.

Labour Prior to 1973

Labour, similar to the Conservatives, believed it stymied the SNP's advance in the after the 1970 election, and turned its focus away from Scottish autonomy. In 1967, Labour and the Conservatives worried about the future of Scottish politics when the SNP won a surprising by-election. In addition, the SNP increased its support in local elections. Labour's concerns subsided after the SNP's more modest results in 1970 and this shaped Labour's perceptions as it articulated in a post-election internal party paper:

> "Having gone through the nationalist hurricane as they had done, and emerged victorious, it was natural for Labour to believe it had dealt a death blow to the SNP. The 1967-70 period was reckoned to be just another of the occasional nationalist upsurges that had always been experienced. The widespread expectation was that nationalism and the SNP would now recede" (Eadie, Ewing, Robertson, & Sillars, 1974, p. 6).

With the perceived end to the SNP threat, Labour turned its attention to other issues; one that particularly captured its attention was prospective membership in the European Economic Community. Labour, while somewhat internally divided over the UK joining the EEC, spent considerable effort attempting to block the Conservatives and Edward Heath's plan to join the community. Labour found it necessary to combat

Heath's liberal economic agenda and its typifying achievement of EEC entry by trying to make it a left-right issue. Labour was consumed "in the Common Market debate and in fighting the early crude capitalist policies of the Tory Government" (Eadie, Ewing, Robertson, & Sillars, 1974, p. 6). In opposition, Labour had little concern for the SNP and the center-periphery issue dimension until 1973.

The Conservatives Prior to 1973

The Conservatives won the 1970 election and claimed 23 seats in Scotland, a three-seat increase in comparison to 1966. Once in office, the party took relatively little action on devolution policies and preferred to focus on other issues. Before the 1970 election, the Conservatives, like Labour, feared the SNP would make large gains. This concern led the party to make pledges considering the creation of a Scottish Convention, a break with a long history of rejecting decentralization in the Union. When the SNP only won one seat and 11.4% of the vote, the Conservatives interpreted its own win as an indication that adopting any significant devolution legislation was not an urgent matter. Following the election, Gordon Campbell, the Conservative Secretary of State for Scotland, argued that any possible devolution policy would have to wait (The Rampant, 1970). The Conservatives claimed that any changes to UK government structure would begin with a reform of local governments.

The Conservatives spent the first two and a half years in office prioritizing other issues ahead of devolution. The UK's accession to the European Economic Community, the Troubles in Northern Ireland and disbanding the Parliament of Northern Ireland in favor of direct rule, several major strikes, the end of the Bretton Woods agreement, and many other domestic and international issues dominated the political discussion. The

myriad of economic problems that beset the Heath government enhanced concern that this demand-side factor could shift public attitudes in favor of Labour in the next election.

In addition to a focus on other issues, internal tension over whether the Conservatives should move farther right on the left-right issue dimension minimized the party's concern with Scottish autonomy. Heath and the Conservatives issued the more neoliberal Selsdon Manifesto prior to the 1970 election that moved the party right, however, when difficulties arose, Heath waivered on his commitment to the new agenda. Initially, he seemed committed to the novel economic doctrine with the passage of the Industrial Relations Act that aimed to curtail the influence of labor unions, but in the face of mounting economic problems, he balked. The UK experienced significant inflation, and rather than respond in accordance with a monetarist neoliberal policy agenda, Heath reverted to the more traditional Conservative corporatist approach when he announced on November 6, 1972 "that prices and incomes are to be frozen for at least 90 days" (Warden, 1972, p. 1). Heath feared a "bottom-up" public backlash if prices continued to rise. In addition, public sector and government expenditure grew after initial efforts to limit their growth. Government outlays as a percentage of GDP decreased in 1971 and 1972 but increased again in 1973 and 1974. The Conservative government moved back towards a more corporatist model of governing after an initial attempt to move right. The failures of the administration laid the groundwork for the ascension of Margaret Thatcher, as evidenced by the neoliberal wing of the party making public criticisms of its own party's Prime Minister. Conservative MPs became increasingly vocal in their opposition to Heath, with firebrand MP Enoch Powell asking, "Have you taken leave of

your senses" after the announcement of the price and income controls (Warden, 1972, p. 1). With the internal disputes over the future of the party's position on its primary issue dimension, little attention was given to the center-periphery dimension.

The SNP Prior to 1973

The SNP began the process of reformulating its position on independence between 1970 and 1973. After the 1970 election, the SNP had ambiguous feelings about the results as it won only a single Westminster seat, but its vote shares reached an all-time high. Winnie Ewing, the SNP MP that won the monumental Hamilton by-election of 1968 but lost her seat three years later in 1970, summarized the party's feelings, "The result is a tragic blow to all those men and women who live in Scotland … The SNP has lost one battle but we have not lost the war" ("Mrs. Ewing Brave in Defeat, 1970). The SNP had one by-election to contest prior to 1973 and began deploying its new electoral strategy. During this period, the party changed key elements of its independence messaging (its center-periphery position) and it undertook an intentional shift to define itself more clearly as a center-left party (their left-right issue dimension position). Both of these moves, but particularly the party's change on the center-periphery dimension warrant some credit for explaining its eventual electoral increases in 1974.

The SNP made two significant changes to its policy platform related to its independence message and its position on the left-right issue dimension. The first reformulation occurred when it connected independence with the North Sea oil discoveries in the late 1960s and 1970s. At the discovery, none of the parties framed the issue in political terms or used it as an election issue. Initial discoveries occurred in 1969 and in 1970, prior to the 1970 election; yet, it never appeared as a campaign issue. After

the election, Labour and the Conservatives had some arguments about whether they should nationalize or privatize the resource. The SNP, however, politicized the discovery by framing its independence message around it with the slogan "It's Scotland's Oil: With Self-Government," and using it as a wedge to differentiate itself further from the national parties. The second change was a gradual move by the party to adopt a more distinguished center-left position on the left-right issue dimension. This became more pronounced by the election with several candidates referring to the SNP as a social-democratic party (Personal Interview, 2016).

The SNP's oil campaign proved a dramatic transition "from denouncing Westminster policies to stressing the opportunities and self-confidence which independence could generate" (Lynch, 2002, p. 125). Previous SNP campaigns emphasized the distance of Westminster from Scotland and its control over Scottish policy focusing often on the economic neglect of Scotland. The party tried to instill confidence about the economic viability of Scotland outside the United Kingdom, but its message had trouble landing with the Scottish public often because of the relative ambiguity of the party on left-right issues. Labour and the Conservatives effectively attacked the SNP from both sides on its opaque economic message. Labour labeled the SNP as "Tartan Tories" and the Conservatives decried the party's message as incomprehensible or socialistic. With the oil campaign the SNP argued prosperity awaited, regardless of a left or right-wing economic doctrine.

Three key figures in the SNP established the oil campaign in late 1970 and early 1971: Executive Vice-Chairman Billy Wolfe, SNP research officer Donald Bain, and Party Vice President Gordon Wilson. The campaign became a progressively bigger part

of its focus beginning with the first by-election after the 1970 election in Stirling and Falkirk in 1971. The Stirling and Falkirk by-election witnessed the first usage of the campaign, although in a limited capacity, but the SNP finished second behind Labour and ahead of the Conservatives, something it failed to do in that constituency in the 1970 election. The Conservatives did not expect to win but were surprised to finish third. While unsure of the overall influence on the by-election result, the SNP decided to increase its focus on the oil campaign.

The SNP's persistent usage of the oil issue continued to build momentum in 1972. The party mobilized in Scotland and its lone MP Donald Stewart pressed the issue in parliament. The determination and tenacity of the SNP "caught the UK political parties off guard" and produced "muddled reaction[s] from both Conservative and Labour camps" (SNP Research Bulletin, 1972, p. 3). The SNP placed both parties in extremely difficult positions with its effective maneuver on the center-periphery dimension. Both wanted to use the find for political ends after observing the SNP's success with it, however, the SNP had established a degree of issue ownership over the policy first, so it worried any emphasis on the quantity would only embolden the SNP. Labour faced an internal battle with Scottish members urging the national party not to tout the extent of the find even to criticize the Conservatives because if the oil was sufficiently bountiful the SNP could undercut the economic dependency argument often made by Labour that Scotland could not survive, independent of the UK. The Conservatives also had concerns that its plans for privatization would not resonate in Scotland and might produce attacks by the SNP. Thus, as we shall see below, the SNP's changes to an important internal supply-side electoral influence helped shape the outcome of the February 1974 election.

The Developments of 1973 and the February 1974 Election

Four major events happened in 1973 that benefited the SNP leading into the February 1974 election. In March 1973, the Dundee East by-election occurred, and the SNP finished second raising its vote share from 9% to 30% relative to its 1970 total. Dundee East was a Northeastern constituency near the North Sea and the oil issue emerged as a significant topic. The Conservative candidate, William Fitzgerald, emphasized the feeling that the SNP had gained the upper hand on the issue. He expressed concern that "the people of Dundee just don't understand what the Conservative Government is trying to do, and perhaps the issue was clouded by the SNP oil campaign" (Warden, 1973, p. 1). The SNP effectively spread its campaign messages of "It's Scotland's Oil" and "Rich Scots or Poor Britons" to leverage the oil issue against the two national parties. The election also came at the same time discoveries about the Conservative Government's oil policy emerged. The Public Accounts Committee found that the oil companies, granted access to the North Sea Oil fields, paid minimal taxes on their finds (Warden, 1973, p. 1). The Conservatives' agreements with the oil companies only furthered the SNP's contention that Scotland would receive little benefit from the resource as the Conservatives did not consider it a Scottish issue. In addition, Labour maintained its restrictive position on Scottish autonomy denying any possibility of creating a Scottish Assembly in the future.

The second event that influenced Scottish politics was the Yom Kippur War that broke out October 6, 1973. The war effectively quadrupled the price of oil for a brief period, providing even greater salience to the SNP's politicized message about the viability of an independent Scotland profiting off oil revenues. While price of oil would

normally constitute a demand-side factor capable of influencing people's votes and potentially swinging people's votes, the SNP had made oil a political issue before the crisis and the other parties entered the debate, so through its political strategy (an internal supply-side factor) it was able to steer support away from the major parties over this issue. The British Election Survey found that the SNP disproportionately won over voters who began to care about oil during this period (Miller, 1981, 155).

Third, the release of the Royal Commission on the Constitution's report at the end of October 1973 proved a pivotal moment. The Commission, created in 1969 and headed by Lord Kilbrandon, issued its report, with the majority opinion expressing that a devolved Scottish Assembly should be created. This immediately increased the salience of the issue. The Scottish newspapers, including *The Glasgow Herald* and *The Scotsman*, two of the most popular papers, covered the findings extensively. In addition, debates about devolution spiked in the House of Commons. Prior to the release of the Commission's findings, the issue of devolution received not a single mention in parliamentary debate, for over three months (HC Deb, 1973). After the conclusions became public, debates over devolution increased happening almost weekly when parliament was in session through the February 1974 election, and even the November and Christmas recesses did not lead to the issue fading (HC Deb, 1974). The findings, while advocating a devolved Scottish Assembly, offered a unionist solution by discounting any possibility of federalism or independence for Scotland. The Royal Commission even included a recommendation for a stopgap measure that would prevent the devolved assembly from overcoming the parliamentary sovereignty of Westminster and it stated:

"The United Kingdom's Government would also have the power, for use in exceptional circumstances, to determine with the approval of the United Kingdom's Parliament, that a Bill passed by the Scottish or Welsh legislature should not be submitted for Royal Assent" (Kilbrandon, 1973, p. 7).

The Commission dismissed federal and independence options on many grounds, including economic reasons. The report it issued attempted to downplay the economic viability of Scotland provided it gained independence, arguing that Scotland ultimately gained more in pensions and public expenditure than it paid in taxation making it a net earner. The Commission, however, did not "take any serious measure of the value of North Sea oil [because] Kilbrandon realized that if there were a great deal of oil in the sea-bed off the shores of Scotland and if Scotland were granted control of these assets as part of an independence settlement, that might substantially change the argument" (Drucker & Brown, 1980, p. 60).

The two major parties responded extensively to the Commission's report increasing the salience of the center-periphery dimension, but they took different positions on the proper subsequent course of action. Many in the Labour Party reacted quite negatively to the Commission's findings, which leader Harold Wilson established in 1969 to postpone the issue beyond the 1970 election. Labour responded by increasing its hostility to the prospect and denied any prospect of a devolved assembly. In the immediate wake of the Commission's proposal, Allan McLean, Chairman of the Scottish Council of the Labour Party decried it as "a proposal for a Scottish Stormont and when one considers the calibre of members of the Ulster Stormont for the past 50 years it is hardly likely to inspire confidence" ("Mixed Reaction to Kilbrandon Report," 1973, p. 1). His allusion to Stormont held significant weight as the Heath Government had imposed direct rule in Northern Ireland, disbanding Stormont, only a year before because of "The

Troubles." In addition, Labour's MPs and leadership focused their ire on the proposal that the number of Scottish MPs at Westminster should be reduced after the creation of an assembly. The Conservatives opted for a moderate response, opting to consider some form of accommodation, with Heath proclaiming the need for "the widest possible public discussion" before the government took any action on the issue ("Mixed Reaction to Kilbrandon Report," 1973, p. 1). The proposals issued by the Kilbrandon Commission went further than the Scottish Convention the Conservatives discussed as part of Sir Alec Douglas-Home's committee in 1969, and this made the party wary of the Commission's proposals as well.

Finally, any hopes to shelve the issue of devolution or avoid action became more difficult only eight days after the Royal Commission issued its report. On November 8, 1973, the SNP won the Glasgow Govan by-election with 41.5% of the vote, a significant increase from its third-place finish in 1970 when it mustered only 10.3%. In the run-up to the election, both the Conservatives and Labour rejected any possibilities of an SNP win, and it provided a similar shock as the Hamilton by-election in 1967. On the eve of the election, Harry Selby, the Labour candidate dismissed the SNP stating, "I have never regarded them as a threat at all [because] they have stood here at municipal elections and never won a seat … They make a lot of noise but noise does not win votes" (Clark, 1973, p. 28). Labour felt confident of a victory as it had won the constituency in every election after 1955. The Royal Commission's report, however, had begun to change the terms of debate. The loss immediately prompted a convening of top Labour officials of both the Scottish and National party, which highlighted the divisions between the two groups. The October 1973 result "caused convulsions in the Labour leadership and the

unprecedented spectacle of the London leadership pushing the Scottish leadership to push the Scottish membership to support devolution" (Keating, 1977, p. 6). The Conservatives knew that Glasgow Govan was most likely unwinnable as a Labour stronghold, but the SNP victory reanimated its concerns over the issue of Scottish autonomy, especially as it occurred only a week after the Kilbrandon Commission recommended establishing a Scottish Parliament. The SNP powered to victory because of "the increased attention given to a Scottish Parliament" and its oil campaign (Lynch, 2002; Personal Interview, 2016). The SNP's organization mobilized effectively, completing two canvasses of the constituency and allowing it to spread its message more effectively in a political environment more focused on the Scottish question ("Labour Confident of Retaining Govan Division," 1973). Govan had significant lasting consequences as "from that flashpoint its electioneering machine steamrolled its way through 1974" ("Margo Loses Her SNP Post," 1979).

After these four major events in Scotland and a miner's strike, the Heath Government moved to hold an election earlier than many expected, dissolving Parliament on February 8, 1974. The Conservatives had a national lead in the polls and it sought to use an election win for leverage in negotiating with the strikers. Heath believed the Conservatives would win, and with a victory, he could more effectively force the miners into a compromise favorable to his administration.

The February Campaign and Devolution Issues

The SNP's breakthrough in February 1974 resulted from three major factors. First, the salience of the devolution issue was very high with all of the events of 1973, and both the Conservatives and Labour discussed the issue quite often. Second, while the

Conservatives tried to appear accommodative on peripheral issues with promises to implement aspects of the Kilbrandon Commission, the Labour Party remained staunchly centrist and against a Scottish Parliament. Finally, the SNP after three years of honing its reformulated independence message, ran an effective campaign that highlighted the new aspects of the center-periphery issue dimension related to potential Scottish oil wealth and its ramifications.

In terms of Labour's position on devolution, little changed from the 1970 campaign. Labour did profess its willingness to consider some administrative devolution with a few more powers given to the Scottish Grand Committee. With the publication of the Kilbrandon Commission's findings, the Scottish Executive of the Labour Party convened a review of its devolution policy. The Scottish Executive and the rest of the Labour Party leadership rejected outright any possibility of a Scottish Parliament and dismissed the Kilbrandon Commission proposals (Eadie, Ewing, Robertson, & Sillars, 1974, p. 8). Labour's anti-devolution MPs hardened their opposition to the prospect, even with the seeming growth in support for some end to the status quo by the public. One group Labour depended on significantly for electoral support was the Scottish Trade Unions Congress, and it had changed its position from 1970; now favoring a Scottish Assembly after the Royal Commission released its findings (Keating, 1977, p. 8). Labour remained unmoved, and purposefully omitted any mention of issues related to devolution from its February campaign manifesto to demonstrate its unwillingness to change the position.

The Conservatives, while concerned about the devolution, maintained its vague promises to address the issue. In the heart of the February campaign, Heath declared the

Conservatives "accepted the need for … key administrative decisions being taken in Scotland and that … key initiatives should come from Scotland" (McIntyre & Warden, 1974). The party's plan, while outwardly supporting the creation of an unelected Scottish Convention that would sit in Edinburgh, lacked a definitive commitment from the party at a national and Scottish level. Heath's Declaration of Perth surprised the Scottish branch of the Conservative party in 1968, and the national party found his decision to embrace, even a minimal form of devolution, unwise. Heath's reaffirmations of the need to enact some form of devolution became more urgent during the campaign as compared to his Premiership when he viewed the SNP threat as moribund. Heath tried to reiterate his commitment to devolution on the eve of the February election by proclaiming:

> "Getting constitutional arrangements right is very important. We are working on proposals taking into account Sir Alec Douglas-Home's committee recommendations from 1970, as well as the various recommendations in the Kilbrandon Commission. But it is the real intentions that count. We intend to go on as we have started, giving the initiative in action in Scotland to Scotland. Whatever the constitution – and if changes are right we will make them – it is action which affects people in Scotland" (Warden, 1974).

The devolution issue received more attention than ever before. Labour did not want to engage extensively on the issue as it held an anti-Scottish autonomy position, but as the public favored more devolution and the SNP was increasing its support in pre-election polls, Labour had to debate the issue. In addition, the Conservatives had to address devolution more than in any previous election. The Conservatives issued a separate manifesto exclusively for Scotland, unlike Labour, and promised to consider more devolution proposals than Labour. With both parties having to address the issue, devolution became a more important issue relative to the traditional left-right dimension, and this benefited the SNP and its campaign.

The SNP pushed its position that Scotland needed self-government and maintained that only the SNP could deliver any kind of meaningful reform. The party pointed to Labour's continued hostility to any options for change and the Conservative government's inaction over the previous four years. The SNP, however, had always stood for greater Scottish control. Arguments for self-government before the SNP began revamping its independence message detailed various deficiencies in the governing structure of the UK and the need for Scottish independence to improve the Scottish economy. The campaign message the party fine-tuned prior to the election and deployed effectively in the campaign coupled greater self-government with the prospects of North Sea oil in a genuinely novel general election strategy. It spread its message to a greater extent than in previous years pushing its "Rich Scots or Poor Britons" and "It's Scotland's Oil: With Self-Government" slogans more extensively than ever before at a Scotland-wide level. One manifestation of its campaign's increased popularity was that it sold, for profit, 900,000 copies of its leaflets on its oil policy (Personal Interview, 2016).

The February Campaign and Left-Right Issues

While center-periphery issues had taken on additional importance, the left-right positions of the various parties mattered for the SNP to breakthrough. The Conservatives became somewhat more centrist narrowing the partisan divide with Labour. The SNP adopted its clearest position on the left-right spectrum in its history pushing a social-democratic image. Thus, the diminished polarization of the national parties and the SNP's more discernable center-left position may have benefited the SNP.

Labour's campaign focused on economic issues facing Scotland, particularly oil and employment. While the SNP politicized the oil issue several years before the

election, Labour tried to make it a left-right issue rather than a Scottish issue. Harold Wilson campaigned on a pledge to nationalize North Sea oil. He stated that this approach by the UK government would "secure maximum public advantage from [UK] resources" (Labour Party, 1974). He argued that the Conservatives' aims for privatizing oil would limit its potential for the country as a whole. Based on Labour's socialist goals it sought central authority over oil as a means to redistribute the benefits. Employment also registered as a concern as the economy had worsened throughout the Conservatives term in office. Labour attempted to leverage the ongoing miner strike to its advantage, as it portrayed itself as the party of the workers capable of quickly resolving the issue with a call in its manifesto to "repeal the Industrial Relations Act as a matter of extreme urgency and then bring in an Employment Protection Act" (Labour Party, 1974).

Edward Heath made a modest shift in the Conservative Party's positions back toward the center during the February campaign. While he called the election to resolve the miner strike, in the party's manifesto it waivered to a certain extent on its commitment to its crowning neoliberal policy agenda item the Industrial Relations Act. The Conservatives planned to introduce changes that would be perceived as somewhat less hostile by the more militant members of the Trade Union Congresses. With respect to oil, however, the party remained relatively committed to privatization and came out against Labour's nationalization plan. The Conservatives also hit back at the SNP's proposals for Scotland to retain the revenue generated by the resource. The Conservative Secretary of State Gordon Campbell rebuked claims "passed around by the Scottish National Party and others that the oil companies have already made great profits out of North Sea oil" (Clark, 1974, p. 13).

A significant shift in the SNP from 1970 to 1974 came from its adoption of a more social-democratic platform. In 1970, the party had a more centrist and ambiguous electoral position on left-right issues, something that both Labour and the Conservatives eagerly made a focal point of their attacks. In 1974, the party opted for a more established center-left position. The SNP still contained a mix of individuals across the left-right dimension, so even though it made its stance clearer, the position still resonated closer to the center than to the far left. The divisions appeared among the prospective MPs that the party stood in the February election, including former Tory Hamish Watt and former Labour member Donald Stewart. This new approach came through most clearly on the SNP's policies on social and economic issues. The party built upon its message from the 1973 elections "to mine the discontent and run on an economic and social case for voting SNP rather than culturally" (Personal Interview, 2016). While the party could not afford to sow internal fissures based on its minority status, the SNP leadership, especially party leader Billy Wolfe, realized that the most significant gains could come from taking Labour seats, as Labour held 44 of the 71 constituencies. By placing itself between Labour and the Conservatives on left-right issues, the SNP could win voters from both sides.

