Membership from independence
A study of the Scottish National Party’s strive for an EU-member state status

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Abstract

The Scottish National Party want an independent Scotland, but there is somewhat of a “puzzle” to their stance. Because they want this self-ruling nation shall be a member of the European Union. This thesis explore the features of the party’s standpoint and how it could be conceived as reasonable. Scotland is only one of several regions in Europe with a separatist movement/party that desire autonomy in combination with an EU-membership. With the party’s manifestos and transcripts from the Scottish Parliament their arguments are sorted after two ideal points.

The ideal points are constructed primarily on Bickerton’s nation state and member state theory, with three main characters; identity, economy and sovereignty. In the SNP’s stance rights are separated from the notion of nationhood and the individual plays a large part in defining the people in relation to the territory. This leads to the conclusion that the SNP is closer to the member state ideal point. With a position that builds on the notion that identity is partly separated from the territory (you only need to live there), in combination with that the territory’s autonomy is highly reflected, this leads to the principal idea is concluded to be considered as reasonable.

*Key words:* autonomy, EU, member state, nation state, SNP.

Words: 9954.
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<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<td>MSP</td>
<td>Member of the Scottish Parliament</td>
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<td>SNP</td>
<td>Scottish National Party</td>
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<td>SP OR</td>
<td>Scottish Parliament Official Report (Meeting of the Parliament)</td>
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<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
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1 Introduction

Holyrood can, Holyrood has and Holyrood will (SP OR 23 September 2014, col. 47).

The Scottish National Party (SNP) is Scotland’s largest political party. They want an independent Scotland as the quote above from a debate in the Scottish Parliament (Holyrood) shows. SNP also want Scotland to become an EU member state. The intention with this thesis is to see which components the SNP position consists of and if it could be considered to be reasonable. The material used will be transcripts from the Holyrood Parliament and election manifestos from SNP. The transcripts come from various debates in Holyrood.

This is not the only region in Europe that wants self-rule in combination with EU membership, another example would be Catalonia in Spain (BBC a, b 2016). The party assumedly shares some similarities with other separatist movements across the continent. Interestingly, a large part of politics are made in political parties, for example in how the EU is conceived on a national level (Rosén Sundström 2009:24).

To organize the thesis, it will be based on Bickerton’s nation state and member state concepts. This will lead to an examination of SNP’s argumentation concerning: identity, economy and sovereignty. So, the aim is to explore the SNP standpoint in recent year’s discussion regarding EU integration and independence. It is here worth noting that the classic culture historian E.P. Thompson argues that the historical experience in Scotland has been very different from that of the southern neighbour and that both countries societies hold distinct “stories” until at least the 1820s (Thompson 1963:13). Today the European Commission has separate representation in the four different parts of UK (European Commission 2016).

The question of Scottish independence has perhaps recently in the occurrence of a “Brexit” fallen into somewhat of a shadow. However, the SNP argues that the UK should stay in the EU and if not, so shall at least Scotland still stay in the EUs single market (The Guardian 2016). This power struggle between Holyrood and Westminster in the UK and EU relation is prominent in the SNP statements. Here we also see an interesting side to the SNP position; their interest is in that all of the British Isles stay in the (supranational) EU. Possibly even more fascinating is the fact that SNP is considering to expand as a party into the south of the Scottish border (The Scotsman 2016). This gives an initial idea of how complex the SNP position is for a separatist movement and this will be further explored in this thesis.
1.1 Purpose and research questions

The aim of this thesis is to see how reasonable the Scottish National Party (SNP) stance regarding Scottish independence and EU membership is. It’s about blending in self-rule into a global environment. SNP dose on one hand have a firm opinion on the northern part of United Kingdom’s right to autonomy. Yet on the other hand the party on the other hand advocates EU membership for Scotland. This could be conceived to be a “puzzle”, with different values supposedly standing against each other. The two standpoints are not necessarily contradictory and they might be compatible. So, the issue will here also be focused around how these seemingly contrary positions reasonably could be combined. If there would be a consensus between autonomy and integration; it could consider to be a result in itself. The intention is set in two stages, the first is to examine which components the party’s argument consist of. Secondly, the aim is to grasp if it is a reasonable position to hold; one that combines autonomy with integration. The research questions for this essay are:

i. What are the characters of SNP’s standpoint regarding independence and EU-membership?
ii. How can the SNP attitude towards greater autonomy with EU integration reasonably be combined?

The questions is meant as a guide the rest of the thesis. An important factor of the first question is that SNP’s description of a Scottish identity will try to be clarified. In the second question the topic is then to try to understand how it could be a reasonable position to hold. However, the intention of this thesis is not to illustrate any changes in SNP’s view on the subject over time. Thou it might be interesting if that was the case, the aim is about how the two standpoints could in a reasonable way correspond.

1.2 Material and principles for data collection

This study will mainly consist of two primary sources. It will utilize material from two different sources; election manifests produced by the SNP and debate transcripts from the Holyrood parliament. Other material would undoubtedly also be useful for this thesis. However, due to time constraint and availability, there will be a need to limit the amount of material. This will be a study with the focus of language and text, which is yet another reason for the boundaries in material collection (cf. Yanow 2003:11).

The time of interest for this thesis is set out between 2010 and today (autumn 2016). This is due to the fact that in the year 2010 there was an UK election and the following year there where elections for the Scottish parliament (Carman et al.
Important to note here is the fact that it were these two elections which lead up to the Scottish referendum on independents in 2014 (Gibbins 2014:192). It shall also here be pointed out that 2011 was the first time since the founding of the Holyrood parliament in which the SNP was faced with a possible re-election. In the 2011 Holyrood election SNP got 53,3 percent of the seats in parliament compared to 36,4 percent after the 2007 election. After the 2011 election SNP again formed a government without any coalition partners. The 2010 UK elections are also interesting because the shift it had on Westminster, after which the conservatives won (Carman et al. 2011:1f, 5f, 8, 14f). The manifestos chosen for this thesis are from 2007, 2010, 2015 and 2016. These are the four manifestos published by the SNP concerning the time of interest.

The debate transcriptions are available through the Scottish parliament webpage and are sorted after subject of discussion. I chose the ones relating to an independence and/or EU topic will be the ones chosen for the analysis (The Scottish Parliament 2016). This is a needed way to narrow down the research material, otherwise this essay doesn’t drown in all the rich debate material. The themes of the debates are slightly different from year to year. But this will not be a problem, because this thesis is not following any particular debate or issue. Because the study’s interest is located in how SNPs position is expressed in the manifests and transcripts. Posed this way, it shall here be noted that there might be a variation in how various MSPs (Member of the Scottish Parliament) argue. This could become a problem if the spread in the MSPs argument is too great. Therefore, one of the reasons behind why the manifestos have been included into this thesis, is to try to tackle that outcome if it would occur. This way, it will be clear if one or more MSP suddenly moves far away from SNP’s general standpoint.

Because of the focus is on the SNP, it was decided to only work with transcriptions from the Holyrood parliament and not from the British at Westminster. This is due to that the SNP could be expected to have a more prominent role in the Scottish parliament than in the British, in regard to its size in respective parliament. Also taken into consideration is the “Scottish dimension” of the election to Holyrood after 2011, when SNP became unmistakably bigger than Labour. This might be because the unwelcome shift in Westminster, which would mean that this could have been the first time a UK election clearly affected a Scottish election (Carman et al. 2011:11f, 14f).

Important here to note is that the materials are relatively close in time, culturally and socially, which makes it more accessible. In general, the material does not involve any particular different cultural environment from my own and should therefore make it easier to interprete (Esaiasson et al. 2012: 222) The linguistic factor should probably be consider an advantage, because it does not need to be translated. Transcripts made by Holyrood Parliament can assumingly be seen as reliable sources (cf. Teorell & Smith, 2013: 104ff).
1.3 Method and disposition

The methodological approach of this thesis will start with the construction of two ideal images in the theoretical part. These ideal images are meant to make it possible to detect the various features of SNP’s standpoint. The disposition for the analysis comes from the characters that is constructed in the theoretical part. In the analysis the material will be examine and categorized through the theoretical framework.

A viable method is to try to clarify the actor in how it can be placed between two polar ideal types (Eriksson 1989:189). The ideal types will work as a filter to sort out the political statements and then to clarify the aspects after the theory. Political scientist Brommesson study will be taken as inspiration (Brommesson 2007:62f, 73ff). The abstraction levels may vary depending on the concepts, ideal types are not true statements about reality, but should instead be seen as an analytical tool (Teorell & Svensson, 2013:42f). With a frequent quoting, the reliability of this thesis should increase. The quoting is also a vital part in the analytic task of the descriptive analysis in what the features of SNP’s standpoint are (Brommesson 2007:73).

Therefore, in using these two polar points it will be possible to classify the arguments from the SNP (Eriksson 1989:191f). Hence the reason to work with ideal types is moreover because they can be used to merge an argumentation (Beckman 2005:25ff). Furthermore an ideal type is not an average value, the point is instead to place the subject (and its arguments) in relation to them (Eriksson 1989:186f). An interpretive approach, like the one I use, is more suitable when it examining a specific content, such as SNP’s viewpoint (Yanow 2003:12).

With the help from “idea critique” (idékritiken) it will be possible to go from a description of the SNP position, to then be able to consider how reasonable a position is. This method will give the opportunity to test whether something is reasonable, how different political values can relate to each other and observing if various statements are contradictory (Beckman 2005:38, 56f, 69, 72). Nevertheless, it is important to here note that the given analytical tools might form a problem if the author is trying to adjust the material after them. One might also witness the opposite, there the analytical tools are too vague to be of any use (Bergstöm & Boréus 2012:167). The strategy to overcome this is here to work with previous research and theories concerning the area of interest.

This thesis idea critique method will be using an argument analytic starting point that relates to the two ideal points. However, the analysis of argument method (argumentationsanalys) is not going to be used for follow any particular debate. It shall instead be used to try to see if there is any incoherence in the argumentation from SNP in relation to the two ideal points. This is not to test if the argument is contradictory, but rather to examine if the arguments does (not) follow any mutual principle. There must be a connection between normative statements and a collection of coherent values and principles (Beckman 2005:39ff, 72f). This study builds on the assumption that it exist a conceptual structure within political messages (cf. Brommesson 2007:60).
Given that the debates (Official Reports) are sorted on a yearly base by the Holyrood web database, the start for the analysis has been set to the year 2010. Related to the time period, SNP released four manifest. There are reports publish on a nearly a daily base. In total there are 39 transcripts containing 43 debates and/or statements during the time of interest that has been deemed relevant (due to the topic discussed in them) for this thesis. However it shall be pointed out that there seems to be a peak around the year 2014 (independence referendum) regarding the area of interest. The transcripts are of varying length, depending on the debate, but usually around five to fifty pages. Moved debates have to some degree been a problem, though they are usually easy to find in other records. There is of course a chance that some debates containing interesting material were overlooked. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that the goal is not to follow any particular question, but to examine how SNP argues (The Scottish Parliament 2016).