Changes in the Campaign from 1970

During the 1970 election, the SNP struggled for media attention outside of the brief television time it received and coverage in the pro-independence paper, *The Scots Independent*. The coverage of the SNP increased dramatically in the February 1974 campaign with the increased credibility of the party as an electoral threat. A significant testament to the SNP's enhanced standing in the Scottish political system was apparent in

its front-page feature in *The Glasgow Herald* on Election Day, February 28, 1974. In the 1970 campaign, the paper had not dedicated a single article on any page exclusively to the SNP. The 1974 feature highlighted the SNP's independence agenda and emphasized its oil campaign and unemployment concerns. In the article, the paper detailed the SNP's perspective that "only the SNP could truly work for Scotland and use its own great natural resources for the benefit of the Scottish people," and that "Scotland had always suffered disproportionately from the failures of London governments … [as] unemployment had been consistently between one-and-a-half and two times the UK average" ("We are the Only Answer—SNP," 1974). This article along with sixteen others featured in *The Glasgow Herald* throughout the campaign exceeded the seven articles from 1970.

Assessing the Results

The SNP's breakthrough was apparent in several metrics. The SNP's vote shares increased dramatically from 11.4% to 21.9% and increased its seat share from one to seven. Of the seven seats it won, four came from the Conservatives, two from Labour, and the SNP retained its one seat from 1970. With the center-periphery dimension receiving more attention than ever and the SNP's campaign, it made significant gains across the region.

The election surprised the Conservatives and Labour as neither party expected the SNP's surge. One Conservative MP who lost his seat in Scotland described the SNP's success as "tremendous shock," and the Secretary of the Labour Party called its increase in support "a real belt in the teeth to us" ("SNP Now Vital Majority," 1974). Nationally, Labour won a plurality of the seats while the Conservatives won the aggregate popular

vote. Heath attempted to overcome the initial deadlock by forming a coalition with the Liberals, but he failed to reach an agreement. With the failure to form a government, Heath relinquished his premiership, and Labour formed a minority government. The party's minority government had an auspicious beginning, ending the miner strike Heath had made as a central feature of his campaign and reason for calling an election. Labour realized that a minority government put too many constraints upon the party. Thus, in an effort to build off the success resolving the strike, it called for a second election in October.

The October 1974 Campaign

The October campaign was similar in many respects to February. The salience of the devolution issue increased by October with both parties giving it more focus, even compared with February. and the SNP continued to effectively push its self-government message connected to oil wealth. The February breakthrough which entailed an increase in both vote shares and seat shares produced a change in the center-periphery positions of both Labour and the Conservatives. The biggest change in this external supply-side factor came when Labour began supporting a Scottish Assembly. In addition, the Conservatives moved even further to the center diminishing the intensity of the left-right divide allowing an elevation of devolution issues that favored the SNP.

<u>The October Campaign and Devolution Issues</u>

Labour adopted the most significant policy shift of the major parties between the February and October elections, shedding its anti-devolution position in favor of one that accepted a Scottish Assembly. After the February election, in which the SNP won seven seats, Labour feared the SNP would win more in the next election. William Ross, who

was appointed Scottish Economic Minister after the election and had previously served as Secretary of State for Scotland from 1964-1970, represented this concern in his post-election comments. William Ross had been a vociferous critic of devolution during his time as Secretary of State for Scotland and as the Shadow Secretary of State for Scotland (1970-1974), but after Labour formed a government he claimed, "I have never been a hardliner on devolution, but always a hardliner on separation" ("My Plans for Scotland—Ross," 1974). In the aftermath of the February election, significant divisions ran through the party over the proper response to the insurgent SNP. Labour's leadership in London decided that the party needed to change course on the issue as a stopgap measure, especially as they planned to call an election in October. Interestingly, the Scottish MPs and the Scottish Labour leadership largely disagreed with the central party for caving on the devolution issue and fought hard to prevent any accommodation believing it would only embolden the SNP (Keating, 1977). The most significant instance of the internal conflict occurred when the Scottish Executive of the Labour Party effectively prevented any vote on incorporating devolution proposals into the party platform during the 1974 national party conference. The National Executive Council, based in London, convened a special conference soon after, however, and forced through devolution measures (Keating, 1977, p. 6). Even though the issue divided the party, Labour went into the October election with devolution promises in its manifesto, specifically the creation of a Scottish Assembly. It even published its first separate Scottish Manifesto for the election clearly indicating its concern about the possible loss of seats in the region. The manifesto dealt with a range of Scottish issues, including specific plans for improving employment

in Scotland, proposals to ensure Scotland benefited from North Sea oil, and further details about the proposed assembly (Keating, 1977).

The circumstances regarding the Labour Party's willingness to shift its center-periphery position reduced the credibility of the maneuver. Even after it shifted positions, polling indicated that an overwhelming majority did not believe or know for sure whether Labour was a stalwart proponent of creating an assembly. One poll asked is your "Candidate strongly for an assembly" and respondents chose yes, no, or don't know for the Conservatives, Labour, the Liberals, and the SNP. For Labour, 29% believed they did not support an assembly, 48% did not know, and only 23% believed they supported it (Miller, 1981, p. 122). Only after the SNP's electoral breakthrough had Labour considered the option. If Labour won a majority in the October there were no guarantees it would not shelve the issue similar to the Conservatives, and the prospects of passing devolution was even tougher as many of the Scottish Labour MPs were the most vocal critics.

The Conservatives again promised to take up the issue of a Scottish Assembly. The growing power of the SNP and its ability to win four previously Conservative held seats generated a sense of urgency. The party had difficulty campaigning for an assembly, as it had taken no significant action over the previous four years to seriously address the issue. While it could claim it implemented local government reform, it lacked the significance of establishing a Scottish Assembly.

The SNP ran an extremely similar campaign to that of the February election. The party continued to push its position that packaged North Sea oil and independence and it claimed its increased seat share reflected growing support for this message. The SNP

drove the oil issue, as SNP MP Gordon Wilson emphasized, "The voters of Scotland will realize that oil is an issue in this election because the SNP made it an issue in Scottish politics … [and] until the SNP forced the oil issue into the open, the other partiers were happy to keep quiet" (Wilson, 1974). The SNP effectively campaigned on its center-periphery position in the February 1974 election, and it continued to effectively message in the October election. As it stated in its manifesto, "Scotland's oil provides the most vivid illustration of how much there is to gain—and how much there is to lose" (SNP, 1974).

The SNP had extremely high expectations for the October election campaign. Early in the campaign, party leader, William Wolfe, further articulated the plans of the SNP if it won a majority of the Scottish seats at Westminster. Wolfe had a high degree of confidence that the party would meet the 36-seat threshold it declared was necessary to initiate the independence process in Westminster. The party polled quite favorably as well. For example, two days before the election, in the Northern 16 constituencies 43% of prospective voters supported the SNP, a 19% lead over the next closest party, the Tories, who had won five of these constituencies in the February election (Finlay, 1974, p. 1). Similarly, on October 9, polls indicated that the SNP had 37% support in the 20 Eastern Scottish constituencies compared to Labour at 29% (Finlay, 1974, p. 1). In addition, with the polls showing increased electoral support, favorability for changing the constitutional system became the preferred choice throughout the Scottish electorate, regardless of party preference:

Table 4.1: Constitutional Preferences Across the Scottish Parties October 1974

	Conservatives	Labour	SNP
A Completely Independent Scotland	4%	9%	34%
More Say in Our Own Affairs but within the UK Framework	89%	75%	63%
Keeping the Present System	7%	11%	1%

The preference for more say in Scottish affairs and independence together were significantly more favorable than the option of retaining the current system. The Scottish National Party, however, offered the most credible position to bring change, as it had always supported more autonomy. The Conservatives promised to consider proposals for a Scottish Assembly in 1970 and took almost no action upon forming a government. Labour refused to consider any form of devolution outside of small administrative changes until the late summer of 1974, only months before the October election. Labour and the Conservatives' external supply-side changes did not sufficiently prevent another large SNP breakthrough. The SNP stood the best chance of poaching voters who favored this issue. With the February success reaffirming its place in Scottish politics, the SNP had a greater capacity than ever before to drive the narrative on Scottish self-government.

The October Campaign and Left-Right Issues

Labour enacted few significant changes to its left-right positions for the October campaign. It maintained its socialist objectives, advocating greater central government control of the economy. The party even received a significant credibility boost when it ended the miner strike during its minority government. The threat to Labour on this dimension was that the SNP now occupied a clearer center-left position, so the party

could advocate for positions similar to Labour but do so with an emphasis on Scotland's economy.

Heath's more centrist inclinations created significant divisions in the party. He faced a rebellious faction of more dogmatic neoliberals, including Keith Joseph and Margaret Thatcher, but refused to resign as leader after the February defeat. He received criticism for backing down from the vision laid out in the Selsdon Manifesto, particularly the seeming abandonment of neoliberal economic principles. In the interim between the two elections, he also faced criticism from within his party over his calls for a national unity government that would create a coalition between the Conservatives and Labour to end the hung parliament after the February election. Many worried this would weaken the party due to a lack of ideological coherence in its campaign. Yet, during the October campaign, Heath continued to push for a government of national unity. He proffered that the government should have the most talented individuals regardless of party and went as far to proclaim his idea could "change the face of British politics" (Warden, 1974, p. 1). The message infuriated many Conservatives as Heath continued to emphasize the idea even as Labour and the Liberals rejected the possibility.

Due to his vision of a national unity government, Heath pushed the party more to the center. This was most evident in the October 1974 manifesto, particularly regarding the Conservatives' new position on the Industrial Relations Act. The Industrial Relations Act, passed in 1971, was an initial move by the Conservative government to push back against organized labor by limiting its capacity to strike, restricting certain collective bargaining measures, and loosening the stringent requirements of many workers to join unions in their respective industries. While initially using it forcefully to change the

status quo on labor relations, Heath took a moderate stance over the course of his term. Even with the lessening commitment to apply the law as extensively as possible, labor relations still deteriorated. Concerns over the issue even led the Conservatives, who sought to make the February 1974 election about standing up to the unions, to consider reevaluating certain parts of the Industrial Relations Act. By October, the Tories changed its party platform to proclaim, "In the interest of national unity we will not re-introduce the Industrial Relations Act" (Conservative Party, 1974). This signaled a significant retrenchment from the neoliberal approach Heath had touted prior to the 1970 election. A promise to move beyond the Industrial Relations Act and become more centrist overall did not alter Scottish skepticism over the party's historical rightward leanings as it polled third behind Labour and the SNP. In addition, it created more problems for Heath inside his own party.

The SNP likely improved its fortunes as well with a more discernable left-right position. A former SNP MP who ran in both the February and October elections made clear that the party had shifted toward a "social-democratic" position on left-right issues (Personal Interview, 2016). This move put it to the center-left making it more attractive to the leftward shifting Scottish population while also staying somewhat to the right of the Labour Party's socialist position that could increase its chance of peeling off Conservative voters. The Scottish Conservative Party leader Alick Buchanan-Smith believed that "much of the SNP vote had been a protest vote, [and] there had also been widespread tactical voting" (Clark, 1974, p. 7). With the SNP between Labour and the Conservatives on left-right issues, it was primed to receive either tactical or protest votes.

Assessing the Results

The Scottish National Party increased both its vote share and seat share in October relative to February earning 30.4% of the vote compared to 21.9% and 11 seats compared to 7. The combination of the increased salience of devolution, the positions taken on Scottish autonomy, and the SNP's campaign helped drive this increase in support. SNP leader William Wolfe believed it was a significant moment for the party, declaring, "We have achieved the breakthrough point for our party. These results will be the springboard to an even greater success" ("SNP Now Vital Minority Group," 1974). The changes in Labour and the Conservatives positions on Scottish autonomy were not enough to overcome the benefits of the additional focus on devolution and the SNP's campaign. An Opinion Research Corporation poll from June 1974 ranked self-government and oil as two of the three most important issues in Scotland (SNP's National Council, 1974). In addition, the Scottish public's views on devolution shifted significantly from June 1970 and October 1974 with the number of Scots wanting to keep the political system the same dropping from 23% to 6% ("Scots Favour Referendum—N.O.P," 1970, p. 1; Finaly, 1974, p. 1). Labour attempted to accommodate on these issues, but the timing generated concerns about the authenticity of its supposed newfound commitment. With such a drastic change in position only months before the election, in comparison to its twelve-year official opposition, the move appeared more like political opportunism than a genuine change. The Conservatives had opted for a similar strategy prior to the 1970 election, and then failed to deliver on any form of a Scottish Assembly. The Conservatives also had difficulty staking a credible position on the issue of self-government. The party had promised at least to consider proposals for a Scottish

Assembly, but never made any significant effort to carry-out any legislation before February 1974. After the first 1974 election, any reaffirmed promises for a Scottish Assembly appeared like the political maneuvering of a party trying not to lose more support in the face of a failed promise. One poll before the October 1974 election found that only 40% of the population believed Labour wanted to create a devolved assembly (Miller, 1981).

The SNP also likely benefited from the increasing number of voters choosing which party to support during the campaign. The percentage of voters that decided during the election campaign increased in each election from 1970 to October 1974, with 17.7% in 1970, 21.4% in February 1974, and 27.4% in October 1974 (Crewe, Day, & Fox, 1995, p. 150). This willingness to decide during the campaign likely benefited the SNP, as the two major parties increased the salience of the issue. The SNP's increased exposure and capacity to effectively message increased throughout this period as the party's Press Officer stated, "The overall Press campaign can be considered reasonably successful" (SNP Press Officer, 1974). The party remained an important electoral competitor and built off the increased salience helped by more media coverage than the February election. At a time when the public seemed less tied to traditional party affiliations, the SNP had the capacity to offer something novel. The public extensively knew the positions of Labour and the Conservatives, but the SNP had a chance to pursue potentially disillusioned voters from both parties.

The 1974 Elections and the SNP's Breakthrough

The SNP managed to breakthrough in the two elections of 1974 based on the increased salience of the center-periphery dimension, the positions taken by Labour and

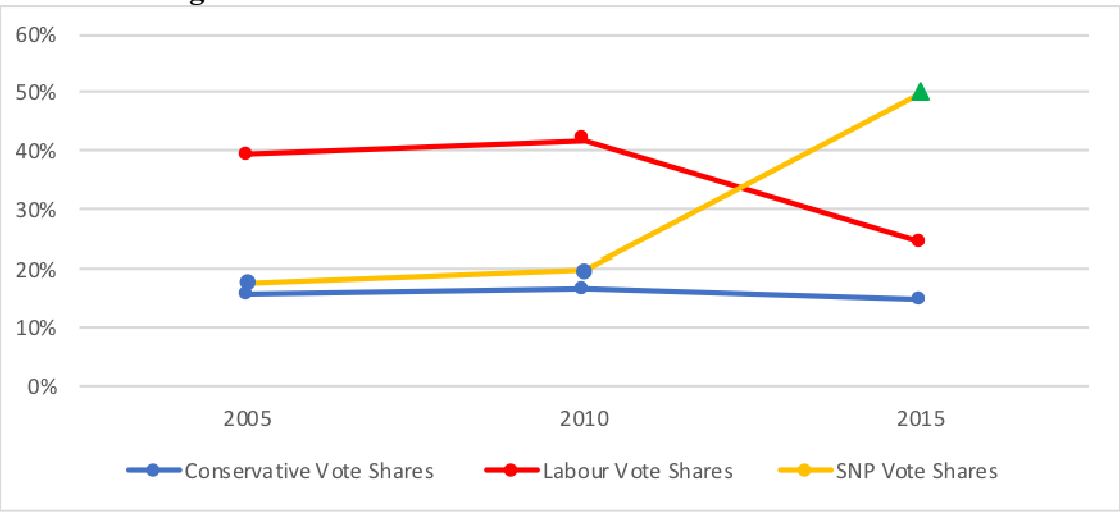
the Conservatives on devolution, and the SNP's clear positioning on the center-periphery dimension translated to an effective campaign. As discussed above, both Labour and Conservatives devoted more attention to the prospects of a Scottish Assembly than ever before. In addition, Labour campaigned vigorously against devolution in February 1974 and only changed its position a month before the October election hindering the effectiveness of this new position. In this environment, the SNP made an effective case for self-government, with a heavy focus on North Sea oil as the factor that would make it possible. The confluence of these three factors played an important role in the SNP's unprecedented growth in support.

THE 2015 ELECTION

The 2015 election was the SNP's largest electoral victory in its history and a significant electoral breakthrough. The party made enormous gains in both vote shares and seat shares (see Figure 4.2) earning 50% of the vote and 56 of 59 Scottish Westminster seats, compared to 2010 when it won 19.9% of the vote and 6 of 59 seats. The results were particularly devastating for Labour, whose vote share declined 17.7% and who lost 40 seats. Labour's vote share of 24.3% was its lowest total in Scotland since 1910. The Conservatives, who had long been a minor player in Westminster elections in Scotland held on to its lone MP but had its vote share decrease from 16.7% to 14.9%. This was its lowest level of support since 1865, before mass enfranchisement. This electoral "tsunami," as many political commentators referred to it, came only eight months after Scotland had an independence referendum that resulted in United Kingdom staying a single country with 55% favoring remaining and 45% choosing to leave. The referendum outcome was the opposite of the SNP's hope, and could have caused a

significant electoral decline. Several factors, however, turned a potential failure into the enormous breakthrough.

Figure 4.2: The 2015 General Election Results in Scotland



Note: The red Xs denote failure, the green triangles denote breakthrough, and the blue squares denote persistence

The SNP managed to breakthrough based on certain external and internal supply-side factors. In terms of external supply-side influences, the salience given to the center-periphery dimension and the positions taken on the center-periphery dimension by Labour and Conservatives opened up an electoral space for the SNP. Labour and the Conservatives had to address the issue of Scottish government extensively in the election, which played in the SNP's favor as the more the major parties engaged on the issue, the more they focused on the issue dimension which the SNP had an advantage on. A political narrative in Scotland that made Scottish issues primary was not beneficial to the national parties. In addition to increasing the salience of the center-periphery dimension, Labour and the Conservatives adopted ambiguous positions on the same issue dimension. Both parties attempted to accommodate on Scottish issues but failed for different reasons, as the Conservatives, while offering devolution measures, wanted to avoid addressing the issue and Labour only offered the same devolution policies as the Conservatives.

The SNP's positioning on the center-periphery dimension was the internal supply-side factor that also influenced the election's outcome. The SNP effectively made securing greater devolution its position and declared independence was not an issue in the 2015 election. The SNP then portrayed itself as the party of Scotland capable of delivering devolution and more of it, in contrast to Labour and the Conservatives who would potentially minimize the issue and only proposed further autonomy as a stopgap measure when Scottish independence seemed a possible outcome. In the SNP manifesto, it promised more devolution than offered by Labour or the Conservatives, including policies such as total fiscal autonomy, full power over welfare policy, full power over national insurance, and full power over employment policy. The SNP, with its effective campaigning, took advantage of the electoral space opened by Labour and the Conservatives.

This section proceeds in three parts. First, I examine the independence referendum and determine how it set the stage for the 2015 election. Second, I trace the various factors that produced the SNP's breakthrough in the 2015 election. Finally, I assess the aftermath of the election and conclude.

The Independence Referendum

On September 18, 2014, the Scottish voted to remain part of the United Kingdom, with 55% of the population supporting this position and 45% wanting independence. The referendum, which seemed inconceivable only five years before, changed Scottish politics and ensured the issue of Scotland's place in the UK would remain an issue. Rather than settling the Constitutional question and ending the issue of Scottish self-government, it enhanced its salience. The referendum's result, while not the SNP's

desired outcome, did not scuttle the party's electoral prospects. Instead the SNP capitalized on the vote to remain and used it to breakthrough. As Alex Salmond, the SNP leader, proclaimed in his speech the day after the referendum, "The position is this. We lost the referendum vote but Scotland can still carry the political initiative. Scotland can still emerge the real winner" (Salmond, 2015, p. 9).

The independence referendum campaign officially began in May 2014. While the two sides began advocating for their positions earlier, with Yes Scotland launching in May 2012 and Better Together launching in June 2012, this marked the official campaign commencement. The SNP was the main political party leading the Yes Scotland campaign and Labour, the Conservatives, and the Liberal-Democrats made up the Better Together campaign. At the outset of the campaign in May, when Scots were asked their voting intentions in the referendum, polling showed 30% in favor of Yes, 42% favoring No, and 28% choosing don't know (Pike, 2016). By September 7, only eleven days until the referendum, the *Sunday Times* published a poll showing the Yes campaign ahead 51 to 49 percent (Pike, 2016). The campaign strategies of both Yes Scotland and Better Together resulted in this narrowing gap that transformed a seemingly guaranteed No vote into an uncertain result.

The Better Together ran a negative campaign to highlight the risks of Scottish independence. Internally the campaign called itself "Project Fear," and eventually Better Together's Director of Communication accidentally used the phrase in public and ignited a serious rebuke from Yes Scotland (Pike, 2016, p. 68-69). This allowed the Yes campaign to claim the UK parties had every intention of scaring the Scottish into remaining without focusing on constructive arguments. The Yes campaign tried to drive

this message and did so most effectively by the second debate between the heads of the two campaigns. In the debate, Alex Salmond, leader of the SNP, and Alistair Darling, former Labour Chancellor of the Exchequer and leader of Better Together, adopted contrasting arguments about the future of Scotland, which came through in Darling's specific focus on issues such as the potential end to the currency union and Salmond's emphasis on the benefits independence would have on policy areas such as employment and health care (Pike, 2016).

The Yes Scotland campaign led by the SNP argued for the benefits of independence. The SNP had hoped for an opportunity to pursue independence since its founding and the campaign allowed it to make the case for the change. Yes Scotland wanted to create a positive narrative for an independent Scotland and emphasize the need for Scottish self-esteem. Yes Scotland understood it had the more difficult campaign as the possibility of independence produced uncertainty versus remaining representing the status quo.

As the polls narrowed only a week before the referendum, and some showed Yes ahead, Labour, the Conservatives, and the Liberal-Democrats came together and issued "The Vow." "The Vow" was a promise made by the three major parties to devolve "extensive new powers" to Scotland if a No vote occurred (Pike, 2016). This new proposal had few specifics as Labour, the Conservatives, and the Liberal-Democrats had very different perspectives on Scottish autonomy. The Liberal-Democrats long favored federalism, the Labour Party disagreed on which powers could be devolved, and the Conservatives largely favored no additional measures (Pike, 2016, p. 200). To give this broad proclamation more standing the Conservatives, Labour, and the Liberal-Democrats

proposed creating a Royal Commission that would immediately undertake the issue of determining actual policy proposals.

The Better Together campaign operated under the assumption that it would easily win and did not develop a sense of urgency until the polling weeks before the vote indicated a close race. The new polling created such concern that the Prime Minister even cancelled question time to campaign in Scotland (Pike, 2016, p. 26). This was a last attempt by the major mainstream parties to prevent Scottish secession. "The Vow" had consequences for both the referendum and the subsequent 2015 election. Johns and Mitchell argue, "While this may have swayed some voters to support No, in some respects it was a win for the SNP" (Johns & Mitchell, 2016). SNP leader Alex Salmond originally wanted a three-question referendum with the choices being independence, more devolution, or the status quo, but David Cameron, the Conservative Prime Minister, insisted on a Yes/No independence referendum. "The Vow" made the referendum a choice between independence and more devolution; both options favored the SNP. Thus, even when the referendum resulted in Scotland remaining part of the UK, the issue of Scottish autonomy did not recede, and instead further devolution became a priority.

Less than 24 hours after the referendum, the tenuous alliance between Labour, the Conservatives, and the Liberal-Democrats fractured, which created immediate problems for them and forecasted the longer-term consequences the parties would face for aligning. The immediate consequences began the morning after the referendum with Prime Minister David Cameron's address. He stated:

> "I have long believed that a crucial party missing from this national discussion is England. We have heard the voice of Scotland—and now the millions of voices of England must also be heard. The question of English votes for English laws—the so-called West Lothian question—requires a decisive answer" (Cameron, 2014).

The head of the Better Together Campaign Alastair Darling, the former Labour MP, warned Cameron before the speech that "if you conflate more power and English votes today you'll let Salmond in the back door," which expressed a fear that any immediate shift to focusing on England would not sit well with many No voters who still prioritized Scottish interests (Pike, 2016, 247-248). Labour and the Conservatives diverged sharply over Cameron's speech and within a day, the campaign that had fought to hold the Union together returned to traditional partisanship eliminating any lasting feeling of victory. This created an extremely negative environment that benefited the SNP, as it quickly shifted from the independence campaign to focusing on more devolution.

The Better Together campaign would ultimately hurt Labour and the Conservatives in the 2015 election in Scotland. The alliance created difficulties for Labour and the Conservatives for different reasons. Labour had to work together with the Tories, the "Others" of Scottish politics (Mitchell, 2015). Since Thatcher, the Conservatives finished either third or fourth in elections and many Scots regarded the party as anti-Scotland. Thus, even Scots who favored remaining in the UK viewed the Conservative Party's efforts in the Better Together campaign as working against Scottish interests.

The referendum, while not producing the desired SNP outcome, did not end the relevance of Scottish autonomy. Rather, it helped lay the foundation for the 2015 electoral breakthrough. The referendum had several factors that benefited the SNP only eight months later. First, referendum turnout was extremely high at 84.6% and this reinvigorated interest in Scottish politics, which remained through the 2015 election. Second, the SNP managed the referendum loss significantly better than the failed 1979

devolution referendum. The common refrain was that "the losers were acting like winners" (Johns & Mitchell, 2016). The party transitioned leadership, did not contest the result, and made the fulfillment of "The Vow" its top priority. Third, Labour and the Conservatives ineffectively managed the result, which should have been a major victory them. Opposite the characterization of the SNP, coverage of both parties claimed, "the winners were acting like losers" (Johns & Mitchell, 2016). Fourth, the Better Together campaign believed that it would have a landslide victory over Yes Scotland, which would serve as a significant embarrassment for the SNP. Instead, the SNP made significant gains in the campaign and lost only narrowly, and the major parties committed to "The Vow."

The 2015 Election

After four years in power, David Cameron had to call for a general election in 2015. The May election occurred only eight months after the referendum and Scottish autonomy remained a pressing issue. The Royal Commission (The Smith Commission), established to generate concrete proposals to fulfill "The Vow," issued its findings on November 27, 2014. The SNP pressed the issue of more devolution extensively, and the major parties had to debate and consider the findings in the run-up to the election. Ultimately, the continued salience of Scottish autonomy, the ambiguous positions taken on the issue by Labour and the Conservatives, and the SNP's effective campaign based on its repositioning on the center-periphery issue dimension produced an SNP electoral breakthrough in 2015.

The Campaign and Center-Periphery Issues

The 2015 election in Scotland focused less on the failure of the independence referendum and more on "The Vow" (Johns & Mitchell, 2016). This placed a significant constraint on each party as any failure to deliver had the potential to create significant electoral consequences. Rather than "settling the question of Scotland's constitutional status, holding the referendum ensured the question of how Scotland should be governed influenced electoral choice in Scotland to a greater extent than ever before" (Curtice, 2015, p. 5). With Scottish question remaining a primary issue, "The SNP's opponents were competing amongst themselves on the SNP's preferred agenda" (Mitchell, 2015, 95).

Labour gave increased attention to center-periphery issues in the 2015 campaign but failed to adopt a position that could prove accommodative enough. With the continued relevance of Scottish autonomy, Labour engaged the issue extensively in its campaign. In Labour's manifesto, it pledged to institute the findings of the Smith Commission, but this was the same promise made by the Conservatives (Labour Party, 2015). Rather than attack the SNP on the left-right issue dimension and shift the focus, many of its arguments attempted to counter SNP support by focusing on center-periphery issues. A major Labour refrain was that supporting SNP would lead to a second independence referendum, even though the SNP specifically omitted any possibility of another referendum in its manifesto. In addition, Labour devoted more attention to center-periphery issues in its manifesto than any election since 1997.

The Conservatives were in similar position as Labour as it also addressed the center-periphery issue dimension extensively, while also trying to advance a conciliatory

position on Scottish autonomy. The Conservatives devoted more attention to center-periphery issues in its 2015 manifesto relative to 2010. During the campaign, "the Conservatives' preoccupation with the SNP, targeted at an English audience, helped give the party a starring role in Scottish election coverage that it would not otherwise have enjoyed" (Johns & Mitchell, 2016, p. 16). The Conservatives continually discussed resolving the issue of Scottish autonomy and focusing on English autonomy, which only served to give more attention to center-periphery issues.

The salience of the center-periphery dimension remained high as the SNP received an invitation to participate in the only 2015 national leadership debate prior to the election. This contrasted significantly with 2010, where only Labour, the Conservatives, and the Liberal-Democrats participated. The presence of Nicola Sturgeon, the SNP party leader, and her capacity to press the other parties, particularly Labour and the Conservatives, on the question of Scottish autonomy enhanced the stature of the SNP post-referendum and ensured Scottish issues remained a priority. In addition to the debates, newspaper coverage was more favorable and gave then SNP more attention as evidenced by the support given to it on election day by the two largest newspapers in Scotland, *The Sun* and *The Daily Record* (Mitchell, 2015). The SNP benefited and capitalized from the fact that it received more media attention than at any previous election (Mitchell, 2015).

Labour had a credibility issue regarding its position on the center-periphery issue dimension. A particular problem for the party was that it worked extensively with the Conservatives in the Better Together campaign against Scottish independence. Labour had long claimed to represent the interests of Scotland in opposition to Tory indifference

and hostility, however, working with the Conservatives "contaminated Labour" (Johns & Mitchell, 2016, p. 213). Labour promised to fulfill "The Vow," and "go further, with a Home Rule Bill to give extra powers to Scotland over tax, welfare and jobs" (Labour Party, 2015, p. 86). Labour's alliance with the Conservatives, however, diminished the integrity of the commitment. Labour now had to compete with the SNP over who was the party of Scotland. Adding to this credibility gap was the selection of Jim Murphy, prior to the election, as the leader of the Scottish Labour Party, the Scottish branch of the party (Johns & Mitchell, 2016). Murphy was a Scottish MP at Westminster in the Labour Shadow Cabinet, who had been a close ally to Tony Blair. Both of these facts diminished his standing on the Scotland issue as he was not seated in the Scottish Parliament and Tony Blair had largely become a *persona non grata* in Scottish politics as his concerns over further devolution were against mainstream Scottish public opinion. Murphy made attempts to overcome these issues in different ways, such as including a member of Yes Scotland on his campaign but was ultimately unsuccessful. Labour could not effectively advance a conciliatory position on the center-periphery issue dimension.

The Conservatives also did not adopt an advantageous center-periphery position. The party offered similar promises as Labour regarding devolution stating, "[Scotland] will have significant new welfare powers to complement existing devolved powers in health and social care [and] we will provide the Scottish Parliament with one of the most extensive packages of tax and spending powers of any devolved legislature in the world" (Conservative Party, 2015, p. 70). While the party seemingly adopted an accommodating position, it alluded to the issue of Scottish autonomy as settled, stating, "Scotland's place in the United Kingdom is now settled" (Conservative Party, 2015, p. 69). Even with its

proposals to implement devolution measures, these types of statements from the Conservatives echoed its more traditional anti-Scottish autonomy position.

Labour and the Conservatives hurt themselves with the positions they took in their campaign attacks against the SNP. They criticized the SNP for supporting independence during the referendum, even though the party had removed it from its election platform and switched to focusing on devolution. These types of attacks on the SNP actually backfired with individuals who identified more as Scottish than British as it influenced these voters to support the SNP (Morisi, 2018). By the 2015 election, about 50% of voters felt more Scottish than British, thus, the attacks helped sway a large contingency toward the SNP (Morisi, 2018). In contrast, where Labour and Tory attack ads increased their support was with Scots who felt more British than Scottish, but only about one-fifth of the population identified this way (Morisi, 2018). Labour and the Conservatives' attack ads not only worked counter to their objectives based on the position they took, but it also contributed to increasing the salience of the center-periphery dimension which advantaged the SNP.

The SNP ran an effective campaign in spite of the failed independence referendum. This differed dramatically from the significant failure the party suffered in the 1979 election immediately after the failure of the first devolution referendum. The party's campaign ultimately proved Scottish Labour leader Jim Murphy wrong who in January 2015 proclaimed the SNP were "sluggish, lethargic and off-the-pace" (Prince, 2015). The party ran an energetic campaign and managed to elicit broad support with a changed message on the center-periphery dimension to some extent. Prior to the independence referendum, every campaign had a commitment to hold a referendum on

independence. During the 2015 campaign, the party made sure to emphasize that it had no intention of pushing for a second independence referendum, saying, "The SNP will always support independence- but that is not what this election is about. It is about making Scotland stronger" (SNP, 2015, p. 10). The SNP wanted to distinguish itself as the true representatives of Scottish interests.

A key factor in the SNP's success was that it not only retained most of its supporters from the independence referendum, but also secured support from "No" voters. The party had an effective message on the center-periphery dimension with a total focus on securing more devolution. The SNP demonstrated its ability to successfully hold an independence referendum for its base of supporters, but it eschewed future prospects of independence in its campaign to appeal to other voters as the party of Scotland. The British Election Study found that "no less than 90 per cent of those who voted Yes in September … turned out again in May [and] backed the SNP" (Curtice, 2015, p. 5). The party performed well in attracting and turning out a wide range of supporters. In several of the previous Westminster elections, the party had difficulty winning the group that should have been its natural base, those who favored independence; usually only having two-thirds of pro-independence Scots vote SNP (Johns & Mitchell, 2016, p. 216). In 2015, the SNP won the support of nine out of ten independence supporters (Johns & Mitchell, 2016). The party also reached individuals outside this more natural base, with its reoriented focus on devolution as the primary goal.

Assessing the Results

The SNP's electoral breakthrough was a monumental result. The party went from losing a referendum that represented its *raison d'etre* to winning the 50% of the Scottish vote and 56 of 59 Scottish seats in Westminster. The success came from the enhanced salience of the center-periphery dimension and the SNP's effective campaign. These external and internal supply-side factors shaped the election after the referendum. The referendum did not resolve the issue of Scottish autonomy as Labour and the Conservatives hoped, and they continued to address the issue rather than ignoring it. With an election in Scotland focused on the center-periphery issue dimension, the SNP flourished. In this environment, the SNP managed to run a campaign that acknowledged the referendum results, shifted its attention to more devolution, and emphasize that it was the true party of Scotland. With Labour and the Conservatives agreeing to "The Vow" as a final effort to swing the referendum, the SNP could cast itself as the only party with the credibility to ensure further devolution occurred. As a result, the SNP had the largest breakthrough in its party's history and the biggest victory by a party in Scotland in over seventy years.

CONCLUSION

The SNP achieved electoral breakthroughs in February 1974, October 1974, and 2015. Similar dynamics explain the results across the three elections, with mainstream party salience on the center-periphery dimension, mainstream party positioning on the center-periphery dimension, and SNP positioning on the center-periphery dimension converging in a beneficial manner for the SNP. The salience of the center-periphery issue dimension relative to the left-right issue dimension, an important external supply-

side dynamic, was very high in all three elections as both Labour and the Conservatives devoted considerable attention to the issue. In all three elections the major parties devoted more attention to the issue of Scottish autonomy than in other proximate elections.

In terms of the mainstream party positions on the center-periphery dimension, Labour and the Conservatives did not effectively accommodate on the issue. In 1974, Labour only moderated its anti-devolution position months before the October elections and the Conservatives lacked any credibility on the issue as it undertook no steps to create a Scottish Assembly while in office in the early 1970s. In 2015, Labour suffered a credibility gap to act as the party of Scotland based on its alliance with the Conservatives in the Better Together campaign and its pledge to enact the same proposals as the Conservatives. For the Conservatives, distrust in its position was high as the party had a long history of opposing more devolution, and its manifesto urged moving beyond Scottish Constitutional issues.

In these electoral environments, with the center-periphery dimension receiving considerable attention, the SNP's position on the center-periphery dimension was very important. In all three elections, the SNP adopted unique positions on the center-periphery dimension to shape the public's perception on Scottish autonomy. In 1974, its deployment of an independence message that combined a focus on self-government and an economic message focused on the feasibility of its existence outside the UK, the SNP managed to change the political debate. In this new political environment, it offered the most credible commitment to pursue Scottish policies. In 2015, the SNP effectively moved downplayed independence issue after the referendum kept Scotland in the UK and

it made its position securing as much devolution as possible, more than either mainstream party offered.

The SNP experienced electoral breakthrough in February 1974, October 1974, and 2015 because of the mainstream parties elevated the salience of the center-periphery issue dimension, the mainstream parties did not adopt accommodative enough positions on the center-periphery issue dimension, and the SNP positioned itself effectively on the center-periphery issue dimension.

CHAPTER V

ELECTORAL FAILURE

Electoral failure represents a major setback for a regionalist party. This outcome occurs when regionalist parties either fall below an absolute minimum threshold of electoral relevance or have a decline in vote shares that diminishes their previous electoral standing, even if they achieve a vote share above the base standard of relevance. Quantitatively, I defined these two forms of failure, with 5% of the vote representing the lowest total to remain relevant and a decline in a party's vote percentage by more than 3% relative to the previous election as a qualifier for a diminished electoral status. In either instance, the influence of a regionalist party decreases largely because mainstream parties may view the decline as a reason to dismiss a regionalist party's agenda. In order to understand the process by which particular factors produce electoral failure, I conduct an in-depth case study of a particular Scottish election.

This chapter examines the electoral failure of the SNP in the 1979 election. The SNP suffered a precipitous drop-off when the two external supply-side and one internal supply-side factors aligned in an unfavorable manner. Where mainstream party issue salience, mainstream party positions on the center-periphery dimension and the SNP's positions on the center-periphery all aligned to benefit the SNP in the two elections of 1974, the opposite occurred in 1979 as all three factors hurt the party. First, the salience of the center-periphery dimension diminished significantly relative to the left-right issue dimension, especially after a devolution referendum that would have created a Scottish Assembly did not pass. Second, both Labour and the Conservatives accommodated

enough on the issue of devolution to hinder the SNP. Finally, the SNP's convoluted position on the center-periphery dimension weakened its attractiveness as a third party.

THE 1979 ELECTION

The 1979 election was a failure for the SNP, as it dropped from 30.4% of the vote share in October 1974 to 17.4% in 1979 and lost nine of its eleven seats in Westminster. The three major factors that contributed to the SNP's decline were the diminished salience of the center-periphery dimension after the failed devolution referendum, the heightened salience of the left-right dimension relative to the center-periphery dimension, and a divided SNP campaign that lacked a coherent position on either the left-right or center-periphery issue dimension. This section begins with an overview of the Labour government from October 1974 to 1979. Subsequently, it details the process of passing devolution legislation from 1974 to 1978. Then, I examine the devolution referendum campaign and the results. Finally, I investigate the 1979 election and determine how the campaign and the events of the previous years produced an SNP retrenchment.

The Labour Government and Devolution

Labour won the October 1974 election with a three-seat majority at Westminster. The party was fortunate not to lose additional seats in Scotland as it had in the February election because this might have cost it a slim majority. The party's vote shares decreased slightly, but its representation remained the same. But even though Labour did not lose any additional seats to the SNP from the February election, it worried that inaction on devolution could prove costly in the subsequent election, as the Conservatives failed to enact any devolution measures, including creating a Scottish Assembly, and lost nine seats to the SNP across both the February and October elections. The Labour Party

leadership dedicated significant energy to the passage of devolution legislation, even in the face of tremendous intra-party conflict over the issue. Eventually a bill passed after two attempts, but it contained a caveat that Scotland must vote in a referendum for the creation of a devolved assembly. The SNP made the process of passing legislation somewhat of a challenge as it continually pushed for more concessions for greater self-government. While the SNP often eventually supported the government on these issues based on the idea that any additional devolution was beneficial, the tenuous relationship ultimately collapsed after the devolution referendum failed based on a technicality imposed by Labour backbenchers. The failure of the devolution referendum eventually led the SNP to join the Conservatives and bring down the government with Conservative support through a motion of no confidence.

Devolution Legislation

After the October election, the eleven SNP MPs set about pushing the Labour government to follow through on its campaign promise. This was the first opportunity when a group of SNP MPs had an extended period to press a vulnerable Labour government to enact self-government legislation. When the February election produced a minority government, the SNP had little opportunity to influence the legislative agenda, as most MPs expected another election was imminent. Once parliament returned to a more normal operating procedure, the SNP proved a vocal minority with eleven members working effectively in unison. The party constantly badgered the Labour government on the issue of Scottish self-government, remaining all-too-aware that any perceived flagging in interest of the devolution issue would result in Labour scuttling it.

The Labour government began the process of drawing up a Scotland and Wales Act in 1975 to outline its proposals, but, the backbenchers made the process very difficult as party still had significant divisions over the issue. Pressure from the Scottish public was great for Labour to not only make a constitutional change, but also make that change meaningful. The salience of the issue remained high and the polling showed an increasing support for devolution and independence as well as support for the SNP by the end of 1975 when internal Labour opposition intensified. From July to December 1975, support for devolution grew from 58% to 64% and support for independence grew from 20% to 22% in Scotland. In addition, during the same period, the SNP went from the third most popular party at 21% to the leading party in the polls with 38% support (Drucker & Drucker, 1979). In spite of this, many Labour MPs fought the possibility with dogmatic perseverance. Tam Dalyell, a Scottish MP and one of the most significant opponents of any form of devolution, thought devolution would prove the catalyst for eventual Scottish independence proclaiming:

> "If any colleague in the Labour Party imagines that through the creation of a 150 Assemblymen in Edinburgh, the SNP will 'wither away,' to borrow a phrase from Marx they are living in a fairyland. For the rest of our lives we will have to live with a well-organized Scottish National Party committed to a separate Scottish State" (Dalyell, 1976).

Dalyell believed that any moves towards devolution would strengthen the SNP. He did not believe that devolution would be "a product of any great ground-swell of public opinion, but of a concerted campaign by a small percentage of the populace who have a vested interest in seeing legislative bodies established in Cardiff and Edinburgh" (Dalyell, 1976). The SNP represented this movement.

Dalyell's concerns about a Scottish Parliament becoming a permanent stronghold of the SNP did not prevail and prevent Labour from moving forward with devolution, as the London leadership believed it was essential. Instead, the Labour Party pushed forward based on its more generally held belief that devolution was necessary "to fend off the separatists' attack on the Labour Government's integrity" as the government made a pledge to create an assembly prior to the October 1974 election (Parkhouse, 195, p. 1). Many in the Labour Party believed that a devolution bill would neutralize most of the SNP's positions, especially about its claims that Labour did not represent Scottish interests. By pushing for a Scottish Assembly, Labour could bolster its Scottish credibility and diminish the prospects of separatism in the future.

The internal divisions that the issue created for Labour, in addition to its two-seat majority by February 1976, made it difficult to pass legislation. The Labour Party introduced the first devolution bill, the Scotland and Wales Act in November 1976, and after a second reading on December 16, 1976, it went to committee. Here the bill floundered after twelve sittings lasting 98 hours and 25 minutes, three of which lasted all night ("Devolution," 1976). The bill proved exceedingly difficult as MPs introduced 350 amendments the first day of committee, with more added continuously from all of the parties involved. Labour for a long period seemed unwilling to introduce the necessary guillotine motion to end debate and remove it from committee, largely because the government feared a backbench revolt with its slim majority. The SNP feared this course of events, with one MP arguing before the introduction of the bill that without a guillotine it would be "dead as a dodo" ("Devolution," 1976). The Conservatives had little intention of helping the bill out of committee as well. Therefore, when the Labour

government finally introduced a guillotine motion, many backbench Labour MPs and all of the Conservative MPs voted against it effectively killing the bill. The final vote was a significant defeat for Labour at 312 to 283, with 22 of the nay votes coming from Labour (Parkhouse & Russell, 1977, p. 1). The vote carried additional ramifications as it led to numerous calls for a vote of no confidence against a government with a slim majority of seats.

The Conservatives began taking a more anti-devolution stand after the October 1974 election. Edward Heath finally lost the leadership, and Margaret Thatcher replaced him. Thatcher had significantly different views than Heath and reverted to a pro-unionist position. Thatcher had secretly recommended Conservative MPs vote against allowing the first devolution bill out of committee with a guillotine measure, as a means to kill the legislation. Conservative MPs, such as the Scotsman Ian Sproat, defended their actions to end debate by proclaiming, "If ever a Bill required microscopic scrutiny it is this one. It would not get it if the guillotine went through. The Government is trying to guillotine something that is against the wishes of the people" (Parkhouse & Russell, 1977, p. 1). Antipathy towards devolution did not subside, thus, Thatcher considered a proposal from one of her cabinet ministers to attach an amendment allowing the rest of the UK to vote in a referendum for a Scottish Assembly. In her response to the cabinet minister in a private correspondence, she declared:

> "I like your proposition about the Scotland and Wales Bills—and agree with the reasoning. Whether I can sell it to my team is another matter—but I will have a go. If we can't do it from the front-bench we can try from the back-benches and we might even attract the support of some Labour MPs" ("How Thatcher Tried to Thwart Devolution," 2008).

With the Conservatives and many Labour MPs working in unison against the Scotland and Wales Act, it failed to receive the necessary votes to leave committee and any prospect of passing it disappeared.