The debates in the transcripts are sorted by subject. I have therefore decided, in line with the “puzzle” mentioned in the purpose section, to only work with transcripts that directly relate to the subject. The themes (almost like “search words”) that have been used in this process are: “Europe”, “European”, “EU Membership”, “Euro Zone”, “Independence” and “Referendum”. Different things where discussed in all these debates, but they all do in one way or another relate to the main issue in this paper. There are a number of different official reports on a vast variety of subject, however the ones labelled with those above listed words were chosen for this thesis (The Scottish Parliament 2016).

1.4 Previous research on the SNP and the EU

The SNP’s history has already to a great extent been investigated by previous researches, more than already mentioned in earlier parts. There has been an influence from political scientist Benedict Anderson’s concepts about the nation state (cf. Brown et al. 1996:29ff). Interest have included comparing SNP to other pro-EU separatist movements in Europe, like Flanders and Catalonia (Laible 2008:2, 7). The SNP was founded in the 1930s, but the widespread enthusiasm for the party occurred in the 1970. Labours situation in Scotland have been related to SNPs, because of their similarities, because both could be considered to be Social Democrats (Brown et al. 1996:16ff). Economic and social reasons have often been a central part in the party’s history to upheave the treaty between England and Scotland from 1707 (Laible 2008:42ff). The all-British opposition from the Scottish nationalism has not always enjoyed the most stable of supports. On the contrary the claim on national identity has been relatively stable compared to the “instability and impermanence” of political nationalism (Hobsbawm 1990:179).

Important is its victory in taking most of Scotland’s seats at Westminster in the latest elections and then to prove that SNP is able to defend Scotland’s interest in a mostly conservative London parliament. Interesting to note is that there previously has existed a division between elections to Holyrood and Westminster, mostly because voters seem to have believed that a vote for Labour would be more
influential in London. The SNPs dominance in Scottish politics seems interestingly not to be because of its independence stance, instead much of the attractiveness seem to be because of popular politicians (Carman et al. 2011:151ff, 156). At the same time has the Conservatives during recent elections been relative weak in Scotland, compared to the rest of the UK (cf. Jensen et al. 2013:551f).

Previous research has pointed out the belief in Scotland that the EU would be better than the UK in helping them with their welfare goals (Brown et al. 1996:24). The SNP has in recent elections had a benefit in how the voters have viewed its capabilities in “looking after Scottish interests” (Carman et al. 2011:149). Notable is also that the SNP’s interest in European politics can be considered a strategy for securing Scotland’s interest. Therefore has the party participated in EU organizations that indirectly define Scotland as a region and not a country (Laible 2008:180, 210). Previous researchers has pointed to a possible correlation between support for independence and EU membership. This could be due to the supposed benefits of a membership, or as means for independence (Burrows 2010:131).

The EU has been described as creating a new form of sovereignty, which alters the relationship between Scotland and the United Kingdom. This is understood to be the result of new political structures that result in redistribution of power. Here has the “Scottish question” emerged from the re-orientation towards Europe, which has redefine the concept of the state (Brown et al. 1996:220f). Perhaps most notable is that until 1999 most decision-making power was located solely at Westminster. The SNP has also argued, together with other similar parties across Europe, that regions should have more to say at EU-level (Laible 2008:207).
The theoretical framework will be the base for the disposition in the analysis. I will in this part of the text develop two ideal types that shall be used as analytical tools for the previous described material. The theoretical discussion will to a large part be based around previous research. It is necessary for the reproducibility and thus intersubjectivity to clarify the conceptual approaches (Badersten, 2006:189). Why I chose to work with ideal types is because it gives a clear picture of the polarization between ideas (like the ones here presented). It also gives a clear distinction between the empirical political material and the abstract analysing tool (Brommesson 2007:63).

Firstly, an ideal type for autonomy and independence will be constructed from previous studies in the area. Secondly, a similar ideal point will be made out from an integration theoretical standpoint. Both parts will be constructed out from previous research, however not exquisitely research on the SNP. The two ideal types will be built upon political scientist Chris J. Bickertons nation state and member state concepts. In the member state the notion of identity is based on belonging to a larger community outside the national boarders in contrast to the nation state. Also the decision process is different in the two types of states, this is due to the power relation between state and society is different. In the nation state there is a much clearer power relationship between society and state within the state boarders (Bickerton 2012:12).

When the ideal points are constructed it is important that they are distinct in relation to each other. Here I have chosen to do this with two polar ideal types. The two types of states are to be viewed opposite of one another. With the aim to examine the logic between the two pols autonomy and integration it is required that the analysis is constructed after at least two ideal points. Important is here that if the thesis would contain more “pols”, so would it likewise be necessary to increase the amount of ideal points, because more reference points would be needed (cf. Brommesson 2007:64f).

This will be combined with political scientist Janet Laibles discussion about “[t]he (Im)possibility of Separatism in a Supranational Context” (Laible 2008:4). She points to the development in European integration has led to a weakening of the national state. The states are challenged in the global order in their monopoly regarding sovereignty, a traditional national state would not accept to have its sovereignty challenged externally and/or internally (Laible 2008:26ff). The two types of state will be categorised along three main lines; identity, economy and sovereignty. These three categories sometimes have the tendency to overlap in certain areas. This will be even clearer when working with the empirical material.

How the ideal types is going to be constructed could of course vary. Important here is that the ideal type concerning integration could reasonably be created with
either the categories identity and/or economy. However, one might argue that the social causes are different from the functional reasons, hence the split between the two characteristics economics and identity (cf. Hollis 2002:101f & Bickerton 2012:48ff, 64, 70f, 184). So for example the national welfare system can be seen as an economic function separated from the social sphere culture (Keating 2001:134f). Sovereignty will be added as a third part because it’s central in the discussion on how the mood of the state is perceived (Laible 2008:2f).

This goes in line with political scientist Keating’s ideal type of a nation state which consist of; economy, identity and the claim on sovereignty (internal and external). He also adds corresponding national population and governing institutions. However, he then points out that this is a model of an old nation state and might therefore perhaps be considered not to be fully suitable in describing a modern nation state. In the construction on two comparable ideal types (that is deemed to work with Bickerton’s concepts) the two later characteristics of Keating’s ideal type were removed and elements of them were added to the other three. The concept of reterritorialization and the rule of local law are both taken from these two characters (Keating 2001:135, 137ff).

Bickerton (et al.) have been criticized by political scientist Schimmelfennig for that their approach is more suited for an issue-specific work (like this thesis) rather than broader theorising. No perfect member state does exist in this criticism, because the states has not transposed fully to an EU level in their relation to each other (Schimmelfennig 2015:723, 726). This assessments on Bickerton (et al.) concept will be meet with the evaluation between the two ideal types, they are therefore separated from the empirical material, so the question is not about the member states existence. Schimmelfennig also points to the process in which member state still might be guided by core state values (sovereignty and identity) and limit the supranational centralization (Schimmelfennig 2015:728f). This will not be any problem for this thesis because I will be able to position the different values between the two ideal types and the aim is rather to place the arguments than to measure any transition between the two varieties of state.

2.1 Nation state

Bickertons focus is largely on how a national state can develop/emerge in to a member state. He argues that “the political order in and among states” of the old national states system is challenge in this new political order in Europe (Bickerton 2012:1f). Contra this stands the occurrence that nation states have the capability to “reproduce” their values (Billing 2010:6). A simple definition of the nation state could be that the state is the only one legitimate to use force inside its territories, thou this would probably not be a very useful definition for this essay (Geller 1997:13). In a sense it could be hard to clearly expose what makes up a national state. Especially when reflected that there may well be a split in the feeling of sovereignty between population and elite. The presentation of sovereignty to the domestic audience as a clear ideological standpoint might differ from the perception
that’s being held by the (barging) elites (Bickerton 2001:41f). However, the nation state creates a *collective identity*, which changes the relationship between territories, political institutions and identity. This can of course mean different things depending on the situation and there is also the possibility to have more than one nationality (Keating 2001:2, 160).

2.1.1 Nation state and identity

Keating states that “[n]ationality as a form of collective identity is neither more nor less ‘natural’ than others, and is constantly made and remade in the course of political experience” (Keating 2001:2). An issue occurs here with the term identity, because it is hard to classify. National identity will here be a way of talking about nationhood. This will mean that nation identity becomes “physically, legally, socially, as well as emotionally” related to the territory (Billing 2010:7). The idea of a clearly defined territory becomes crucial (Brown et al. 1996:29). This leads to the modern national state central aspect of its inner normative unity. There are no external restrictions and/or norms on the relationship between society and state. The nation state draws its power from either political principles and/or ideas (Bickerton 2012:54f, 69).

With the nation state comes the right to negotiate one’s status within it, due to the above discussed relation between the society (with inner normative unity) and the state (Keating 2001:1f) This is a striking feature of the nation state; its strive for unity. The idea is that issues of e.g. economic or ideological character shall all be changed/refined through unifying categories like the nation and the people. However it can be questioned how unified those categories themselves might be (Bickerton 2012:68). What might give this “unification” is the *limitation* in nationalism, it can only be inclusive to a certain limit. An important feature of this unification is the spoken and written language. When the idea of a particular nation state is being shaped the belief of a common language is of great significance (Anderson 1993:22, 27f, 53f, 92ff).

2.1.2 Nation state and economy

The globalisation of the economy is changing the relationship between the nation states function and the territory. This means that the older national economics is challenged, but the social sphere continues to be rather untouched (Keating 2001:134). Similarly, could it relate to how nation states emerge; there has to be some sort of polity and culture correlation under the right economic situation. It will mean some sort of economic *standardization* (Geller 1994:182f, 188, 200). So, the economy experience (with the economic standardization) will influence if nation state might emerge, and if it can survive in the long-term.