After the failure of the Scotland and Wales Act, Labour introduced a new Scottish devolution bill in November 1977. The party did so because of its weak position in government after losing a majority when it lost seats in several by-elections, which forced it to form a coalition with the pro-devolution Liberals in March 1977. The Liberals favored devolution and helped push the issue in government. Labour's close running in Scottish opinion polls for Westminster further exacerbated its concerns as it averaged around 31% support from March 1977 to November 1977, approximately the same as the SNP (Lynch, 2002, p. 154). Labour adopted a new strategy and decided to take up devolution for Scotland and Wales as independent bills. One of the main changes the party made was to make devolution contingent on a referendum in Scotland. This maneuver would potentially alleviate tension within the party over the issue and take some pressure off the government. Labour's anti-devolution wing managed to place qualifications on the referendum making it so a result with a simple majority would not create an assembly. In committee, Labour backbench MP George Cunningham introduced an amendment that would ultimately contribute to the failure of the 1979 referendum. In January 1978, Cunningham included a provision that would require 40% of the Scottish electorate to vote "Yes" in the referendum. In the parliamentary debate, Cunningham claimed, "If [the Scots] overwhelmingly want devolution, far more than 40 per cent. will presumably vote for it. I am not asking that the overwhelming majority, or even the majority, should vote for it, but only that 40 per cent. should be prepared to go

out and vote for it" (House of Commons, 1978). The amendment passed 168 to 142 against the government's wishes. The government sought to reverse the Cunningham amendment vote six days before the final reading with another vote, but again faced a crushing defeat with a final vote count of 298 to 243, of which 40 Labour MPs voted to keep the amendment against the government's intentions. The government expressed tremendous concern over the prospect that Scotland would vote "Yes," but not achieve the 40% threshold. Labour MP Michael Foot, who was the Labour MP responsible for devolution, feared it could provoke a crisis, and ultimately influence the subsequent election (Trotter, 1978, p. 1).

The SNP wanted to press Labour hard on the issue of self-government, but sometimes found itself in a quandary. The SNP wanted outright independence, but the party faced internal divisions over the process of achieving the goal. The lines broke down between the fundamentalists and the gradualists and it challenged the cohesiveness of its message in opposition to Labour post-October 1974. Fundamentalists argued that devolution was a diluted means of offering self-government that could diminish the drive for independence. Gradualists differed because they believed devolution would serve as a stepping-stone to independence, by providing a necessary transition for Scots to acclimate to the capabilities of an empowered Scotland, ultimately instilling a desire for total separation and control of their own affairs. Ultimately, the MPs decided work for a devolved Scottish Assembly, even though it would never satisfy all of their policy goals.

The SNP engaged extensively in the two efforts by Labour to pass devolution measures, to shape it in its interests. The party was never fully satisfied with the legislation as it offered nothing close to independence or significant self-government, but

it recognized a devolved assembly was a significant first step. SNP MP Hamish Watt summarized this SNP sentiment well in his description of the party's support for the second devolution bill saying, "The limited powers which the Government has grudgingly conceded in the Scotland Bill are far from adequate, but the Assembly will, at least, allow us to make a start" (Watt, 1977). The SNP tried to include every provision possible to ensure the creation of a meaningful assembly, and even pushed for "an independence question in the forthcoming referendum" (Wolfe, 1977). The party advocated for a three-question referendum that would ask, "Do you want: 1) no change in the government of Scotland 2) devolution as proposed in the Scotland Act of 1978 3) an independent Scottish Parliament within the Commonwealth and under the Crown with full control over all Scottish Affairs" (SNP, 1978). Many of the party's attempts to enhance the authority of the Scottish Assembly failed because the proposals were unacceptable to either Labour or the Conservatives, but the party persisted nonetheless. The SNP had significant concerns about the effectiveness of Labour to pass the devolution bills, largely because the backbench killed the first bill and the possibility it would happen with the second Scotland Act seemed high. In an attempt to save the first bill, the SNP made secret outreaches to the Conservatives to enlist its support. Hamish Watt, a former Tory, met with the Conservatives' Chief Whip, Bernard Weatherill, in November 1976, to potentially reach some form of deal that would secure Tory support, claiming, "There was room for agreement between the SNP and the Conservatives" ("Devolution: Weatherill Note, 1976). Weatherill acknowledged the SNP's willingness to compromise to ensure the bill's passages saying, "That the SNP did not think it fair that with a Scottish Assembly there should be the present representation in Westminster

Parliament and he would support us if we moved amendments to this effect" ("Devolution: Weatherill Note," 1976). Ultimately, the Conservatives rejected the outreaches and it voted against the bill on its second reading.

Labour eventually passed the second devolution bill, the Scotland Act, and it received royal assent in July 1978. The success of the bill depended on the Liberals and the SNP for support. The Act, however, did not take immediate effect as it depended on the outcome of the devolution referendum planned for March 1979.

The 1979 Devolution Referendum

The March 1979 referendum placed devolution on the ballot and was only the third referendum in UK history. The result produced significant controversy as the "Yes" vote to create a Scottish Assembly received 51.62% compared to "No" at 48.38%. The referendum failed, however, as turnout only equated to 64%, which meant the 51.62% only represented 32.9% of the Scottish electorate. The 32.9% of the electorate that voted "Yes," failed to reach the 40% threshold established in the Scotland Act by George Cunningham's amendment and meant the anti-assembly group of Labour MPs successfully prevented devolution. While the failure of the referendum was somewhat surprising, with opinion polls indicating the referendum would likely pass, the campaigns before the vote highlighted significant issues.

The referendum campaign created strange political partners and divisions within parties. When the election campaign began, seven different major groups campaigned for "Yes" without any formal coordination, while only three campaigned for "No" (Drucker & Drucker, 1978). With the extensive number of "Yes" campaigns, divisions emerged between the groups and even within them. The "No" campaign groups coordinated to

some extent, but also benefited considerably from the different "Yes" campaigns constantly sniping each other. The Scottish National Party struggled in determining the best course of action. The party desired real Scottish self-government in the form of independence, so Labour's proposals represented a fraction of its ideal. Finally, it chose to campaign for the assembly, even though many in the party recognized the measure as unsatisfactory. The SNP did not campaign for "Yes" with any other political parties, as it could not reach an agreement with Labour, even though the government supported "Yes." Labour refused to campaign with the SNP largely because the SNP argued for the assembly as a stepping-stone to independence—something Labour could not accept, with the Secretary for the Scottish Council of the Labour party declaring, "We will not soil our hands" (Drucker & Drucker, 1978). Prominent Labour politicians took part in the "No" campaign including Tam Dalyell, who coined the "West-Lothian Question," the issue raised that with a Scottish Assembly the Scots would have exclusive competencies to decide its own affairs on certain issues, while Scottish MPs continued to vote in Westminster on issues that exclusively effected the English. Even some Scottish Conservatives campaigned for "Yes," but did so without coordinating their efforts with Labour or the SNP. Most Conservatives, however, including Shadow Secretary of State for Scotland Teddy Taylor, vehemently opposed the assembly.

The "No" campaigns gained an advantage over the various "Yes" campaigns by launching their campaigns first, thus, "No" set the issue agenda to a large extent (Perman, 1980). The "No" campaigns issued their collective campaign positions before any of the individual "Yes" campaigns made their official policies known, and their message had far fewer divisions or complications as compared to the "Yes" campaigns. "No" had the

advantage of advocating for the known status quo, while "Yes" had to articulate the potential changes and how that would benefit the Scottish people. The "Yes" campaigns also had different reasons for supporting this position, for example, Labour thought it could end the SNP threat and provide some modest degree of Scottish control, whereas the SNP saw it as the first step in its push for independence. These conflicting messages made it difficult to discern what effect the creation of an assembly might have on Scotland.

The SNP's "Yes" campaign made the need to address a Scottish democratic deficit and the Cunningham Amendment its two major issues. In focusing on the democratic deficit, the SNP hoped to win support by detailing the minimal influence the Scots had on policy implemented by Westminster. The SNP tried to make the limited assembly more appealing in its leaflets arguing, "Although it won't have all the powers the SNP seeks for a Scottish Parliament it is still an important step in the right direction" (SNP, 1979a). In addition, the party tried to portray the Cunningham Amendment as a serious repudiation of democracy. SNP MP George Reid argued, "There might be a lot of angry and bitter Scots around on March 2" if the referendum passed but did not meet the Cunningham Amendment voting threshold (Trotter, 1979). The party concentrated less on economic issues because the proposed Assembly had little authority in this area. Scots seemed interested in other issues and found the potential parliament inadequate as recounted by one reporter who accompanied individuals campaigning for "Yes." He stated, "The main preoccupations of Scottish voters were prices and jobs [and] "Yes" canvassers that I watched found it difficult to give electors reasons for turning out to vote

for a Parliament which would not be able to deal with their pressing concerns" (Perman, 1980, p. 60).

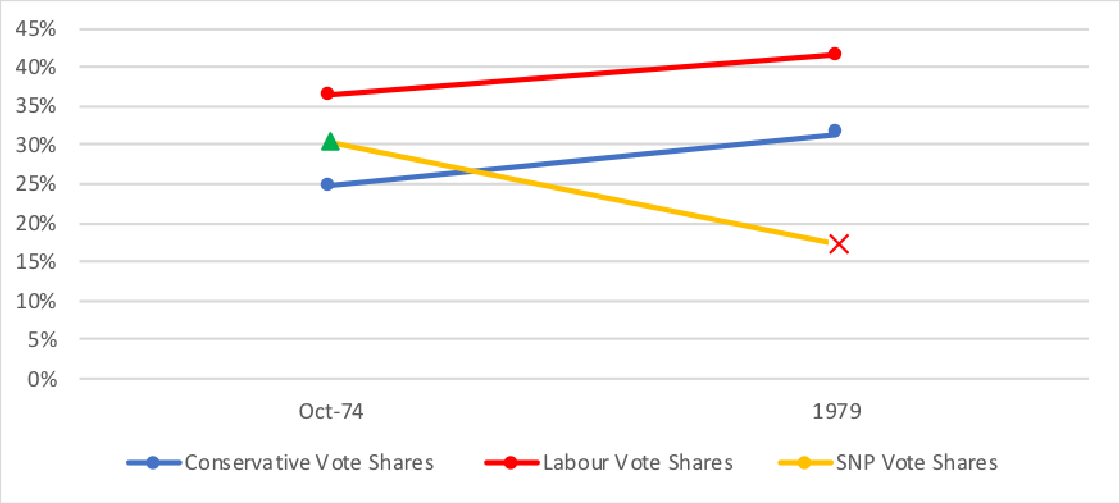
The unsuccessful devolution referendum hurt the SNP. A devolution measure failed to meet the criteria for success at the ballot box, and even though it favored independence, greater self-government was its primary issue. The party attempted to use the unsuccessful referendum as political leverage against the Labour government, especially during the election campaign that would begin in April. This would prove difficult to accomplish, however, as it had difficulties constructing a coherent message based on its own misgivings about the bill. These dynamics played out extensively in the 1979 election.

The 1979 Election

The SNP helped usher in its own major electoral slump. After the referendum failed when the "Yes" vote did not constitute 40% of the electorate even though 51.62% of the population supported it, the SNP considered it an affront to democracy. The party blamed Labour for the loss and demanded the passage of the Scotland Act regardless. When Labour failed to make a commitment to pass the act and discussed all-party talks on the issue, the SNP revolted. With all 11 SNP MPs siding with the Conservatives, it brought down the government with a vote of 311 to 310 because one Labour MP was in the hospital and unable to vote, which would have saved the government. James Callaghan believed that the SNP's actions amounted to political suicide proclaiming that "it is the first time in recorded history that turkeys have been known to vote for an early Christmas.

Once the election campaign was underway several factors hurt the SNP significantly. In terms of external supply-side factors, the diminished salience of the center-periphery dimension with both Labour and the Conservatives looking to move beyond the referendum and the increased salience of the left-right dimension with Margaret Thatcher as the Conservative leader seemed to influence the SNP's results, as I will discuss below. In addition, the SNP's campaign was convoluted on the center-periphery dimension as its ultimate goal of Scottish self-government was very unclear and it seemed to move back towards a more centrist position on the left-right dimension, although on many issues their positions were unclear.

Figure 5.1: The 1979 General Election Results



Note: The red Xs denote failure, the green triangles denote breakthrough, and the blue squares denote persistence

The Campaign and Devolution Issues

Labour faced a difficult election campaign that began by losing a no confidence vote forcing the dissolution of parliament, the first such successful vote in over 50 years. The election followed the infamous "Winter of Discontent" that saw ever worsening economic conditions. In addition, the outcome of the devolution referendum had potential to upset Labour supporters that favored devolution, as the 40% rule introduced

by backbenchers caused its failure. Thus, Labour sought to indicate its willingness to consider devolution in spite of the referendum result, but really turned its focus to the left-right issue dimension. Labour managed to effectively diminish the salience of the center-periphery dimension and hold an accommodating position on the issue. Labour had a degree of uncertainty regarding the potential effect the failed devolution referendum might have on the election. To counter a potential backlash and heighten tension over the issue by reverting to an anti-assembly position, the party did not abandon the prospect of establishing an elected assembly. As the party's manifesto proclaimed, "We reaffirm our commitment to devolution for Scotland. We are therefore ready to discuss constructively with all concerned any changes which could make the scheme in the present Act more widely acceptable, so that we can establish a Scottish Assembly" (Labour Party, 1979). In addition to taking a conciliatory approach, the party also made Thatcher's conservative agenda the focus of its campaign in Scotland, taking away attention from the center-periphery dimension that benefited the SNP.

The Conservatives adopted an ambiguous position on the center-periphery dimension, avoiding an overtly antagonistic position on a future Scottish Assembly. The party removed its 1974 promise to establish a Scottish Convention from its manifesto, but, in a conciliatory move, stated, "We are committed to discussions about the future government in Scotland" (Conservative Party, 1979). Throughout the 1970s, the Conservatives walked a delicate line attempting to pull away Labour supporters who might favor devolution or poach undecided voters that could favor the SNP. The Conservatives, when in power, took little action to implement any devolution measures from 1970-1974. After Labour formed a government in October 1974, the Conservatives

protested most of the devolution proposals, voting in overwhelming majorities against the Scotland and Wales Act of 1976 and against the Scotland Act of 1978. While expressing dissent over Labour's legislation, the Conservatives maintained an outward support for some form of devolution. The party couched its opposition to the legislation in terms that made the two Acts seem against Scottish interests believing the "would not remedy the genuine problems of Scotland and would only sow the seeds of discord and friction leading to the breakup of the United Kingdom" (Seawright, 2008, p. 45). Thatcher also managed to connect her antipathy for the size of government and bureaucracy with an argument against the creation of a Scottish Assembly declaring, "We will never be party to a scheme which lumbers the Scots with fresh and costly layers of bureaucracy" (Thatcher, 1979). The SNP would decry her rejection of an assembly on a bureaucratic basis stating, "The truth is the only level of government which the Tories oppose is the one which is most vitally important to the Scottish people. The Tories are the greatest bureaucratic empire builders of all time. They specialize in creating additional tiers of government. The last Conservative Government created three additional tiers of government in less than four years of office" (Wilson, 1979). The Tories opted for an ambiguous position on devolution, while seeking to diminish the focus on center-periphery issues. Instead, the Conservatives turned its attention primarily to competing with Labour on the left-right issue dimension, particularly based on criticisms regarding the "Winter of Discontent."

The SNP's campaign lacked a coherent message on the center-periphery issue dimension and the future of Scottish self-government. The party struggled to "project a strong national profile during the campaign" largely because of its "inability of the party

to arrive at a common theme" (SNP, 1979b). The lack of cohesion led different SNP candidates to adopt different positions. The failed referendum played a major role in this disarray. In the lead-up to the referendum, the party debated whether it should support a devolved parliament with few autonomous capabilities, however, it ultimately supported Labour's proposal. Once the referendum failed and the election campaign began, the party split into two camps. One SNP group used the slogan "We wuz robbed" and supported implementing the Scotland Act of 1978 (Drucker & Drucker, 1979). The other group argued the "assembly issue was 'dead'" and favored abandoning the calls to implement an Assembly with almost no authority in favor of focusing on independence (SNP, 1979b). This division led to an incoherent message across Scotland when the party called for self-government, as both groups called for it, but the meaning was different depending on which SNP members were speaking. In an election that began to focus more on "British issues," an unorganized SNP struggled to win voters (SNP, 1979b).

The SNP also suffered based on the varied messages regarding the ways Scottish self-government would benefit Scotland economically. Party Vice-Chairman Gordon Wilson recognized this prior to both the referendum and the election campaign, stating, "The Scottish National Party must make a major change in direction in the coming months. In the last two years, we have become bogged down in constitutional abstractions instead of campaigning for social and economic justice for the Scottish Nation. In order to win we have to show in the face of UK failure that self-government can mobilise Scotland's human and physical resources to improve our social and living standards" (Wilson, 1978). Even when the party tried to address the connection between self-government and improvements to the Scottish economy, the message was incoherent.

The prospect of reusing the oil campaign was not uniform and created tensions in the SNP's executive committee. Two MPs, Margo MacDonald and Gordon Wilson, one of the originators of the campaign, exemplified this disagreement. Margo MacDonald argued, "I disagree strongly with Gordon's point that the [oil campaign] has made no impact on the public," since 1974 (MacDonald, 1979). Divisions emerged in other areas where the party tried to discuss the importance of Scottish self-government, including the creation of a Scottish Development Agency, a devolved organization that would focus on Scottish economic development. The concern was whether the SNP should focus its energy on another form of devolution or push the independence message as the truest path to economic prosperity. All of these rifts in its campaign, especially after the failed devolution referendum, greatly diminished the party's appeal.

The Campaign and Left-Right Issues

The SNP struggled to mount an effective campaign on left-right issues, especially in the face of intensified polarization between Labour and the Conservatives and the increased salience of the left-right issue dimension. The SNP readopted a more centrist and vague left-right position during the campaign, while the Tories moved farther right and Labour moved farther left. The failure to have a distinct position in a period of greater economic turbulence, while Labour and the Conservatives offered clear solutions, hurt the SNP. In addition, Labour and the Conservatives focused more on the left-right issues rather than extensively engage the SNP in debates over devolution.

Labour pushed a leftist agenda advocating for the "values of cooperation, social justice, and fairness" (Labour Party, 1979). The party tried to emphasize the growing differences between the Conservatives' positions and its positions. A major aim was to

make the case for the necessity of the state as an important player in the economy. Labour asserted this need in a range of areas from inflation management to ensuring full employment. The party clearly campaigned in a manner to highlight the importance of its positions in relation to the rightward push of the Tories that reflected the changes that began with the Selsdon Manifesto. In Labour's manifesto, it argued, "Too much is at stake to let the Conservatives frustrate the hopes of the coming decade by turning back the clock to the policies that they tried in the early seventies and that failed so badly before" (Labour Party, 1979).

Margaret Thatcher helped move the Conservatives to the right in the 1979 election. Thatcher and her supporters wanted to adopt an even farther right economic agenda and chart a new neoliberal course for the country. A key focus of the party's campaign was combating the unions, as it argued, "Labour have given a minority of extremists the power to abuse individual liberties and to thwart Britain's chances of success. One result is that the trade union movement, which sprang from a deep and genuine fellow-feeling for the brotherhood of man, is today more distrusted and feared than ever before" (Conservative Party, 1979). The party believed labor unions were playing a significant role in limiting Britain's economic potential. The Conservative Party's desire to limit the power of trade unions was extremely concerning to Scots, as 1979 would be the peak year of trade union membership in Scotland with 13.2 million workers belonging to one (McCall, 2015).

The SNP's abandonment of its 1974 strategy of adopting a more social-democratic economic position hurt the party in the 1979 election. As the election shifted toward a focus on left-right issues with the rightward shift by the Conservatives, the SNP

struggled to advance a coherent message, much the same as it did on center-periphery issues. Disagreements emerged over whether the party should maintain the social-democratic position or frame the party as more centrist and in some ways beyond left and right, similar to its 1970 campaign. The lack of a uniform message was apparent in many respects as SNP members, like party president Robert McIntyre, made speeches claiming, "Our compass points of political reference have not been the old shibboleths of left and right which obscure and shroud rather than illuminate what is going on," while simultaneously the party manifesto called for policies like a universal minimum income (McIntyre, 1979).

The roots of the division over left-right issues that received significant attention during the campaign were not new but had particular consequences in 1979. Labour was its main competitor in many ways, so policies were needed that could satisfy the party membership and effectively court Labour voters. After making some gains with a leftward shift in the 1974 elections, the SNP subsequently diminished its left-wing credentials after entering office, thus, hurting itself in a highly polarized 1979 election. The SNP initially tried to carve away some of Labour's support with the Trade Unions Congress following the 1974 elections. To accomplish this task, the party created two new positions, a Convener of Industrial Campaigns and an Industrial Officer. These two positions would facilitate a permanent mission of reaching out to organized labor. These moves to court labor would be overshadowed by its failure to back some leftist Labour legislation. The party took a major hit that it was unable to recover from before the 1979 election with its controversial decision to vote against the Aircraft and Shipbuilding Industries Bill of 1976 that nationalized these two industries. The SNP refused to vote

for the bill because it would not include a Scottish division of the new national organization that would oversee the production. The SNP wore the vote as an albatross with a Scottish shipbuilding and engineering union declaring that the SNP was "in no way a party of the working class in Scotland" ("SNP Stand on Bill Attacked," 1976). Not only did the party vote against the bill, but SNP whip Hamish Watt publicly ripped up telegrams that various union officials sent imploring the SNP to vote for it (Mitchell, 1996, p. 209). The party proved unreliable on left-right issues for prospective SNP voters who favored Labour.

Assessing the Results

The 1979 election was a major failure for the SNP. The downturn of the SNP resulted from three major factors: the failed referendum outcome allowed Labour and the Conservatives to give the center-periphery dimension less attention, the Tories' shift right heightened polarization on left-right issues and increased its salience, and the SNP ran an ineffective incoherent campaign on both the center-periphery and left-right dimension. The referendum resulted in a strange outcome with 51.6% of voters supporting it, but the percentage of "Yes" voters was not high enough to meet the threshold of the Cunningham amendment. This led the Labour and the Conservatives to largely ignore it as a policy issue in the campaign. At the same time the two major parties diminished the issue, the SNP had significant disagreements about how to address the failure and what future Scottish autonomy policy should be. The "Winter of Discontent" highlighted many of the economic problems across the UK and in Scotland, and in response, the Conservatives, under Thatcher's leadership, shifted even further right. The large differences between Labour and the Conservatives over left-right issues and the increased

attention to these issues diminished its focus and the media's attention on Scottish issues, hurting the SNP. Finally, just as the SNP had a desultory campaign on center-periphery issues, it was similarly disorganized on left-right issues. Without a focused campaign and a unified party leadership, it could not increase its support in the response to little attention by Labour and the Conservatives to devolution and the increased polarization and attention given to left right issued.

CONCLUSION

The 1979 was a significant failure for the SNP after its successes earlier in the decade. The party faced an electoral environment that did not favor its primary issue dimension and it was ineffective at running a coherent campaign on the future of Scottish autonomy. The two main external supply-side dynamics that hurt the SNP were Labour and the Conservatives increasing the salience of the left-right issue dimension, while diminishing its attention to the center-periphery dimension, and both parties adopting accommodative enough positions to deflect significant criticism regarding a lack of concern for Scottish autonomy. In addition, an important internal supply-side factor that hurt the SNP was its inability to adopt a coherent message on the center-periphery dimension, with some members proclaiming further devolution as the primary goal and others campaigning exclusively on platform focused on independence. With all three of these factors aligned unfavorably, the SNP failed in 1979.