When it comes to globalization the nation state might not necessarily be brought down by a *determinitorialization*, the opposite might happen with a *reterritorialization*. This concept argues that the global economy may help to
preserve the cultural and social cohesion. When a regime that provides access to
the free market, can it also benefit from the external effects of this independence
(Keating 2001:135f). This can be related to the economic unification mentioned
above, however a will to do it is also needed. Therefore, there must be a mixture of
loyalty and identification with the state for its duration (Geller 1997:75, 182).

2.1.3 Nation state and sovereignty

Bickerton highlights the relationship between authority and legitimacy, in which
the nation state has created its own source of power in the connection concerning
state and society (Bickerton 2015:54). For the nation state sovereignty is a central
concept. The aura that surrounds it is closely related to the sense of nationhood.
Within the term nationhood there is an “us and them” feeling, which helps create
the above mentioned limitation for a nation state. With the identity’s language the
nationhood is sharpened (Billing 2010:4, 7). To create this national identity, it is
often important to be seen as unique (Kane 2011:225). It shall here be added that
these types of nationhoods are probably best to be seen as ideal type in their self,
and not as accurate representation of reality (Laible 2008:11).

In national state thinking; self-governing is crucial, this can also be related to a
nation’s self-determination. Interesting to note is that sometimes nationalism can
grow from a strong regionalism (Keating 2001:3f). This relates to the phenome
that new state is to “reproduce” the state structure (and values), which seems to be the
way if you (e.g. a region) want to become a state (Laible 2008:6). Sovereignty is
also vital in other ways, it is crucial in the states relationship to citizenship. This is
significant because with citizenship come rights. These rights are bound to the state,
with solitary feelings directed to the nation. With self-governing the rule of local
law in the territory becomes crucial. The ones that writes the laws in the sovereignty
territory has also holds the authority (Keating 2001: 134f, 138f).

2.2 Member state

To Bickerton the member state (in a European context) is defined by its self-
understanding that which is bound to a pan-European policymaking and
cooperation (Bickerton 2001:49f). This could be related to the (new) multi-level
decision process of the EU, there the member states manage to agree to a certain
amount of norms (Smith 2004:741 & cf. Milward 1992:20). In a neofunctionalism
integration thinking this would be understood as a web of linkage between different
regional interest groups that makes for a shift towards increase integration. Regions
want to trade with each other, without any borders. In time different interest groups
within the state’s starts to become more and more interested (because the economic
gains) in what is happening outside the national borders. This is then encouraged
from the ever deepening economic integration, which had led to loyalties being
shifted due to material interest (Rosamond 2000:52, 58f, 65f). It is hard for a clear majority to exist in this environment of divided societies, contra the nation state (Keating 2001:161).

There is also a shift in the base from which the national power is retrieved from. The legitimization comes from the public official rather than from the political community. This means a greater importance in the institutional rules for the member state compared to the nation state (Bickerton 2012:69). It is important to here note that the member state is more than just a title, like joining or exiting an international organization. The member state is more of a denationalization of politics, because it is not purely legitimizing itself by the terms the nation or the people compared to the nation state (Bickerton 2015:54f).

2.2.1 Member state and identity

Identity is in the member state is mainly drawn from the individual. This is critical in order to establish some sort of constrain on the intolerance of the underlying old nationalism. So it is perhaps not necessarily a creation of a new collective identity that takes place in a member state, but rather a way of controlling nationalistic impulses (Bickerton 2012:63). Bickerton also points to the concept of member statehood, where governments seeks “legitimacy in horizontal frameworks of policy-making at the European level” (Bickerton 2015:72).

This is vital because an identity must not necessary be built on difference, in the sense of “self and other”. It can also be constructed out of “sameness”, or in other word the cooperation is being built with an identity on “near-selfness”. The new identity will then be formed with “friendly-others”, there for example a strong cultural linking exist. This could be between different European nations, where it might be perceived to exist a strong association with one self and the other member states (Gibbins 2014:14, 16ff, 123). The identity of a given territory is not bound to certain culture. In the member states the culture is less about homogeny, with instead being more focused toward multiplicity and complexity (Keating 2001:135).

2.2.2 Member state and economy

The member state does not necessary regulate its economy within the state borders, it accepts regulations from an international or supranational level (Laibles 2008:205). Hence different interest groups can interact with other national or regional organizer of their particular sector to demand changes that benefit them (Pollack 1994:99). This is in line with Bickertons argument about the inner division in member states, neither categories like state or people can sublimate conflicts in economic areas (Bickerton 2012:68f). In a European context the economic development could be described as part of a shift towards more Europe and less state centralized economy, where a new economic logic grows or has already taken
root. Also of importance, in a European setting, would be the regional development funding (cf. Laible 2008:79, 100, 103, 122, 197).

So there is a “regionalization” of the economy in the member states. There is an internationalization on the economic front, which leads to new territorial planning. Here the intermediate levels of government will be strengthened by this, for example different regional administration (Pasquier 2010:35). This can be described as a decentralization of the economy (with more local production emphasis), where the economy is more focused on a particularly province or city (Keating 2001:134).

2.2.3 Member state and sovereignty

The member state has developed a type of sovereignty that could be define as post-sovereignty, as part of an adoption to a more global world. With sovereignty comes the ability to influence politics in international circumstances. Sovereignty could be interpreted as a system uphold between equals. This has led to some acceptance in limitation in the sovereignty if it is divided equally (Laible 2008:26ff, 33, 76f). Here the member states are actively seeking different types of constrains (or “surrender”) on its power. These constrains placed on the member state could although implemented internally, be depicted as external in there workings. To some degree this can be understood as a separation between policymaking processes from the popular will, to create constitutional tolerance (Bickerton 2012:64f, 67 & Milward 1992:20).