CHAPTER VI

ELECTORAL PERSISTENCE

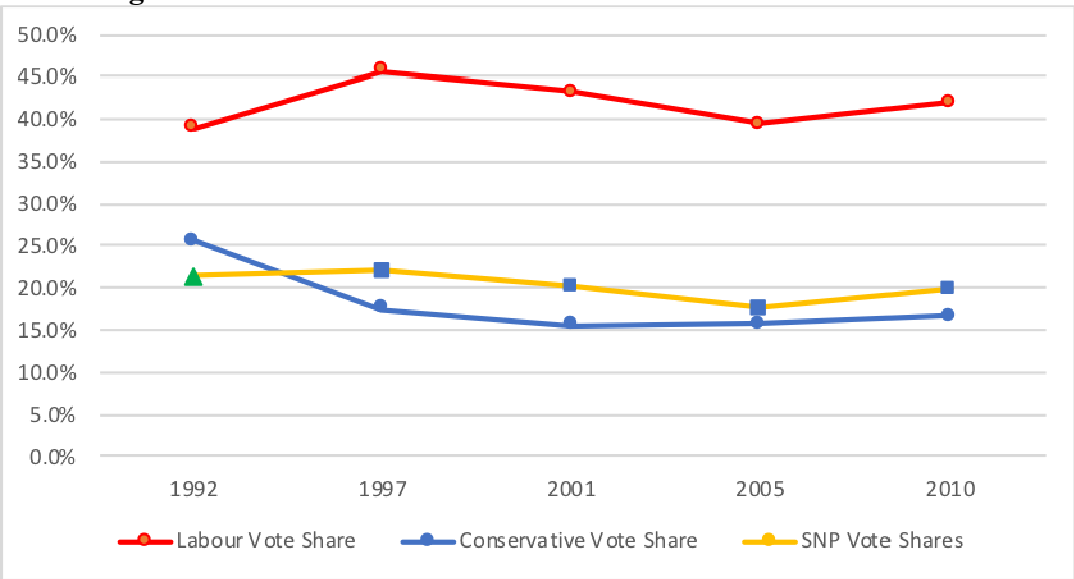
Electoral persistence is the electoral outcome that occurs when a political party replicates its previous level of electoral success without suffering a significant decline or having a large increase in support. For regionalist parties, this outcome is preferable to electoral failure, but electoral breakthrough is their primary aim in every election. The quantitative threshold for persistence banded the upper and lower bounds to define it as vote gains less than 5% and vote losses under 3% relative to the most recent election. A regionalist party can remain within this range when certain factors exist to maintain its previous support, but a confluence of all the necessary factors needed to produce a major growth or decline in vote shares does not materialize.

Electoral persistence occurs when at least one or two, but not three, of the following factors is advantageous: the degree of salience mainstream parties devote to the center-periphery issue dimension relative to the left-right issue dimension, the positions that mainstream parties take on the center-periphery issue dimension, and the position that a regionalist party takes on the center-periphery issue dimension. Mainstream party issue salience, an external supply-side factor, benefits regionalist parties when the focus on center-periphery issues increases relative to the left-right issue dimension. The other influential external supply-side factor is the positioning of the two largest mainstream parties, which increases regionalist party support when national parties are unwilling to consider increased regional autonomy. Finally, the internal supply-side factor that can

facilitate regionalist party success is an unambiguous pro-periphery position on the center-periphery issue dimension.

This chapter analyzes the persistence of the SNP across the 1997, 2001, 2005, and 2010 elections. I use these four successive elections to highlight the capacity of varying alignments of mainstream party issue salience, mainstream party positions, and regionalist party positions to produce electoral persistence. The results of these four elections were relatively identical in terms of vote shares and seat shares (see Figure 6.1),[17] as the SNP neither failed nor broke through. Labour, the Conservatives and the Liberal-Democrats also maintained similar levels of support. In the four elections, mainstream party issue salience, mainstream party positioning, and regionalist party positioning were never all beneficial for the SNP simultaneously, nor did they ever all align unfavorably. Thus, with one or two of these factors was advantageous for the SNP, it persisted.

Figure 6.1: The 1997-2010 General Election Results in Scotland



[17] Note that the number of seats allotted to Scotland changed between 2001 and 2005 so the total seats decreased from 72 to 59.

Note: The red Xs denote failure, the green triangles denote breakthrough, and the blue squares denote persistence

THE 1997 ELECTION

The SNP managed to persist in the 1997 election, receiving a similar vote share as the 1992 election. Labour and the Conservatives increased the salience given to the center-periphery dimension relative to the left-right issue dimension as debates over the Scottish Parliament intensified. Labour adopted an accommodating position on the center-periphery issue dimension, as it promised to hold a devolution referendum if elected. The Conservatives, however, adopted a staunchly anti-devolution position. The SNP ran on an ambiguous center-periphery position. The party refused to make its stance on devolution clear and it would not indicate whether it would campaign for or against the creation of Scottish Parliament in a referendum if Labour followed through on its campaign commitment.

The British Context of the Election

The 1997 election resulted in Labour's first electoral victory since October 1974 and a monumental loss for the Conservatives. Labour achieved the highest seat share of the post-war era earning 63% on 418 seats compared to 1992 when its seat share was 42% from 271 seats. The Conservatives' seat share was 25% with 171 seats compared to 1992 when its seat share was 52% with 336 seats. Labour's victory came after eighteen years of Conservative government. The party had won three elections under the leadership of Margaret Thatcher and one under John Major. Labour made drastic changes between the 1992 and 1997 election to alter its position on the left-right issue dimension with the intention of moving toward the center. This was most apparent in the party's removal of its commitment to socialism from its manifesto. In contrast, the Conservatives tried to emphasize it was the stable option and that Labour in 1997 just

represented diluted version of its policies. In addition, the debate over the constitutional status of Wales and Scotland was a prevalent debate across the UK as Labour promised devolution referendums for both.

The Scottish Context of the Election

In Scotland, Labour finished with 45.6% of the votes and 56 seats (77%), the SNP received 22.1% of the vote and 6 seats (8.3%), the Liberal-Democrats earned 13% of the vote and 10 seats (13.8%), and the Conservatives managed a 17.5% vote share but won 0 seats. The election eliminated the Conservatives' presence in Scotland as it failed to win a single constituency. The context of the election in Scotland was somewhat different than the rest of the UK and mattered significantly to the results. Not only were the dynamics of the left-right issue dimension at play, but the center-periphery issue dimension mattered significantly as well (Lynch, 2002). In each of the four previous elections that the Conservatives won nationally, it never finished with greater than 31% of the vote in Scotland, as Labour became the predominant party in both vote shares and seats. By 1997, the Tories' policy positions did not align with the Scottish public on the left-right or the center-periphery issue dimensions. In terms of left-right positioning, Scottish voters had shifted more towards the left and center with the Liberal-Democrats, Scottish National Party, and the Labour Party making up over 69% of the vote in the 1979, 1983, 1987, and 1992 elections (Lynch, 2002). The Tory neoliberal agenda struck hard at many industrial Scottish jobs and other industries in Scotland that depended disproportionately on government assistance. In terms of the center-periphery dimension, the Conservatives were the only party that did not have a policy position that would have increased Scottish autonomy, as Labour favored devolution, the Liberal-Democrats

preferred federalism, and the SNP wanted independence. With Labour leading nationally in opinion polls and its campaign promise to hold a devolution referendum, the future of Scotland mattered in election (Brown, 1997).

Mainstream Party Issue Salience

Labour and the Conservatives dramatically increased the salience of the center-periphery issue dimension relative to the left-right issue dimension. Labour, with its proposed devolution referendum, was constantly engaging with the issue. The party pushed its position in Scotland as a conciliatory policy, but also had to engage with the topic in England as concerns over devolution's impact on the future of the union existed. Tony Blair emphasized that the Scottish Parliament "isn't federalism, it isn't breaking up the United Kingdom, the Sovereignty remains with Westminster" ("Blair in New Row over Devolution, 1997). At the same time the party stressed, "Subsidiarity is a sound … principle in Britain" (Labour Party, 1997).

The Conservatives sought to make center-periphery issues a focal point as it had a distinctly different position than Labour and the SNP. The Conservatives did not want devolution and emphasized its views. By the middle of the campaign, devolution had taken on tremendous significance as Prime Minister John Major's trip to Scotland was seen as "an offensive on the two key issues of the campaign for the Tories, devolution and Europe" ("Conservative Battlebus Spearheads Scottish Offensive on Devolution and Europe," 1997). As the campaign neared conclusion, John Major returned again to Scotland and "attempted to make devolution a defining issue in the final days" ("Storm Clouds Gather," 1997).

Mainstream Party Center-Periphery Positions

Labour and the Conservatives held very different positions on the center-periphery dimension in the 1997 election. The Conservatives staunchly opposed any prospect of devolution. In the party's manifesto, its official position stated, "The development of new assemblies in Scotland and Wales would create strains which could well pull apart the Union … [and] would create a new layer of government which would be hungry for power" (Conservative Party, 1997). In harsher terms, Conservative Party Prime Minister John Major called devolution "the most dangerous proposition ever put before the British people" (MacWhirter, 2014, p. 231). The Conservatives did not favor devolution and did not seek to eschew its position. He built upon this statement claiming, "I cannot tell you how many years … maybe not one … maybe not two … maybe not five, but later inevitably this route will lead to a conflict between an extra parliament and the Westminster Parliament against independence for Scotland and the break-up of the United Kingdom, as we presently know it" ("Conservative Battlebus Spearheads Scottish Offensive on Devolution and Europe," 1997, p. 13). In addition to its fears about the eventual break-up of the UK, the party viewed its position as a potentially important opportunity to differentiate itself from the other parties. Conservative Scottish Secretary Michael Forsyth summarized this perspective saying, "Europe and devolution are the two great topics of this campaign which divide us from all of our opponents and where we have the vast majority of the electorate support" ("Conservative Battlebus Spearheads Scottish Offensive on Devolution and Europe," 1997, p. 13).

Labour adopted an accommodating position on Scottish devolution, as Tony Blair committed the party to a devolution referendum if it won. Labour had long been

involved in bringing about Scottish devolution. The party placed itself at the heart of the process to determine Scotland's future by participating extensively in the Scottish Constitution Convention established in 1989 that outlined the structure of a prospective devolved Scottish Parliament. In addition, John Smith, a Scot and Labour's leader from 1992 to 1994 promoted the prospects of devolution extensively. Tony Blair, Smith's successor, in many ways felt constrained to carry-out Smith's legacy on the issue even though by the 1997 election he changed Labour's official position to a promise to hold a devolution referendum rather than immediately legislate on the issue (Ross & Fontana, 2018). This promise, however, was enough to signal Labour's commitment to the process (Lynch, 2002). The party's campaign sought to highlight a range of ways devolution would benefit Scotland. For example, Tony Blair declared, "Devolution will be good for Scottish business" ("PM Says Life Firms' Home Rule Stance 'Conditional,'" 1997, p. 7).

The SNP's Center-Periphery Position

The SNP ran an ambiguous campaign in terms of its center-periphery position. The party made Scottish independence the focus of its messaging. The SNP pushed its message of independence to provide a stark differentiation with Labour and its devolution policy. As Labour appeared likely to win the election, the SNP wanted to secure a large contingent of MPs to push for independence as its policy was that if it won half the Scottish Westminster seats it would initiate negotiations to hold independence referendum (Lynch, 2002). The SNP made its position exclusively about independence and refused, before the election, to take a position on whether it would support devolution or a Yes campaign for a Scottish Parliament in a devolution referendum should Labour

win the election and carry-out its campaign promise. The party manifesto did not contain a single reference to devolution (SNP, 1997). The SNP purportedly considered reviewing its opacity on the issue but opted to remain non-committal. The party attempted to counter its ambiguity by contrasting the power Scotland would have if independent versus a devolved parliament and questioning Labour's commitment to devolution. SNP chief executive summarized the SNP's view of Labour's proposal declaring, "Westminster will always keep the power" ("Westminster Would Overrule Scottish Parliament on Constitutional Affairs Says Wilson," 1997, p. 9). In relation to Labour's commitment, the SNP criticized Tony Blair for backing out of Neil Kinnock's promise that devolution was the "settled will" of the Scottish people and making devolution contingent on a referendum. The party attempted to remind voters that Labour delivered a failed referendum in 1979 and opted for the slogan, "Labour couldn't deliver a pizza let alone a parliament" (Lynch, 2002, p. 216).

Assessing the Results

The Scottish National Party persisted in the 2001 election because all of the necessary factors did not align to generate a breakthrough. The party faced an advantageous electoral environment but failed to deliver an effective message to cultivate the support needed for a large growth in its vote shares. During the election, the Conservatives and Labour both devoted considerable attention to the issue of Scottish autonomy. Thus, both parties were heavily emphasizing an issue dimension that they did not have the most significant degree of issue ownership over. In Scotland, 49.8% of the population listed the Scottish Parliament as either extremely important or important in their voting decision in 1997 (British Election Study, 1997). With the focus of both

mainstream parties and the public on the issue, devolution was an important factor in the election.

The positions of Labour and the Conservatives were somewhat favorable as well. While Labour promised to hold a referendum on devolution, the Conservatives maintained its opposition to devolution. In Scotland, 67% of the population believed that the Conservatives did not favor any form of Constitutional change. This position proved costly based on "the fact that only parties committed to changing Scotland's constitutional position won seats was widely interpreted as a mandate for change" (Denver, 1997, p. 32). In an election where 76.6% of the population favored a new form of Scottish government, 50.9% preferring a devolved parliament and 25.7% wanting independence, the Conservative's position was untenable. Labour, however, with its promise to hold a devolution referendum could offer a viable election offer to a more left-leaning Scottish public, who also wanted constitutional change.

The SNP hurt itself with its ambiguous position on devolution. Instead of promoting the option along with independence, the party limited its capacity to reach a broader portion of the electorate and diminished its credibility on its primary issue dimension. The SNP's unwillingness to define its beliefs was not met with widespread support as polling showed about 80% of the Scottish electorate wanted to know its position (Lynch, 2002, p. 215). Not only was the party leadership's vagueness not in in line with the Scottish electorate, but it did not reflect its own party's preferences as 77% of SNP voters wanted the party to be part of the devolution Yes campaign and 63% wanted the party to commit prior to the election (Lynch, 2002, p. 215). With an election

heavily focused on center-periphery issues and a devolved parliament likely to finally become a reality, the SNP seemed to hinder its electoral prospects with vagueness.

THE 2001 ELECTION

The SNP managed to persist in the 2001 UK election. The external conditions for the SNP were not ideal as Labour and the Conservatives focused less on center-periphery issues relative to the left-right issues compared to 1997 and Labour and the Conservatives adopted relatively conciliatory policies on Scottish autonomy. The SNP, however, adopted a position on the center-periphery issue dimension that pushed for independence while also advocating for more devolution.

The British Context of the Election

Labour won another landslide victory in the 2001 election with 413 seats. Labour maintained a healthy lead in the polls after the 1997 election and the 2001 reflected its high levels of continued support. Nationally, the Conservatives attempted to emphasize many issues that failed to elicit public support as it "banged on about the Euro, asylum seekers, tax cuts, and crime, in a dialogue of the deaf, while the public remained more concerned about schools and hospitals" (Norris, 2001, p. 573). Europe became a major focus for the Tories under the leadership of William Hague, an ardent Eurosceptic, and the party attempted to portray Blair as leading Britain toward joining the Euro. Margaret Thatcher, the former Tory Prime Minister, gave one speech during the campaign and used it to focus on the EU and the Euro declaring, "The greatest issue in this election, indeed the greatest issue before our country, is whether Britain is to remain a free, independent, nation state. Or whether we are to be dissolved in a federal Europe. … We must keep the pound" (Thatcher, 2001). Labour, in turn, emphasized its successful

management of the economy and received praise for its "highly impressive management of the economy during [its] first four years" ("In Safe Hands: The Economy is Now Labour's Strong Card," 2001).

The Scottish Context of the Election

The 2001 election results in Scotland were almost an exact replica of the results from 1997. Labour retained all of its 56 seats, the Liberal-Democrats kept its 10, and the SNP lost one of its six to a Tory MP giving the Conservatives only one seat. The SNP, however, remained in second place based on vote shares. The election occurred two years after the first Scottish Parliament election. With the creation of the Scottish Parliament, a new outlet for Scottish political concerns emerged. Major new changes to the Scottish Parliament were not proposed by either Labour or the Conservatives based on the recency of its founding. Rather than constitutional issues dominating, health and education policy came to the forefront (Brown, 2001, p. 702). In addition, Scotland had the lowest turnout in a national election that had the lowest turnout rate since 1918, dropping in the region from 71.3% in 1997 to 58.2% in 2001.

Mainstream Party Issue Salience

Labour and the Conservatives placed a much lower degree of salience on the center-periphery dimension than in 1997 (Brown, 2001). After Labour created the Scottish Parliament in 1999, the Scottish question became much less pressing, especially with the newness of the Scottish Parliament, only in session for two years. In addition, the Conservatives, with its manifesto position stating, "We will work to ensure devolution is a success," were no longer extensively focused on the potential danger of a Scottish Parliament (Conservative Party, 2001). The Conservatives did not emphasize

the need repeal the Scotland Act 1998, which created the parliament, and this diminished the potential for significant conflict between Labour and the Conservatives over the Scotland issue. During the campaign, the Conservatives, under the leadership of William Hague, made constitutional issues regarding Britain's relationship with the European Union most important, rather than focusing on devolution. The Conservative's campaign in Scotland as a whole "focused almost exclusively on UK issues," which were mainly left-right fights or arguments over Europe (Linklater, 2001).

Labour, while it emphasized its deliverance on the devolution promise, did not focus on the issue extensively as it had hoped the creation of the Scottish Parliament would diminish the Scottish question in Westminster elections. Labour shifted its focus to emphasizing the left-right distinction between the Tories and itself (Seyd, 2001). The Labour Scottish Secretary and the Labour Scottish First Minister, the head of the Scottish Parliament, pushed the message that "Scotland has rejected the single-issue politics of the SNP that fails to recognise that it is poverty that scars Scotland, not the border with England. For the first time in a generation, this election is not about the constitution. It is a straight choice: Labour or Tory" ("Blair Tells Voters: We Will Invest in Scotland," 2001). Labour sought to emphasize that only through a vote for it, not the SNP, could the Conservatives be kept out of government.

Mainstream Party Center-Periphery Positions

The center-periphery positions of both Labour and the Conservatives were fairly conciliatory toward Scottish autonomy. Labour continued its support for devolution considering how to devolve certain additional measures, while the Conservatives took a much less adversarial position on the issue. Labour pointed to its 1997 promise to hold a

referendum on devolution and the creation of a Scottish Parliament by 1999 as evidence of its Scottish commitment (Brown, 2001). Labour (2001) discussed the completion of the devolution process and giving more powers in other policy areas, such as control over health policy. Labour also began discussing the possibility addressing more issues through the devolved parliament, such elderly care, fishing aid, and waiving tuition fees" ("The Real Vote is 2003, Stupid," 2001, p. 9).

The Conservatives attempted to adopt a more conciliatory position on Scottish issues and shed its anti-devolution image. The party had not won a single Scottish seat in the 1997 election. In the party's manifesto, the Conservatives did not adopt an openly combative position, and instead stated, "We will work to ensure devolution is a success" (Conservative Party, 2001). While this was not an outright endorsement of devolution, it was the party's most conciliatory position since the October 1974 election. William Hague, the Conservative Party leader in 2001, articulated the policy shit of the party often. He argued that "the reality of devolution is that the Scottish people can determine their own priorities" ("On the Spot: 10 Questions for Tory Chief William Hague," 2001, 8). The Conservatives thought that committing to working within the framework of devolution it could play down its previously ardent opposition.

The SNP's Center-Periphery Position

The SNP changed its position in the 2001 election on the center-periphery dimension. While still holding independence as its ultimate ambition, its agenda was to highlight its positions to show "the positive role that the party had and could play in the Scottish Parliament" (Brown, 2001, p. 706). In doing so, the party, while maintaining its commitment to its ultimate policy goal demonstrated a willingness to work within the

new devolved framework. One area in particular the party focused on was the proposition to grant Scotland full fiscal autonomy (Brown, 2001). As concerns about the future of UK's funding of Scotland grew, the SNP's policy of working within a devolved framework appeared a moderate solution ("Pressure is on For Fiscal Autonomy," 2001, p. 1). The SNP attempted to win support and distinguish itself from Labour regarding the future prospects of devolution by claiming that supporting the SNP was "a vote to win more powers for the Scottish parliament and a vote for MPs who will always put Scotland first" (SNP, 2001, p. 2). The SNP's position on the path to independence changed as well, making a Westminster vote for the party a less radical option. The party changed its policy on the process to achieve independence after the establishment of the Scottish Parliament. Whereas the from 1992-1999 the party's position was that if it won half the seats in Westminster from Scotland it would immediately begin negotiating independence, which would then be subject to a popular referendum, post-1999 the mechanism that would trigger an independence referendum would be a legislation from the Scottish Parliament (Lynch, 2002). This, in a sense, decoupled a vote for the SNP at Westminster with a vote for independence.

Assessing the Results

The conditions of the 2001 election were mixed, in that the external conditions for the SNP were not advantageous, but the SNP managed to organize a well-positioned campaign. Labour and the Conservatives both paid considerably less attention to the center-periphery dimension than in 1997 and the focus was primarily on left-right issues. Without Labour and the Conservatives concerning themselves extensively, it limited the

SNP's ability to extensively emphasize the issue (Brown, 2001; Lynch, 2002). With both mainstream parties focused on left-right issues, the SNP faced an electoral challenge.

Along with the diminished salience of the center-periphery positions, Labour and the Conservatives adopted accommodating positions on devolution. Labour actually carried through with its proposal to hold a devolution referendum and create a Scottish assembly doing "much to satisfy the demand for Scottish solutions to Scottish Problems" ("What's Your Vote Worth?," 2001, p. 1). In 2001, a poll found that 64% of people thought that Labour either very closely or fairly closely looked after Scottish interests compared to the SNP, who 70% of the public believed they either very closely or fairly closely looked after Scottish interests (Scottish Social Attitudes Survey, 2001). Labour's delivery of a parliament likely increased its standing in Scotland. The Conservatives even adopted a position aimed at making devolution work. The party's decision to embrace devolution to a greater extent benefited the Conservative image in Scotland. In 1997, only 10.5% of the Scottish public believed that the Conservatives would work in Scottish interests just about always or most of the time (British Election Study, 1997). By 2001, 25% of Scots believed the Conservatives would look after Scottish interests either very closely or fairly closely. Without a clear anti-devolution position from either party, the SNP could not leverage the issue.