In a global world this concept of division within the states could mark the transcending from nation state to member state. This global order has led to an encouraging of minorities to seek autonomy (Keating 2001:1f). In Europe this could be explained through the above mentioned concept of post-sovereignty. The concept of post-sovereignty here means that sovereignty can be shared and divided, but it also adds that sovereignty can be contested (Laible 2008:11). This is perhaps most visible in the detachment between rights and citizenship, a person can make claims on rights without necessary being a citizen of the specific country (Keating 2001:134f, 142f).

2.3 To construct the ideal types – Table 1

The two ideal types in table 1 have been constructed out of the three main characters. This table is to be seen as a conclusion of the theoretical discussion in previous parts and dose therefore not include every argument mentioned above. It is only meant to try to capture the main theme of the nation state and member state. The different characters of the nation state and member state points will be used as “work questions” or filter in the analysis. They will guide the work process of the empirical material. The content of SNP’s arguments in the debates will be sorted after these three characters.
The placement of SNP between these two ideal types will be the ground for the discussion on how reasonable that position is. Given the material, this theoretical instrument is supposed to show how SNP’s argument can be interpreted. Neither the national state nor the member state might be a fully realistic point to hold, the interesting part is the relation to them in SNPs argument (cf. Eriksson 1989:189). As been suggested before the characteristics have a tendency to overlay, this will be more noticeable in the analysis part. However, with a clear insight in the work process (for reproducibility) this will not be any problem for the intersubjectivity (Badersten, 2006:189ff).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideal type</th>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Nation state</th>
<th>Member State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identity</td>
<td>Defined by the territory. Claims on self-determination. Inner normative unity, with limitations.</td>
<td>Territory and culture are not connected. Belonging to a bigger community of “sameness” and “friendly-others”. The individual.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>Interest lies within the borders, “reterritorialization”. The assumption of unity.</td>
<td>Loyalty against the “new center”. The assumption of division. Decentralization of the economy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1.* This presents the two ideal types constructed out of the theoretical discussion. The word “characters” has be chosen over “elements” or “levels”, because these three concept are (as here presented) not necessarily fully bound to a territory or representation of a belief (cf. Brommesson 2007:75 & Keating 2001:135).
3  Autonomy and EU – an analysis

The analysis will be constructed out from the discussion of theoretical part. This will mean that the text is constructed out of the three different characters: identity, economy and sovereignty. Furthermore this analysis will not be built along chronological lines, but rather around the argument/ideas in the material. The material will therefore be presented after its character and not the time of the argumentation. Each part contains the picture drafted in the SNP manifestos, for then see how these arguments have developed in the Holyrood parliament debates. For each subchapter there will be a conclusion on how the SNP stance could be interpreted between the two theoretical ideal points regarding the specific character.

However, this chapter has a slightly different disposition to the theoretical part. Here the three different characters of the two state models will here be used as the base for the analytic discussion. The theoretical part where intended to examine and explain the two concepts mainly pictured by Bickerton (et al.). On the contrary, so is here the goal instead to increase the analytic comparability between the two different ideal points/states to increase the understanding of the SNPs standpoint. Therefore it is the character of the two ideal points that will be explored in the analysis, to then find the different features and sort them after the ideal points (cf. Brommesson 2007:62ff).

3.1  Scottish identity in the view of the SNP

Identity is the first character of the two different state types. Here the two poles of a more collective inward looking based identity with a more individual outward rooted identity will meet (Bickerton 2012:63, 68). There also exists a significant dissimilar view on the bound to the territory between the two ideal points (cf. Keating 2001:135). However there is an interesting “twist” in the SNPs identity, which is shown in MSP Willie Coffey’s statement on the relation EU: “Scotland, too, is an ancient nation, and we are among friends who share with us a long history and common purpose” (SP OR 4 June 2014, col 31824). Here one might both argue for the old nationhood, but at the same time the identity appears to be linked to a greater community.

Why Scotland should be an independent country is asked in the 2010 manifesto. The answer is built on numerous reasons, but one distinct argument lies in a “distinct community”, which results in the conclusion that “independence is the natural state for nations like ours” (SNP 2010:22). This “distinct community” can be related to the identity created by the distinct language, which is stated by MSP Linda Fabiani on the importance of “Gaelic and its status as a national language”
However, this is perhaps more a way to draw a distinction to the rest of the UK and particularly England. This seems likely when taken into consideration that the SNP has also argued for that’s its “time for a new partnership on our isles – a social union that ensures Scotland and England are equal nations” (SNP 2010:17). The use of the somewhat unique language (Gaelic) becomes a way of building a national identity that contrast from the one that supposedly exist in the especially England.

However, the clearest way this nation state identity takes its expression is perhaps in the connection to an inner unity. This can be seen in the argument that only the Scottish parliament, elected by the Scottish people knows how to govern Scotland. Westminster is portrayed as an undemocratic and also unable to address or protect the Scottish people’s interests (SP OR 4 June 2014, col 31841 & SP OR DRAFT 1 November 2016, col. 40). Notable is also the argument that the UK is a threat towards the “most vulnerable people” in the Scottish society (SP OR 24 September 2014, col. 41). Here the people living in the Scottish territory seems to be mistreated and the SNP’s answer is the autonomy of Holyrood.

Nonetheless, on the issue of Scotland’s place in the world is it described in the 2015 manifesto as; “[s]cotland is an outward looking nation” (SNP 2015:18). If the distinct community would be an argument for a nation state view, so does the SNP turn this on its head when it starts to list the context of this community/society. This is perhaps clearest in one of MSP Kenneth Gibson entries in a debate about the Scottish independence referendum, where he states:

People who live in Scotland, whether they are Scottish, Pakistani, Indian or Chinese, or indeed English, Welsh or Northern Irish, by birth—the people who pay Scotland”s taxes, who elect the members of the Scottish Parliament and who have chosen to make a life for themselves here—are the most important stakeholders in the wider debate (SP OR 18 January 2012, col. 5418).

This quote illustrates the “inclusiveness” (opposite to the limitation of the nation state) of the SNP community. Though, there is still a bond to the territory. Yet, it portrays how the SNP has a broader culture view (multiplicity and complexity), which is as a typical member state trait, with the main focus on the individual (Bickerton 2012:63 & Anderson 1993:22). This leads on towards the understanding that the culture and history is interlinked and also a product of Scotland’s relation to its European neighbours. Interesting is also how the European neighbours are described as friends (SP OR 4 June 2014, col. 31807, 31824).

Here it becomes vital to note the fact that the SNP argues for a future where Scotland work together with the rest of the continent (i.e. EU). Learning and also teaching (with other member states) is seen as a part of this relation (SP OR 22 April 2014, col 29904). Engagement in international politics is described as almost something natural for the Scottish identity, with both historical and present references, especially with regards to the EU (this also connects to sovereignty).

A rather clear member state stance is also taken in the question concerning individual’s rights, where EU is depict as a mean to achieve greater protection for people (SP OR 14 September 2016, col 24 & SNP 2016:41f). It is here interesting
to reflect on the recent “Brexit” referendum and the overall UK attitude towards the
difference of identity to the one on the continent and the idea of an ability to fend

The SNP’s argumentation regarding the identity can be concluded to largely be
based in the direction towards the ideal point of the member state. This is mainly
due to the fact that the individual plays so large part in defining the people of the
territory priorities. Although, some part of the identity seems to be based more
closely to the nation state ideal, perhaps most prominent when the SNP tries to draw
up difference towards England. This is however countered by the argument that the
identity is built on the complexity and the movement towards less homogeny
(Keating 2001:135). The motivation for co-operation with other member states is
in line with Bickerton’s member statehood (Bickerton 2015:72). Therefore, the
overall conclusion is here that SNP appears to be closer to the member state in its
understanding of identity.

3.2 The SNPs economic standpoint

The SNP does in its 2015 manifesto take a rather clear stance of loyalty toward the
new economic centre. They want Scotland to stay in the European Union in the case
of an EU membership referendum. A particularly important feature is here the SNP
claims that numerous employments in Scotland are directly linked to the EU
membership (SNP 2015:9). This can be explained in the light of Laible’s argumentation, where a new economic logic against the centre has taken root or is
taking root. This might also be a (Scottish) regional trend from within the UK,
where Scotland is more connected to the continent than the rest of the isles (cf.
Laible 2008:79, 100, 197). Thou, there might not perfect harmony in the SNP
argumentation.

We have got to move away from Brussels-based micromanagement and bring
decision making closer to home (SP OR 4 December 2012, col. 14220).

This was uttered by Richard Lochhead, regarding the Scottish fisheries. The
determination to have self-control over the fisheries (and perhaps to some degree
other part of the economy) by themselves seems to relate to the previous discussed
reterritorialization. It seems like they want to be the ones that regulate the market.
The economic standardization within the nation is assumingly seen as a more viable
option for Scotland.

However, the annoyance is more directed towards the UK, which is blamed for
using Scotland’s economic interest as “a bargaining chip” in negotiation with the
rest of the EU (SP OR 4 June 2014, col. 31827). So, it is possibly more of a member
state characteristic, because it is more of a determination to sit at “the top table”
with the other member states, opposite regulate things alone (SP OR 8 September
2011, col 1589).
To follow up on the theme of Scottish fisheries, here lies an interesting division between different economic interests. The division is about the positive effects the European single markets brings (also to other parts of the economy) versus the regulations. Here we can also see the idea of a division in the people connected to the specific issue concerning Scotland’s fisheries. This division can be seen in MSP Stewart Stevenson comment that the (fishing) industries:

[...]

Poised this way, the division in the economy (which is a member state feature) becomes rather clear. However, the loyalty towards the “new center” is never questioned by the SNP MSPs in the examined material. This can also be seen in the discussion about the future economic situation after a “Brexit”, with a desire to keep a so close as possible connection to the EU (SP OR DRAFT 15 November 2016, col. 14f, 31).

The economy character in SNPs argumentation is not as clear cut as the above discussed identity. There are several features from both ideal types present in the material. On one hand, there seems to be urge for national control and on the other a clear division. Yet, it is important to not undermined the prominent specialization (and reform of EU) parts of SNP’s argumentation (cf. SNP 2010:17ff & SP OR 13 December 2012, col. 14762). Both sides of the argument can be merged with Keating’s decentralization of the economy, which seems to be fitting the main theme of the SNPs devotion towards the EU (Keating 2001:134). Because there is a aspiration for a close relation to the single market, but also a drive to be involve in (at least) some parts of its regulation.