The SNP ran a campaign that allowed it to target both independence supporters and those who favored an increase in the Scottish Parliament's authority. While Labour may have gained credibility for taking the major step of creating a Scottish Parliament, the SNP worked to point out the shortcomings and its willingness to address them. The SNP targeted the segment of the population who were dissatisfied with devolution

through its policy proposal of full fiscal autonomy. Opinion on the Scottish Parliament changed quickly after its establishment in 1999, for example, 70% of the population believed it would give Scotland a stronger voice in the UK before its creation, by 2001 only 52% believed it actually gave Scotland a stronger voice (Scottish Social Attitudes Survey, 2001). In addition, when asked whether they favored more authority for the Scottish Parliament, 56% agreed or strongly agreed in 1999 compared to 68% by 2001. The SNP worked effectively to mine the discontent, embracing increased devolution as part of its platform.

THE 2005 ELECTION

The 2005 election was the third successive contest that the SNP persisted. The party faced an electoral environment in which the Conservatives and Labour did not emphasize center-periphery issues extensively and sought to make the election a competition primarily about left-right issues. Both national parties also avoided offering extensive proposals for future devolution in Scotland, preferring to make their electoral positions about working to make the Scottish Parliament run better and less about accommodating with more autonomy. In this environment, the SNP shifted its center-periphery position away from working on policies to improve devolution and back towards its policies related to independence, including the addition of new elements to its independence message.

The British Context of the Election

The 2005 election occurred after successive Labour electoral victories. The nation-wide focus of the election was the economy and the war in Iraq. Tony Blair and Labour sought to cast its previous years in office as an economic success. The party

ended up moving slightly right as it attempted to coopt certain Conservative policies, such as health care and public services, by adopting similar positions as the Conservatives (Smith, 2005). The Conservatives ran a campaign that combined moves to the center on particular policies, but rightward shifts on others (Smith, 2005). As Labour mirrored certain positions, it moved to the right and focused its campaign on areas it knew Labour would not replicate its approach, law and order issue, such as immigration and crime. Overall, the nation-wide campaign could be summarized as follows "In 2005, whereas Labour sought to focus the campaign on its economic record and delivery of public service reform, its opponents pressed arguments regarding issues such as participation in the Iraq war, trust in the Prime Minister (notably over the war), and specific concerns regarding public services such as university fees and cleanliness in hospitals" (Johnston, Pattie, & Rossiter, 2005, p. 789).

The Scottish Context of the Election

The 2005 election was the first instance of a Westminster election where the number of Scottish seats were reduced from 72 to 59 following the agreed upon change after the establishment of the Scottish Parliament. The SNP vote share decreased in the 2005 election from 20.1% to 17.7%, but its seat share increased from 6.9% to 10.1% as the added a seat, growing from five to six. Labour's vote share declined from 43.3% to 39.5% and its seat share dropped from 77% to 69%. The Conservatives remained in almost the exact same position winning a single seat in 2001, retaining it in 2005, while increasing its vote share from 15.6% to 15.8%. The election's major issues were similar in many ways to UK-wide election issues such as health care, schools, and the Iraq War. Constitutional questions about the powers of the Scottish Parliament became somewhat

of an issue as well, as concerns regarding its efficacy grew six years on from its establishment (Scottish Social Attitudes Survey, 2005).

Mainstream Party Issue Salience

Labour and the Conservatives downplayed the center-periphery issue dimension in the 2005 election. Labour dedicated no space in its manifesto to discussing the future of Scottish devolution (SNP, 2005). The party prioritized left-right issues and attempted to make devolution a secondary issue by inducing fears related to potential Conservative welfare spending cuts, stating, "But don't be fooled into thinking that devolution will protect Scotland from Tory cuts. It won't" ("Follow the Leader to Make Up Your Mind," 2005, p. 20). Labour emphasized its commitment to working in Scotland's economic interest, while the Conservatives would not. The economy and debates over left-right issues were the focus, not devolution.

The Conservatives did not focus the center-periphery issue dimension extensively either. When discussing the center-periphery dimension the Conservatives focused on the unfairness of Scottish MPs voting on English affairs, stating, "Now that exclusively Scottish matters are decided by the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh, exclusively English matters should be decided in Westminster without the votes of MPs sitting for Scottish constituencies who are not accountable to English voters. We will act to ensure that English laws are decided by English votes" (Conservative Party, 2005, p. 22). The Conservatives, at a national level, focused very little on devolution or how to make it work better.

Mainstream Party Center-Periphery Positions

The positions of Labour and the Conservatives became somewhat less receptive to the prospects of future devolution in the 2005 election. In its nation-wide manifesto, the Conservatives maintained, "We remain strongly committed to making a success of devolution in Scotland, so that it delivers for the Scottish people" (Conservative Party, 2005, p. 21). The party did not, however, outline proposals for additional devolution or how it would make the new policy work effectively in Scotland.

Labour, similar to the Conservatives, omitted any discussion about future devolved powers to Scotland. The pointed to its facilitation of the devolution process but avoided specific future changes. Labour's manifesto stated, ""In our first term, we devolved power to Scotland and Wales and restored city-wide government to London. Britain is stronger as a result. In the next Parliament, we will decentralise power further" (Labour Party, 2005). The party's proposals to decentralize more power were focused on Wales and England, not Scotland.

The SNP's Center-Periphery Position

The SNP changed its position again for the 2005 election, putting independence back at the forefront of the campaign and distancing itself from additional devolution proposals. The SNP began its shift away from supporting devolution measures after Alex Salmond became SNP leader again in 2004 four years after stepping down. Salmond immediately criticized devolution upon his return to the position and set the tone for the future election campaign declaring, "Devolution is yesterday's news. It has not responded to today's reality, never mind the challenges of tomorrow" ("Salmond Ends Support for Devolution," 2004, p. 15). The party, under Salmond's leadership, returned to a clearer

position on independence as the primary policy objective, over devolution, in the 2005 campaign. The party, even brought back elements of its oil campaign from the 1970s, arguing for the creation of a Scottish Oil Fund, to contrast what an independent Scotland powers relative to that of a devolved assembly (SNP, 2005).

Assessing the Results

In the 2005 election, the center-periphery dimension received little attention from Labour and the Conservatives, both parties offered little regarding additional devolution measures for Scotland, and the SNP moved away from some of its devolution proposals and broadened its focus on independence. Labour and the Conservatives devoted minimal attention to the center-periphery issue dimension, preferring to focus on left-right issues. Both national parties preferred to have the Scottish branches of its parties address Scottish issues and do so within the framework of the Scottish Parliament. Both parties did not want to inflame any Scottish issues that could influence the debates on its preferred issue dimension. The party's focus on making 2005 election a British election seemed to have some effect as only 32% of Scots made their vote choice based on primarily Scottish issues, while 43% decided based on British issues (Scottish Social Attitudes Survey, 2005).

Labour and the Conservatives did not adopt any prominent positions in their 2005 policy platform to provide any significant increase in devolved authority to Scotland. Both parties' silence on the future of the Scottish Parliament came during a period of record low confidence in the powers of the Scottish Parliament, as 55% of the population believed it made no difference in giving Scotland a stronger voice in the UK (Scottish Social Attitudes Survey, 2005). In this environment, the less accommodating positions of

both Labour and the Conservatives may have helped drive support for independence to its highest levels (35%) since 1994 and open up a potential policy space for the SNP to fill.

The SNP moved away from a policy platform that incorporated extensive proposals on devolution. Instead, it expanded its policy goals for an independent Scotland. The party sought to leverage the gap between itself and the two national parties, especially with both parties moving away from the devolution issue. In addition, it worked to connect many of the most prominent issues of the campaign with independence.

THE 2010 ELECTION

The SNP persisted in 2010 for the fourth consecutive election. The salience of the center-periphery dimension increased in the 2010 election as both Labour and the Conservatives gave the issue dimension more attention even in the midst of the economic crisis. Labour and the Conservatives, in addition to raising the salience of the center-periphery dimension, both adopted relatively accommodating positions, promising to legislate additional future devolution. The SNP made both independence and securing further devolution aspects of its center-periphery position as it hoped to push for as much autonomy as possible along the way to outright independence.

The British Context of the Election

The 2010 election resulted in the first hung parliament since February 1974, as no party won an outright majority. The Conservatives finished ahead of Labour but had to negotiate a coalition with the Liberal-Democrats to form a government. The election occurred in the midst of great political and economic uncertainty as the UK was entering the depths of the financial crisis. New elements were introduced into the election, with

national debates between the prospective Prime Minister candidates, the first of such types of debate in the UK. In these debates Gordon Brown, the Labour Prime Minister, David Cameron, the Tory leader, and Nick Clegg, head of the Liberal-Democrats, focused extensively on British issues and eschewed regional questions. With concerns about the economy very high, this garnered the most attention in the national election (Ipsos MORI, 2010).

The Scottish Context of the Election

The 2010 Westminster election occurred during the greatest economic recession in the post-war era. Scotland was not immune as unemployment nearly doubled from 4.2% in 2008 before the crisis to 7.7% by the 2010 election (Ashcroft, 2015). In addition, Scottish GDP growth rate plunged from 3% in 2008 to -2% by 2010 (Scottish Government, 2010). While the economic situation deteriorated, the issue of Scottish autonomy took on greater importance based on the events in the Scottish Parliament since 2007. In 2007, the Scottish National Party won its first ever plurality in the Scottish Parliament. Labour had won a plurality in 1999 and 2003, the first two elections. With the SNP's victory, Labour began to worry about the SNP cutting into its vote share in the subsequent Westminster election and it sought to change the focus of the debate on Scottish autonomy. The SNP government after winning a plurality wanted to begin a "national conversation" about independence and holding a referendum, but Labour, the Conservatives, and the Liberal-Democrats refused to participate ("Parties Join Forces to Bulldoze SNP," 2007, p. 8). Labour with the Conservatives and the Liberal-Democrats, sought to reclaim the narrative about Scotland's future place in the UK so on December

6, 2007, the three parties passed a motion to establish the Calman Commission, a Scottish Parliament Commission, to review devolution. The proposal was created:

> "To review the provisions of the Scotland Act 1998 in the light of experience and to recommend any changes to the present constitutional arrangements that would enable the Scottish Parliament to serve the people of Scotland better, that would improve the financial accountability of the Scottish Parliament and that would continue to secure the position of Scotland within the United Kingdom" (The Commission on Scottish Devolution, 2010, p. 1).

The SNP opposed the motion "insisting that their National Conversation on independence is the best way to proceed" ("Analysis: Nationalists' Private Pleasure in Defeat," 2007). The SNP wanted the public's attention on independence, but indications that the SNP was secretly pleased about the motion existed as "any moves to give the Scottish Parliament more fiscal and general powers represent further steps along the road" to independence ("Analysis: Nationalists' Private Pleasure in Defeat," 2007).

Mainstream Party Issue Salience

The financial crisis and significant economic downturn led to a major focus on left-right issues between Labour and the Conservatives. Even with the increased concerns about the left-right dimension, Labour and the Conservatives increased their attention to center-periphery issues after the 2007 Scottish election that produced an SNP minority government in the Scottish Parliament. While Labour emphasized the left-right debates with the Conservatives portraying the party as returning to its policies of 1980s, Labour devoted the most space in its manifesto to Scottish autonomy since 1997 (Labour Party, 2010). Even as Labour emphasized that "Scotland bears deep and painful scars from the last time the Tories were in power," discussing the Calman Commission and devolution was unavoidable (Brown, 2010, p. 10).

The Conservatives emphasized the center-periphery dimension as well. David Cameron did not avoid the subject and actively wanted to portray his leadership as different than previous Tories. Cameron stressed his policy proposals for Scotland constituted a "respect agenda" with promises to implement the findings of the Calman Commission. Cameron hoped that a more positive image in Scotland could help the party as it only had one MP from the region. By cultivating a perception of mutual respect, the Conservatives thought its electoral fortunes could change ("Election Webchat: Shadow Secretary of State for Scotland," 2010).

Mainstream Party Center-Periphery Positions

Labour and the Conservatives adopted conciliatory positions on the prospects of future devolution. Labour promised in its manifesto to "implement the recommendations of the Calman Commission, including giving the Scottish Parliament additional tax-raising powers" (Labour Party, 2010, 9:6). Labour's willingness to refer specifically to the Calman Commission and discuss implementing its findings provided a clear indication of its willingness to move forward with greater devolution. This contrasted with the 2005 election, when it seemed unconcerned with enacting future measures.

The Conservatives promised to enact the Calman Commission proposals as well stating, "We support devolution and are committed to making it work for all countries … [and] we will take forward the proposals of the Calman Commission" (Conservative Party, 2010, p. 83). In addition, it specifically promised to consider increasing Holyrood's capacity tax declaring, "The Scottish Parliament should have more responsibility for raising the money it spends" (Conservative Party, 2010, p. 83). The Conservatives attempted to remake its image in Scotland claiming, "A Conservative

government would never do anything to undermine the union. It would respect and strengthen devolution... rebuild the broken relationships between our parliaments and government and make sure Scotland's voice was heard once again at the top table of government" ("Tory Win 'Could Split the Union,'" 2010, p. 1-2).

The SNP's Center-Periphery Position

The SNP adopted a position on the center-periphery dimension that allowed it to support both greater devolution and push for independence. While the SNP initially opposed the creation of the Calman Commission, it changed its position, stating, "The SNP supports the transfer of these additional responsibilities and in government has published legislation that could make this happen quickly" (SNP, 2010, p. 17). The SNP, however, tried to draw a contrast between the Calman Commission, which it described as "a small number of new responsibilities," and its position on independence that would highlight the discrepancies between more devolution and independent statehood (SNP, 2010, p. 17). The party made a referendum on Scotland's future a priority and its referendum would include three options: status quo, additional devolution, or independence. The SNP viewed this as an effective policy because it would put independence on the ballot and even if independence was not the preferred option it would likely increase Scottish autonomy as almost two-thirds of Scots wanted more devolution.

Assessing the Results

One of the three conditions related to producing persistence were favorable for the SNP in the 2010 election, and that was Labour and the Conservatives' more extensive focus on the center-periphery dimension. A breakthrough did not occur, as both parties,

adopted fairly conciliatory positions, which helped stymie the SNP. In addition, the SNP struggled to run an effective campaign with a targeted position on the center-periphery issue dimension.

Labour and the Conservatives increased the salience of the center-periphery dimension even in the midst of the financial crisis. The Calman Commission released its findings less than a year before the election, and with its recommendations that further powers be devolved, Labour and the Conservatives had to address the issue of Scottish autonomy, especially with 60% of Scots wanting more devolution, including taxation powers and welfare spending (Canwest News Service, 2010). Both parties' increased focus on the issue dimension opened up a greater space for the SNP preferred increased attention given to the center-periphery issue dimension. With greater attention on the center-periphery dimension, trust in the UK government to act in Scotland's interest hit a four year low as 74% of people believed that Westminster worked in Scotland's interests either only some of the time or almost never (Scottish Social Attitudes Survey, 2010). In addition, Labour and the Conservatives both polled lower than the SNP in terms of how closely people believed they looked after Scottish interests. The Scottish public believed that the SNP either very closely or fairly closely looked after Scottish interests 71% of the time contrasted with 34% for the Conservatives and 62% for Labour (Scottish Social Attitudes Survey, 2010). In an election with a heightened salience on the center-periphery dimension and the SNP having the highest credibility for protecting Scotland's interests, the other parties were at a disadvantage.

Labour and the Conservatives were able to limit the influence of the SNP in the 2010 election as both accepted the proposals issued by the Calman Commission to

increase the powers of the Scottish Parliament (Mitchell & Van der Zwet, 2010). With even the Conservatives supporting the Calman Commission, the SNP lacked a significant foil to build its claims upon that it alone fought for Scottish interests. Distaste for the Conservatives remained in Scotland, but the acceptance of the commission proposals made this issue less of a lightning rod in Scottish politics. The debate between Labour and the Conservatives with the SNP revolved around how much additional devolution should occur rather than whether devolution was even a potential option.

The SNP's struggled to run an effective with a center-periphery position that could win significant support. The party's electioneering was even considered "their worst campaign in more than 10 years" ("Lacklustre Campaign is Leaving the SNP on the Sidelines," 2010, 7). This was not helped by decline in the SNP leader Alex Salmond's decline in popularity during the campaign from 38% to 36% ("General Election 2010: Electorate 'Rejecting SNP and its Policies,'" 2010). With declining popularity, the ability of Alex Salmond and the party to spread its message was more difficult. The SNP tried to inject its *National Conversation* into the election. The *National Conversation* was an initiative started by the SNP once it formed a minority government at the Scottish Parliament in 1997 to focus the public's attention on independence. The effectiveness of the program was highly questionable and Labour, the Conservatives, and the Liberal-Democrats creation of the Calman Commission limited its influence (Harvey & Lynch, 2012). The party struggled to effectively advance this campaign message and overcome or change the framing of the pledges made by Labour and the Conservatives to implement more devolution (Mitchell & Van der Zwet, 2010).

CONCLUSION

The SNP managed to persist across four elections from 1997 to 2010. The party managed this because in each election of the major factors related to regionalist party outcomes, mainstream party salience, mainstream party positions, and a regionalist party's position, at least one was advantageous every time and in some instance two were. In the four elections, mainstream party issue salience was beneficial for the SNP in 1997 and 2010, mainstream party positions aided them in 2005, and the SNP's position on the center-periphery dimension was effective in 2001, 2005, and 2010. Without all of these factors aligning in a supportive or costly manner, the SNP did not breakthrough or fail.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

Do regionalist party's achieve different types of electoral outcomes? If there are different types of results, do different factors explain the changes in fortune? Do supply-side or demand-side factors best explain a regionalist party's successes and failures? The preceding chapters, through a mixed-methods approach using regression analysis and case-studies, sought to answer these questions. Ultimately, I found evidence that dividing regionalist party outcomes into breakthrough, persistence, and failure is necessary and that three supply-side factors, mainstream party issue salience, mainstream party center-periphery positions, and regionalist party center-periphery positions, have the biggest influence on these three results. This conclusion will further discuss my new theoretical framework that emerged from the results, the contributions to both the broader field of electoral studies and more specifically to regionalist parties, and future projects that can advance this research agenda.

A NEW THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The two objectives of this dissertation were to determine whether a reconceptualization of regionalist party outcomes was necessary and, if so, what factors explained the different results. I found evidence that regionalist party results needed differentiation, but the factors that produced breakthrough, failure, and persistence mattered in a somewhat different context than originally hypothesized. The quantitative and qualitative evidence revealed that my theoretical explanation of regionalist party electoral outcomes warranted a reframing. In my original theoretical formulation about

the causes of different regionalist party electoral outcomes, I expected external supply-side variables would have the greatest influence on breakthrough, internal supply-side variables to matter most for electoral persistence, and either to have the capacity to induce electoral failure. I based this expectation on previous literature that found significant evidence regarding the influence of mainstream party positions on a regionalist party's electoral success (Meguid, 2005; Meguid, 2008). While a growing literature has begun to examine the influence a regionalist party's position has on its electoral fate, previous conclusions seemed more related to a regionalist party's ability to persist, rather than make large gains (Alonso, 2012; Elias, 2015). Thus, political opportunity structures related to the mainstream parties' positions and issue salience appeared more likely to have a large enough effect to induce a breakthrough and a regionalist party's position could generate electoral support but was unlikely to regularly produce gains sizable enough to break through. The results suggest that supply-side factors best explain regionalist party outcomes, as I expected, but when particular supply-side factors produce breakthrough, failure, and persistence was not the same.

I found little evidence that demand-side factors played an important role in explaining when the three types of outcomes occurred. In the quantitative analysis, neither GDP per capita nor unemployment rates had a significant relationship with regionalist party success, whether using vote shares as the dependent variable or when the outcomes were differentiated. The case studies did not provide extensive evidence that demand-side variables produced the particular outcomes in any of the Scottish elections.

The combination of the regression analyses and case studies revealed that mainstream party issue salience on the center-periphery dimension relative to the left-

right issue dimension, mainstream party positioning on the center-periphery issue dimension, and the regionalist party's position on the center-periphery issue dimension were the three factors most important for determining a regionalist party's electoral outcome. The regionalist party's result, however, appears to depend on how these three factors operate in the same election. Breakthrough is more likely to occur when mainstream parties increase the salience of the center-periphery dimension relative to the left-right issue dimension, when mainstream parties adopt positions on the center-periphery issue dimension that favor greater central government control, and when regionalist parties adopt an unambiguous pro-periphery position on the center-periphery issue dimension. These three advantageous conditions can induce a breakthrough. Failure is more likely to occur when all three conditions align unfavorably. In this circumstance, mainstream parties will diminish the salience of the center-periphery-issue dimension relative to the left-right issue dimension, mainstream parties will accommodate regionalist party demands on the center-periphery issue dimension, and regionalist parties adopt an ambiguous or pro-centrist position on the center periphery issue dimension. So while breakthrough and failure depend on the confluence of the three factors, persistence occurs when only one or two of three influences is beneficial and at least one is disadvantageous. Thus, different combinations of the three factors can sustain a regionalist party's previous level of success and facilitate persistence.

The results of the quantitative and qualitative analysis indicate that both external and internal supply-side factors influence breakthrough, persistence, and failure and justify the reconfiguring of my theory regarding regionalist party electoral success and which factors are likely to produce the three outcomes. The regressions showed external

and internal supply-side variables significantly related to the different outcome and that some variables were significant across elections, but the direction of the relationship was dissimilar. In the quantitative analysis, the following variables were all significant: regionalist party center-periphery positions, regionalist party left-right positions, mainstream party center-periphery positions, the supranational government index, and the regional authority index. The qualitative analysis helped elucidate the multicausality of mainstream party issue salience, mainstream party center-periphery positions, and a regionalist party's center periphery position for producing the three types of electoral outcomes. I recognize that reframing my theory based on the quantitative analysis paired with eight case studies from the same region my limit to some extent the generalizability of my findings, but the results from this study suggest the need for a theoretical reframing. Thus, I advance the tripartite explanation that mainstream party issue salience, mainstream party positioning, and regionalist party positioning account for when regionalist parties experience electoral breakthrough, electoral persistence, and electoral failure.

CONTRIBUTION

This dissertation makes contributions to the political party literature more generally and more specifically to studies focused on regionalist parties. The more general contributions of this study are that it provides additional evidence to the burgeoning literature related to elections and the importance of considering supply-side factors and it is another study that demonstrates the value of a mixed-methods approach. In terms of the contribution to the regionalist party literature, I demonstrate the

significance of differentiating electoral outcomes, show that different factors produce these results, and that regionalist party strategies matter for its electoral fate.

The general contributions of this study relate to supply-side studies and the importance of mixed-methodology studies. A growing literature on the importance of supply-side variables in elections has developed. My findings, in the quantitative and qualitative analyses, provide additional evidence regarding the importance of supply-side factors. This dissertation does not introduce any novel supply-side elements, but it does bring many together that have not been analyzed within a multi-methods framework. For example, I examined party strategic variables for both mainstream parties and niche parties in the quantitative and qualitative analysis, whereas previous research has only examined them together in one or the other in a single study.

In addition, mixed-methodology frameworks should be used more frequently in electoral analyses. Without adopting this framework, my findings would have less reliability and certain relationships would not have been discovered. The quantitative analysis revealed important correlations across my universe of cases. By analyzing various supply-side and demand-side variables across a range of countries, regions and decades, I developed valuable insight into the factors likely matter across contexts. The qualitative analysis revealed the importance of the interplay and process by which mainstream party issue salience, mainstream party center-periphery positions and regionalist party center-periphery positions shaped the different electoral outcomes. Only through a back and forth between my case studies and the regression results did my explanation of breakthrough, persistence, and failure become clearer and demonstrate the need to reframe my theory.

This dissertation also provides important new insights into the analysis of regionalist political parties. At the outset of this dissertation, a major argument was that regionalist party electoral outcomes need differentiation. Previous analyses of regionalist parties looked at their results in a uniform fashion. I maintained that with their electoral limitations based on their geographical constraints, considering their results in a more nuanced fashion would provide a more context-specific means of explaining regionalist party performance. I found considerable evidence to justify dividing electoral results into three categories. In the regression results different factors appeared to predict the likelihood of the different results. When I analyzed regionalist party results using vote shares as the dependent variable, I only found regionalist party center-periphery positions, the quadratic measure of a regionalist party's left-right position, and the Regional Authority Index to have significant relationships. Once I divided the outcomes, however, regionalist party center-periphery positions, regionalist party left-right positions, mainstream party center-periphery positions, the supranational government index, and the Regional Authority Index were all significant and related to different types of outcomes. In the case studies of the various elections with different outcomes, when and how mainstream party issue salience, mainstream party center-periphery positions, and regionalist party center-periphery positions became clearer.

With evidence that different types of regionalist party outcomes existed, I explored the factors that explained those outcomes in my quantitative and qualitative analysis. Through a combination of both, I reframed my theory to argue that the confluence of mainstream party issue salience, mainstream party center-periphery positions, and regionalist party center-periphery positions are the most important factors

for determining when regionalist parties breakthrough, fail or persist. I discovered that the likelihood of breakthrough increased when mainstream parties increased the salience of the center-periphery dimension, when mainstream parties became more restrictive towards regional autonomy, and when regionalist parties adopted unambiguous pro-periphery positions on the center-periphery issue dimension all occurred in the same election. Failure seemed more likely to occur when all of those factors were the opposite and unfavorable to regionalist parties, such that mainstream parties put greater emphasis on left-right issues, mainstream parties accommodated on center-periphery issues, and regionalist parties adopted ambiguous or pro-centrist positions on the center periphery dimension. The chances of a regionalist party persisting increased when one or two of the conditions favored breakthrough, but not all of them. With at least one condition similar to breakthrough regionalist parties were more likely to replicate their previous levels of success rather than have a large growth in support. No previous studies have identified the interrelationship of these three factors as crucial for explaining regionalist party success. Other studies have shown that different pieces of this tripartite explanation matter, but not in what particular instances certain variables matter or that they work in tandem (Meguid, 2008; Alonso, 2012). Through a combination of these three factors, regionalist parties either breakthrough, fail, or persist.

Regionalist party electoral strategies matter. For a considerable time, the literature on regionalist party success ignored the capacity of these types of parties to shape their own fates. Regionalist parties, in much of the literature, were viewed similarly to far-left or far-right parties, in that they were incapable of playing a major role in influencing their electoral results (Meguid, 2008; Jolly, 2015). While this trend has

begun to change for other niche parties, the application to regionalist parties needs further attention. Regionalist parties may even have an advantage over other types of niche parties based on their concentrated electoral geography. In either a first-past-the-post or a proportional electoral system, their concentrated geography has the potential to enhance their ability to run campaigns that influence outcomes. Regionalist parties also have the capacity to influence their own fate to a certain degree based on their introduction of the center-periphery issue dimension, something mainstream parties would avoid or not have to consider extensively if a regionalist party was not a competitor. Regionalist parties can play a major role in influencing the debate over those issues, whereas they often struggle to influence the debate over the left-right issue dimension. This dissertation found evidence that a clear center-periphery position from a regionalist party that favored more autonomy was a successful strategy. Research on regionalist parties must factor in these elements or risk omitting a significant determinant of electoral outcomes for regionalist parties.

FUTURE RESEARCH

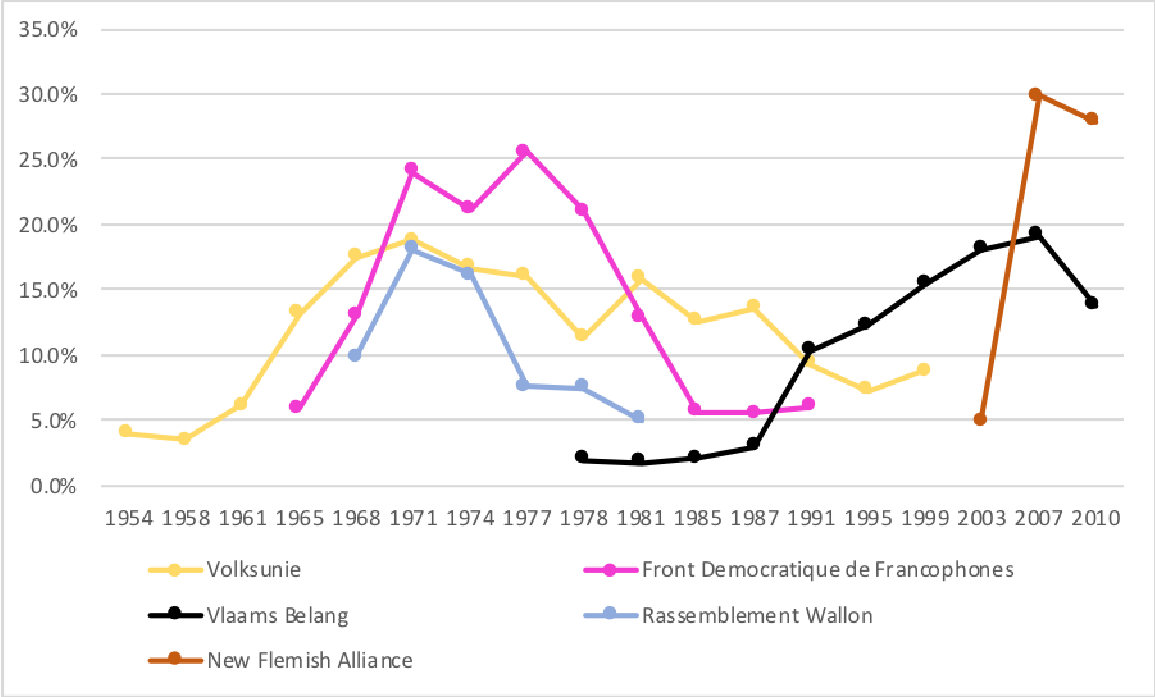
I envision this dissertation as the beginning of a broader research agenda. I have several different ideas to develop this project further to keep investigating regionalist party electoral outcomes. First, to test my tripartite explanation in additional ways, I will analyze several Catalan elections that represent the three different outcomes. This will increase the variation within my analysis and increase the generalizability of my findings, provided the additional cases support my expectations. Second, I intend to conduct a two-step analysis that incorporates an analysis of regionalist party formation with a study of regionalist party success. This study will first assess the factors that led to the

formation of a regionalist party and subsequently assess its electoral performance. This set-up will allow an assessment of the influence that the factors related to regionalist party formation had on subsequent electoral outcomes. Third, I will investigate further regionalist party electoral success in relation to the long-run effects of changes to particular factors on its future outcomes. Finally, I will investigate the electoral fortunes of regionalist parties during the financial crisis. In this study, twelve different national elections occurred after 2007, with twenty different regionalist parties competing. Further analysis of regionalist parties needs to continue for these parties are not disappearing from the electoral landscape and will continue to shape elections in many countries.

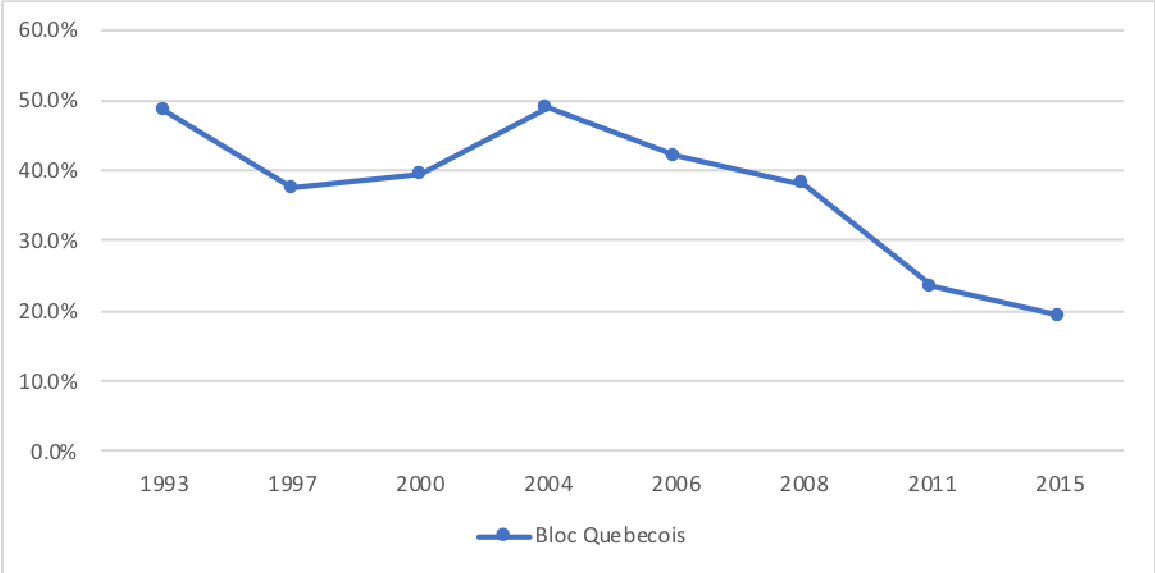
APPENDIX

REGIONALIST PARTY ELECTORAL OUTCOMES

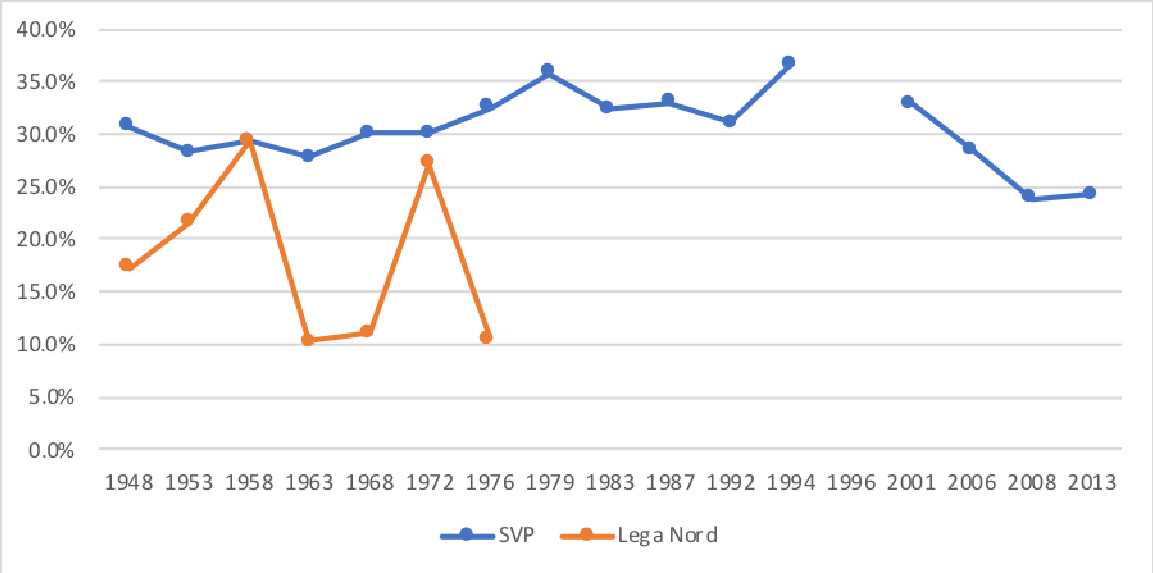
BELGIUM



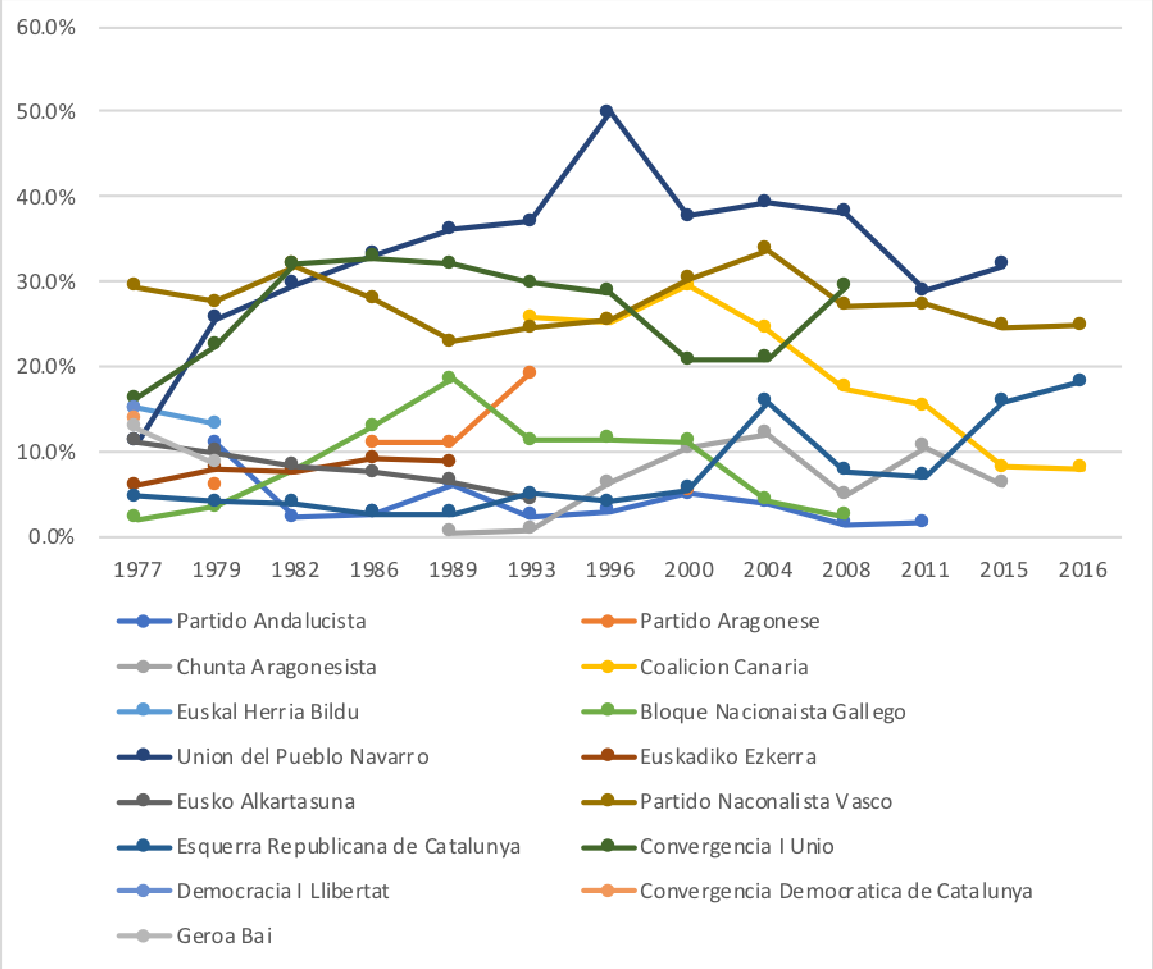
CANADA



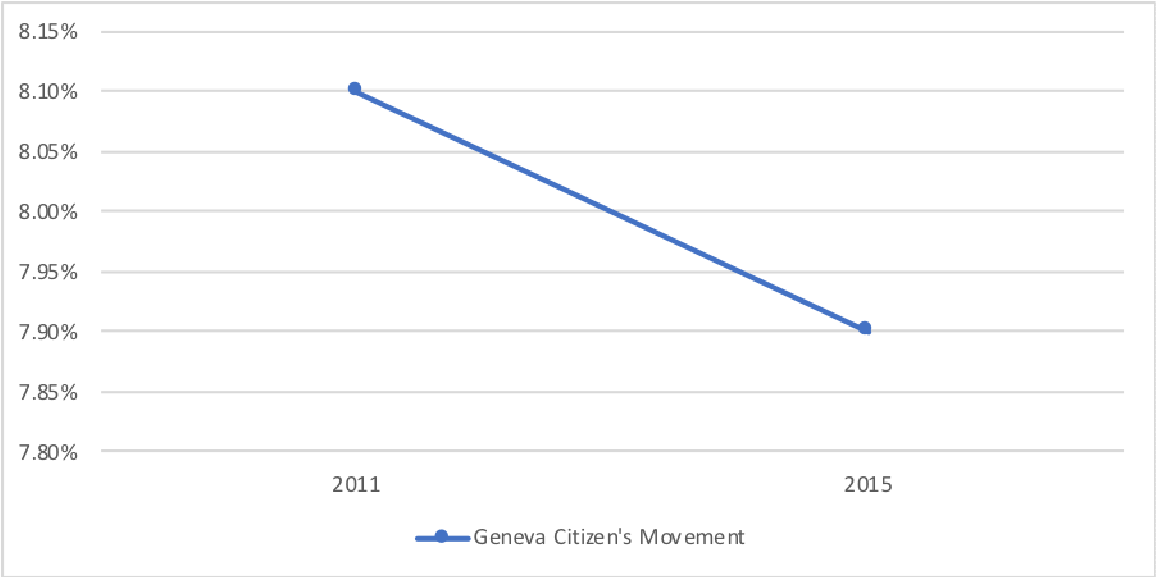
ITALY


40.0%
35.0%
30.0%
25.0%
20.0%
15.0%
10.0%
5.0%
0.0%
1948 1953 1958 1963 1968 1972 1976 1979 1983 1987 1992 1994 1996 2001 2006 2008 2013
SVP
Lega Nord

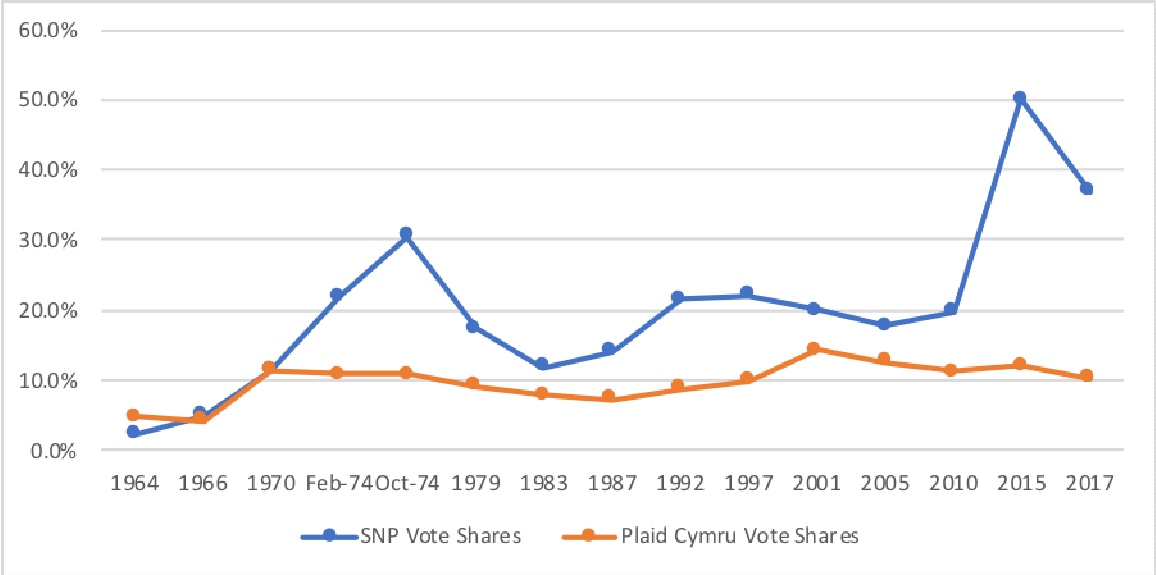
SPAIN


60.0%
50.0%
40.0%
30.0%
20.0%
10.0%
0.0%
1977 1979 1982 1986 1989 1993 1996 2000 2004 2008 2011 2015 2016
Partido Andalucista
Partido Aragonese
Chunta Aragonesista
Coalicion Canaria
Euskal Herria Bildu
Bloque Nacionalista Gallego
Union del Pueblo Navarro
Euskadiko Ezkerra
Eusko Alkartasuna
Partido Naconalista Vasco
Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya
Convergencia I Unio
Democracia I Llibertat
Convergencia Democratica de Catalunya
Geroa Bai

SWITZERLAND



UNITED KINGDOM



REFERENCES CITED

Adams, J., Clark, M., Ezrow, L., & Glasgow, G. (2006). Are Niche Parties Fundamentally Different from Mainstream Parties? The Causes and the Electoral Consequences of Western European Parties' Policy Shifts, 1976-1998, 50(3), 513-529.

Alonso, S. (2012). Challenging the State, Devolution and the Battle for Partisan Credibility: A Comparison of Belgium, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Alonso, S., Cabeza, L., & Gomez, B. (2015). Parties' Electoral Strategies in a Two-Dimensional Political Space: Evidence from Spain and Great Britain. Party Politics, 21(6), 851-865.

Analysis: Nationalists' Private Pleasure in Defeat. (2007, December 7). The Scotsman.

Art, D. (2012). Inside the Radical right: The Development of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Ashcroft, B. (2015, November 13). Labour Market. Retrieved from http://www.scottisheconomywatch.com/brian-ashcrofts-scottish/labour-market/

Beck, N., & Katz, J. N. (1995). What To Do (And Not To Do) with Time-Series Cross-Section Data. American Political Science Review, 89(3), 634-647.

Beck, N., Katz, J. N., & Tucker, R. (1998). Taking Time Seriously: Time-Series-Cross-Section Analysis with a Binary Dependent Variable. American Journal of Political Science, 42(4), 1260-1288.

Berman, S. (1997). The Life of the Party. Comparative Politics, 30(1), 101-122.

Bielasiak, J. (1997). Substance and Process in the Development of Party Systems in East Central Europe. Communist and Post-Communist Studies, 30(1), 23-44.

Blair in New Row over Devolution. (1997, April 29). Press Association.

Blair Tells Voters: We Will Invest in Scotland. (2001, May 14). Glasgow Herald.

Brancati, D. (2008). The Origins and Strengths of Regional Parties. British Journal of Political Science, 38(1), 135-159.

Brancati, D. (2014). Another Great Illusion: The Advancement of Separatism through Economic Integration. Political Science Research and Methods, 2(1), 69-95.

British Election Study. (1997). Retrieved from https://www.britishelectionstudy.com/data-objects/cross-sectional-data/.

Brown, A. (1997). Scotland: Paving the Way for Devolution?. Parliamentary Affairs, 50(4), 658-671.

Brown, A. (2001). Scotland. Parliamentary Affairs, 54(4), 701-711.

Brown, T. (2010, April 16). Labour Tries to Dig Deep with Fearful Tory Flashbacks. The Daily Telegraph. p. 10.

Budge, I., & Farlie, D. J. (1983). Explaining and Predicting Elections Issue Effects and Party Strategies in Twenty-Three Democracies. London: G. Allen and Unwin.

Budge, I., & Laver, M. J. (Eds.). (2016). Party policy and government coalitions. Springer.

Cameron, A. C., & Miller, D. L. (2010). Robust Inference with Clustered Data. Handbook of Empirical Economics and Finance, 106, 1-28.

Cameron, D. (2014, September 19). Speech presented in 10 Downing St., London.

Canwest News Service. (2010, May 3).

Clark, W. (1973, November 7). Govan Canvass Delights SNP on Eve of Poll. Glasgow Herald, p. 28.

Clark, W. (1974, February 22). SNP Impact Could Prove Crucial. Glasgow Herald, p. 13.

Clark, W. (1974, October 16). Scots Tories Back Labour's Assembly Plans. Glasgow Herald, p. 7.

Clarke, K. A. (2005). The Phantom Menace: Omitted Variable Bias in Econometric Research. Conflict Management and Peace Science, 22(4), 341-352.

Coffé, H. (2004). Groot in Vlaanderen, klein(er) in Wallonié: Een Analyse van het Electorale Succes van de Extreem-Rechtse Partijen (Ph.D. Dissertation).

Cole, A., & Loughlin, J. (2003). Beyond the Unitary State? Public Opinion, Political Institutions and Public Policy in Brittany. Regional Studies, 37(3), 265-276.

Collier, D., Brady, H., Seawright, J. (2010). Critiques, Responses, and Trade-Offs: Drawing Together the Debate. In H. Brady & D. Collier (Eds.), Rethinking Social Inquiry: Second Edition (pp. 135-161). Lanham: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Conservative Battle bus Spearheads Scottish Offensive on Devolution and Europe. (1997, April 23). Glasgow Herald.

Conservative Party. (1974). Putting Britain First. London.

Conservative Party. (1979). Conservative Party Manifesto. London.

Conservative Party. (1997). You Can Only Be Sure with the Conservatives. London.

Conservative Party. (2001). Time for Common Sense. London.

Conservative Party. (2005). Are You Thinking What We're Thinking? London.

Conservative Party. (2010). Invitation to Join the Government of Britain. London.

Conservative Party. (2015). Strong Leadership, A Clear Economic Plan, A Brighter, More Secure Future. London.

Cotton, R., & Fontana, C. (2018). Political parties at critical junctures: explaining the decisions to offer referendums on constitutional change in the United Kingdom. Contemporary British History, 1-27.

Crewe, I., Day, N., & Fox, A. D. (1995). The British Electorate 1963-1992: A Compendium of Data from the British Election Studies. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Curtice, J. (2015). General Election 2015: Business as Usual or New Departure. Political Insight, September.

Dalyell, T. (1976). Why Not All Scots Support Proposals for an Edinburgh Assembly: A Response to the Scottish Council. Edinburgh.

Davies, P. H. (2001). Spies as Informants: Triangulation and the Interpretation of Elite Interview Data in the Study of the Intelligence and Security Services. Politics, 21(1), 73-80.

Denver, D. (1997). The 1997 General Election in Scotland: An Analysis of the Results. Scottish Affairs, 20(1), 17-33.

Deschouwer, K. (2003). Political Parties in Multi-Layered Systems. European Urban and Regional Studies, 10(3), 213-226.

Devolution: Part Two of a Briefing for Scots, British, and Overseas Journalists. (1976).

Devolution: Weatherill Note. (1976, November 18). Thatcher Archives.

Dexter, L., (Ed.) (1970). Elite and Specialized Interviewing. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.

Downs, A. (1957). An Economic Theory of Political Action in a Democracy. Journal of Political Economy, 65(2), 135-150.

Drucker, H. M., & Brown, G. (1980). The politics of Nationalism and Devolution. London; New York: Longman.

Drucker, H., & Drucker, N. (1978). The Scottish Government Yearbook 1979. Edinburgh: Paul Harris Publishing.

Durbin, J. (1970). Testing for Serial Correlation in Least-Squares Regression When Some of the Regressors are Lagged Dependent Variables. Econometrica: Journal of the Econometric Society, 410-421.

Eadie, A., Ewing, H., Robertson, J., & Sillars, J. (1974). Scottish Labour and Devolution: A Discussion Paper.

Eatwell, R. (2003). Ten Theories of the Extreme Right. In P. Merkl & L. Weinberg (Eds.), Right-Wing Extremism in the Twenty-First Century (pp. 47-74). London: Frank Cass.

Election Webchat: Shadow Secretary of State for Scotland. (2010, April 21). The Scotsman.

Elias, A. (2015). Catalan Independence and the Challenge of Credibility: The Causes and Consequences of Catalan Nationalist Parties' Strategic Behavior. Nationalism and Ethnic Politics, 21(1), 83-103.

Elias, A., Szöcsik, E., & Zuber, C. I. (2015). Position, Selective Emphasis and Framing: How Parties Deal with a Second Dimension in Competition. Party Politics, 21(6), 839-850.

Fearon, J. D., & Van Houten, P. (2002). The Politicization of Cultural and Economic Difference. In Fifth meeting of the Laboratory in Comparative Ethnic Processes. Stanford University.

Finlay, A. (1974, October 8). SNP are Sweeping Ahead in the North of Scotland. Glasgow Herald, p. 1.

Finlay, A. (1974, October 9). Swing of 15% to SNP in East. Glasgow Herald, p. 1.

Fitjar, R. D. (2009). The Rise of Regionalism: Causes of Regional Mobilization in Western Europe. New York: Routledge.

Fitjar, R. D. (2010). Explaining Variation in Sub-State Regional Identities in Western Europe. European Journal of Political Research, 49(4), 522-544.

Follow the Leader to Make Up Your Mind. (2005, May 3). Evening News. p. 20.

Former Labour Member of Parliament [Personal Interview]. (2016, November 8).

Former SNP Party Leader [Personal Interview]. (2016, November 16).

Former SNP Party Leader [Personal Interview]. (2016, December 12).

General Election 2010: Electorate 'Rejecting SNP and its Policies.' (2010, May 5). The Scotsman.

George, A. L., & Bennett, A. (2005). Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Gerring, J. (2004). What is a Case Study and What is it Good For?. American Political Science Review, 98(2), 341-354.

Goertz, G., & Mahoney, J. (2012). A Tale of Two Cultures: Qualitative and Quantitative Research in the Social Sciences. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Gordin, J. P. (2001). The Electoral Fate of Ethnoregionalist Parties in Western Europe: A Boolean Test of Extant Explanations. Scandinavian Political Studies, 24(2), 149-170.

Green, D., & Shapiro, I. (1996). Pathologies of Rational Choice Theory: A Critique of Applications in Political Science. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Harvey, M., & Lynch, P. (2012). Inside the National Conversation: The SNP Government and the Politics of Independence 2007-2010. Scottish Affairs, 80(1), 91-116.

Hechter, M. (1992). The Dynamics of Secession. Acta Sociologica, 35(4), 267-283.

Holden, H. (2010). The Commission on Scottish Devolution—The Calman Commission.

Hooghe, L., Marks, G. Schakel, A., Osterkatz, S., Niedzwiecki, S., & Shair-Rosenfield, S. (2016). Measuring Regional Authority: A Postfunctionalist Theory of Governance. Volume I. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

House of Commons. (1973). Retrieved from https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/sittings/1970s.

House of Commons. (1974). Retrieved from https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/sittings/1970s.

House of Commons. (1978). HC Debate 25 January. Retrieved from http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1978/jan/25/referendum#S5CV0942P0_19780125_HOC_454.

How Thatcher Tried to Thwart Devolution. (2008, April 27). The Scotsman. Retrieved from https://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/how-thatcher-tried-to-thwart-devolution-1-1165673.

In Safe Hands: The Economy is Now Labour's Strong Card. (2001, June 2). The Guardian.

Ipsos MORI. (2010). Ipsos MORI Issue Index.

Johns, R., & Mitchell, J. (2016). Takeover: Explaining the Extraordinary Rise of the SNP. London: Biteback Publishing.

Johnston, R., Pattie, C., & Rossiter, D. (2005). The Election Results in the UK Regions. Parliamentary Affairs, 58(4), 786-801.

Jolly, S. K. (2015). The European Union and the Rise of Regionalist Parties. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Keating, M. (1977) Nationalism in the Scottish Labour Movement 1914-1974. Paper presented to a conference of the Political Studies Association, September 26-29, 1977. Aberyswyth.

Kilbrandon, L. (1973). Royal Commission on the Constitution 1969–1973.

Kitschelt, H. (1995). Formation of Party Cleavages in Post-Communist Democracies: Theoretical Propositions. Party politics, 1(4), 447-472.

Laakso, M., & Taagepera, R. (1979). "Effective" Number of Parties: A Measure with Application to West Europe. Comparative political studies, 12(1), 3-27.

Labour Confident of Retaining Govan Division. (1973, November 8). Glasgow Herald, p. 3.

Labour Party. (1974). Let Us Work Together: Labour's Way out of the Crisis. London.

Labour Party. (1979). The Labour Way is the Better Way. London.

Labour Party. (1997). New Labour Because Britain Deserves Better. London.

Labour Party. (2001). Ambitions for Britain. London.

Labour Party. (2005). Britain Forward not Back. London.

Labour Party. (2010). A Future Fair for All. London.

Labour Party. (2015). A Better Future for Britain. London.

Lacklustre Campaign is Leaving the SNP on the Sidelines. (2010, April 22). The Daily Telegraph. p. 7.

Leblang, D. A. (1996). Property Rights, Democracy and Economic Growth. Political Research Quarterly, 49(1), 5-26.

Leech, B. L. (2002). Asking Questions: Techniques for Semistructured Interviews. PS: Political Science & Politics, 35(4), 665-668.

Levi, M., & Hechter, M. (1985). A Rational Choice Approach to the Rise and Decline of Ethnoregional Political Parties. New Nationalisms of the Developed West, 128-146.

Lieberman, E. S. (2005). Nested Analysis as a Mixed-Method Strategy for Comparative Research. American Political Science Review, 99(3), 435-452.

Lijphart, A. (1971). Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method. American Political Science Review, 65(3), 682-693.

Linklater, M. (2001, June 7). Election that Ignored Reality of Devolution. The Times.

Lipset, S. M., & Rokkan, S. (Eds.). (1967). Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives (Vol. 7). Free press.

Loomes, G. (2014). Party Strategies in Western Europe: Party Competition and Electoral Outcomes. New York: Routledge.

Lublin, D. (2014). Minority Rules: Electoral Systems, Decentralization, and Ethnoregional Party Success. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Lynch, P. (2002). SNP: The History of the Scottish National Party. Cardiff: Welsh Academic Press.

MacDonald, M. (1979). Paper for the SNP National Executive Committee.

MacWhirter, I. (2015). Tsunami: Scotland's Democratic Revolution. Glasgow: Freight.

McCall, C. (2015, November 3). In Numbers: Trade Union Membership in Scotland. The Scotsman. Retrieved from https://www.scotsman.com/news/in-numbers-trade-union-membership-in-scotland-1-3936322.

McIntyre, E., & Warden, J. (1974, February 19). Heath and Wilson Clash on Labour Oil Plans. Glasgow Herald, p. 1.

McIntyre, R. (1979). Speech presented at Annual Conference, Edinburgh.

Maddens, B., & Libbrecht, L. (2009). How Statewide Parties Cope with the Regionalist Issue: The case of Spain; a Directional Approach. In W. Swenden & B. Maddens (Eds.), Territorial Party Politics in Western Europe (pp. 204-228). London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Mahoney, J. (2010). After KKV: The New Methodology of Qualitative Research. World Politics, 62(1), 120-147.

March, L., & Rommerskirchen, C. (2012). Out of Left Field? Explaining the Variable Electoral Success of European Radical Left Parties. Party Politics, 21(1), 40-53.

Margo Loses Her SNP Post. (1979, September 16). The Observer, p. 1.

Massetti, E., & Schakel, A. H. (2013). Ideology Matters: Why Decentralisation has a Differentiated Effect on Regionalist Parties' Fortunes in Western Democracies. European Journal of Political Research, 52(6), 797-821.

Massetti, E., & Schakel, A. H. (2016). Between Autonomy and Secession: Decentralization and Regionalist Party Ideological Radicalism. *Party Politics, 22*(1): 59-79.

Meadwell, H., & Martin, P. (1996). Economic Integration and the Politics of Independence. Nations and Nationalism, 2(1), 67-87.

Meguid, B. M. (2005). Competition Between Unequals: The Role of Mainstream Party Strategy in Niche Party Success. American Political Science Review, 99(3), 347-359.

Meguid, B. M. (2008). Party Competition Between Unequals: Strategies and Electoral Fortunes in Western Europe. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Meyer, T. M., & Miller, B. (2015). The Niche Party Concept and its Measurement. Party Politics, 21(2), 259-271.

Miller, W. L. (1981). The End of British Politics?: Scots and English Political Behavior in the Seventies. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Miller, W. L., Sarlvik, B., Crewe, I., & Alt, J. (1977). The Connection between SNP Voting and the Demand for Scottish Self-Government. European Journal of Political Research, 5(1), 83-102.

Mitchell, J. (1996). Strategies for Self-Government: The Campaigns for a Scottish Parliament. Edinburgh: Polygon.

Mitchell, J. (2015). Sea change in Scotland. Parliamentary Affairs, 68(1), 88-100.

Mitchell, J., & Zwet, A. V. (2010). A Catenaccio Game: The 2010 Election in Scotland. Parliamentary Affairs, 63(4), 708-725.

Mixed Reaction to Kilbrandon Report. (1973, November 1). Glasgow Herald, p. 1.

Morisi, D. (2018). When Campaigns Can Backfire: National Identities and Support for Parties in the 2015 U.K General Election in Scotland. Political Research Quarterly, 1-15.

Mrs. Ewing Brave in Defeat. (1970, June 19). Glasgow Herald, p. 1.

Mudde, C. (2007). Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

My Plans for Scotland--Ross. (1974, March 6). Glasgow Herald, p. 1.

Neto, O. A., & Cox, G. W. (1997). Electoral Institutions, Cleavage Structures, and the Number of Parties. American Journal of Political Science, 149-174.

Norris, P. (2001). Apathetic Landslide: The 2001 British General Election. Parliamentary Affairs, 54(4), 565-589.

Ohmae, K. (1995). The End of the Nation State: The Rise of Regional Economies. Simon and Schuster.

On the Spot: 10 Questions for Tory Chief William Hague. (2001, June 5). Evening News. p. 8.

Ordeshook, P. (1993). The Development of Contemporary Political Theory. In W. Barnett, M. Hinich, & N. Schofield. Political Economy: Institutions, Competition, and Representation (pp. 71-104). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Parkhouse, G. (1975, November 21). Wilson Faces Revolt by Devolution MPs. Glasgow Herald.

Parkhouse, G., & Russell, W. (1977, February 23). Assembly Death Knell: Labour Rebels Kill the Bill. Glasgow Herald, p. 1.

Parties Join Forces to Bulldoze SNP. (2007, December 12). The Scotsman. p. 8.

Perman, R. (1979). The Devolution Referendum Campaign of 1979. Scottish Government Yearbook 1980.

Pike, J. (2016). Project Fear: How an Unlikely Alliance Left a Kingdom United but a Country Divided. London: Biteback Publishing.

PM Says Life Firms' Home Rule Stance "Conditional." (1997). The Scotsman.

Posner, D. N. (2004). Measuring Ethnic Fractionalization in Africa. American Journal of Political Science, 48(4), 849-863.

Pressure is on For Fiscal Autonomy. (2001, May 22). The Scotsman. p. 1.

Prince, R. (2015, January 29). Jim Murphy: The Scottish Nationalists are 'Sluggish, Lethargic and off the Pace'. The Telegraph. Retrieved from https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/11377345/Jim-Murphy-the-Scottish-Nationalists-are-sluggish-lethargic-and-off-the-pace.html.

Rabinowitz, G., & Macdonald, S. E. (1989). A Directional Theory of Issue Voting. American Political Science Review, 83(1), 93-121.

Riker, W. H. (1986). The Art of Political Manipulation. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Rovny, J. (2012). Who emphasizes and who blurs? Party Strategies in Multidimensional Competition. European Union Politics, 13(2), 269-292.

Salmond, A. (2015). The Dream Shall Never Die: 100 Days that Changed Scotland Forever. London: William Collins.

Salmond Ends Support for Devolution. (2004, September 25). The Scotsman. p. 15.

Sambanis, N., & Milanovic, B. (2014). Explaining Regional Autonomy Differences in Decentralized Countries. Comparative Political Studies, 47(13), 1830-1855.

Sartori, G. (1976). Parties and Party Systems. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Scots Favour Referendum--N.O.P. (1970, June 16). Glasgow Herald, p. 1.

Scottish Government. (2017). Report on Draft Budget 2017-2018. 1st Report.

Scottish Social Attitudes Survey. (2001).

Scottish Social Attitudes Survey. (2005).

Seawright, D. (2008). The Conservative Party's Devolution Dilemma. Textes et Contextes, (1), 41-49.

Seyd, P. (2001). The Labour Campaign. Parliamentary Affairs, 54(4), 607-623.

Sio, L. D., & Weber, T. (2014). Issue Yield: A Model of Party Strategy in Multidimensional Space. American Political Science Review, 108(4), 870-885.

Smith, G. (2005). Positioning Political Parties: The 2005 UK General Election. Journal of Marketing Management, 21(9-10), 1135-1149.

SNP's National Council. (1974). Chairman's Report. Edinburgh

SNP Now Vital Minority Group. (1974, March 2). Glasgow Herald, p. 24.

SNP. (1974). Press Officer's Report. Edinburgh.

SNP Research Department. (1972). SNP Research Bulletin: Dundee By-Elections Prospects, 3(4).

SNP. (1974). Scotland's Future. Glasgow.

SNP Stand on Bill Attacked. (1976, June 10). Glasgow Herald, p. 2.

SNP. (1978, January 23). SNP Amendment to the Scotland Bill.

SNP. (1979a). We Say Yes: SNP Referendum Pamphlet. Edinburgh.

SNP. (1979b, May 9). Campaign 1979. National Executive Council Organisation Department.

SNP. (1997). Yes We Can: Win the Best for Scotland. Edinburgh.

SNP. (2001). Heart of the Manifesto. Edinburgh.

SNP. (2005). If Scotland Matters to You Make it Matter in May. Edinburgh.

SNP. (2010). Elect a Local Champion. Edinburgh.

SNP. (2015). Stronger for Scotland. Edinburgh.

Sorens, J. (2004). Globalization, Secessionism, and Autonomy. Electoral Studies, 23(4), 727-752.

Sorens, J. (2005). The Cross-Sectional Determinants of Secessionism in Advanced Democracies. Comparative political studies, 38(3), 304-326.

Sorens, J. (2012). Secessionism: Identity, Interest, and Strategy. Montreal: McGill-Queen's Press.

Storm Clouds Gather. (1997). The Sunday Times. Home News.

Tansey, O. (2007). Process Tracing and Elite Interviewing: A Case for Non-Probability Sampling. PS: Political Science & Politics, 40(4), 765-772.

Tarrow, S. G. (1996). Power in Movement: Social Movements, Collective Action, and Politics. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Thatcher, M. (1979, April 25). Speech presented at Rally in Edinburgh in Leith Town Hall, Edinburgh.

Thatcher, M. (2001, May 22). The Mummy Returns. Speech, Plymouth.

The Prime Minister Is Interviewed [Interview by J. Warden]. (1974, February 27). Glasgow Herald, p. 10.

The Rampant. (1970). Published by Larkhall Branch of the SNP.

The Real Vote is 2003, Stupid. (2001, May 27). The Scotsman. p. 9.

Tory Win 'Could Split the Union.' (2010). The Times. p. 1-2.

Tossutti, L. S. (2002). How Transnational Factors Influence the Success of Ethnic, Religious and Regional Parties in 21 States. Party Politics, 8(1), 51-74.

Trotter, S. (1978, February 16). Now It's Up to the Scots-- 40% 'Yes' or No Assembly. Glasgow Herald, p. 1.

Trotter, S. (1979, February 14). Fury All Round As Noes Challenge Callaghan Pledge. Glasgow Herald, p. 9.

Van der Brug, W., Fennema, M., & Tillie, J. (2005). Why Some Anti-Immigrant Parties Fail and Others Succeed: A Two-Step Model of Aggregate Electoral Support. Comparative Political Studies, 38(5), 537-573.

Volkines, A., Lehmann, P., Matthieß, T., Merz, N., Regel, S., & Weßels, B. (2018). The Manifesto Data Collection. Manifesto Project. Version 2018a. Berlin: Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung (WZB). https://doi.org/10.25522/manifesto.mpds.2018a.

Wagner, M. (2012). Defining and Measuring Niche Parties. Party Politics, 18(6), 845-864.

Warden, J. (1972, November 7). Freeze Will Last Until End of Winter. Glasgow Herald, p. 1.

Warden, J. (1973, March 2). Taverne Landslide Labour hold Dundee. Glasgow Herald, p. 1.

Warden, J. (1974, October 4). Heath Unveils Unity Plan. Glasgow Herald, p. 1.

Warwick, P. V. (2002). Toward a Common Dimensionality in West European Policy Spaces. Party Politics, 8(1), 101-122.

Watt, H. (1977, December 5) Press Release.

Wawro, G., Samii, C., & Kristensen, I. (2011). On the Use of Fixed Effects Estimators for Time-Series Cross-Section Data. Unpublished Manuscript. Columbia University.

We are the Only Answer--SNP. (1974, February 28). Glasgow Herald, p. 1.

Westminster Would Overrule Scottish Parliament on Constitutional Affairs Says Wilson. (1997). Glasgow Herald. p. 9.

What's Your Vote Worth?. (2001). The Herald. p. 1.

Williams, R. L. (2000). A note on robust variance estimation for cluster-correlated data. Biometrics, 56(2), 645-646.

Wilson, G. (1974, October 3). Speech, Dundee.

Wilson, G. (1978). SNP Should Concentrate on Economic Issues. Press Release.

Wilson, G. (1979, February 22). Tories are the Party of Bureaucracy. Press Release.

Winter, L. D., & Tursan, H. (2003). Regionalist Parties in Western Europe. London: Routledge.

Wolfe, W. (1977, December 3). Press Release.

Wood, J. R. (1981). Secession: A Comparative Analytical Framework. Canadian Journal of Political Science/Revue Canadienne de Science Politique, 14(1), 107-134.

Zirakzadeh, C. E. (1989). Economic Changes and Surges in Micro-Nationalist Voting in Scotland and the Basque Region of Spain. Comparative Studies in Society and History, 31(2), 318-339.