3.3 SNPs understanding of Scotland’s sovereignty

In the SNP manifest from 2007 it is stated that “[i]ndependence is the natural state for nations like our own” (SNP 2007:7). The main topic of SNP’s sovereignty arguments touch upon the striving after an independent Scotland.

In short, the key aspect of the discussion by SNP MSPs argument that leads towards the nation states concept of sovereignty is about the people’s right to have control over the territory. This is summed up by MSP Gil Paterson in that “Scottish public have a higher regard for the Scottish Parliament’s ability to look after Scotland’s interests than that of the Westminster Parliament to do so” (SP OR 12 September 2013, col. 22443). The statement also shows an hint towards a “us and them” feeling, which seems to lead to the conclusion that only the nation can by itself protect its interest and people (similar to the separation in identity with England). It is not by any stretch of the imagination an uncommon opinion towards Westminster and quite often expressed by the SNP MSPs in the material.
Not surprisingly, but rather vital is that in almost the entire material the SNP representatives views Scotland to be like any other country. This is especially clear when MSP Nicola Sturgeon declared “that Scotland should have control over issues that any country in the world” (SP OR 21 March 2013, col. 18124). Another nation state feature is depicted in the defending of Scotland’s own agencies (e.g. judicial system) and a somewhat distrust towards other EU countries agencies (SP OR 8 September 2011, col. 1570 & 19 February 2013 col. 16668). But the desire for Scotland to become a member state prevails.

This is a prominent MSP Jamie Hepburn statement concerning the European Commission work program; that “the SNP wants Scotland to be a new member of the European Union” (SP OR 12 May 2010, col. 26053). To have an active role in the EU as a member state is something that comes forward in the material, again and again. It is a rather prominent feature of the SNP’s future plans for Scotland in combination with independence. This is noticeable in MSP Fiona Hyslops expressed view:

As for the issue of sovereignty, I believe that Scotland should be an independent country precisely so that it can decide for itself the bodies and organisations it can pool or share its sovereignty with as an independent nation in an interdependent world (SP OR 26 May 2016, col. 3).

However, the most interesting feature is what she wants to use the independence for, namely so that they can join international organizations. This becomes clearer later in the transcript when MSP Richard Lochhead argues for the importance of EU-members working together, which connects back to the above economic character (with regulating together). He goes so far as suggesting that the member states must be “sharing and pooling” their sovereignty to solve common problems (SP OR 26 May 2016, col. 12). These freely chosen constrains on the states sovereignty seem to be founded on a fear of isolation (SP OR 27 October 2016, col. 80).

Some parts of Brickerton’s argumentation about authority and legitimacy can be traced within SNP’s perception of sovereignty in the way they argue about the Holyrood parliament’s centrum in Scottish politics (Bickerton 2015:53f). Nonetheless there is an attitude that is clearly influenced by a post-sovereignty view in the material. In the SNP viewpoint sovereignty can be shared and divided between the member states (Laible 2008:11, 26ff). As in the part about identity there are indications on an understanding of rights that was separated from the notion of nationhood (Billing 2010:4, 7 & Keating 2001:134f, 142f).
### 3.4 Categorization of the material - Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideal type</th>
<th>Nation state</th>
<th>Member State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Identity</strong></td>
<td>• Claims on self-determination, with Holyrood shall do as it pleases.</td>
<td>• Are amongst friends in EU (&quot;friendly-others&quot;). History of working together (&quot;sameness&quot;) and must work together with friendly neighbours (EU is described as a family of nations), “member statehood”. Learn from other similar regions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <em>Distinct community</em>: Gaelic language and the claims of an “Old Kingdom”</td>
<td>• Don’t want to leave bigger community (i.e. EU) against the peoples will.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(ancient nation).</td>
<td>• Scotland is a European country (part of Europe) Culture is described as European.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Views independence as the natural state for a nation.</td>
<td>• The <em>individuals</em> (all who live within the boarders) are the people of the nation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economy</strong></td>
<td>• At least some parts of the economy should be under Scottish regulation control.</td>
<td>• Don’t want economic isolation from EU, because economically better off in the EU. Therefore loyalty/interest against the EU (&quot;new centre&quot;).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <em>Reterritorialization</em>, wants to move away from the economic “micromanagement” based in Brussel.</td>
<td>• Prefer EU regulations over Westminster’s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• <em>Specialization</em> (division) of the economy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sovereignty</strong></td>
<td>• Independence – one option to protect Scotland’s interests. Scotland shall hold its own future.</td>
<td>• Accepts and follows common EU rules. International approval is also important, follows therefore international guidelines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Perhaps not always keen to help other members with their internal problems.</td>
<td>• Individuals have rights even if not being part of “nationhood” – defend other EU citizens’ rights in Scotland. Also understands Scottish nationhood to be a product of Europe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• State <em>monopoly</em> on the distinct justice and education system.</td>
<td>• Scotland to be an independent country to join EU. Because they want to have direct influence over EU regulations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Want to <em>regulate</em> fisheries by itself.</td>
<td>• The EU needs collective action. Agrees that some issues are for the European Parliament exclusively.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2.** This illustration shows the data collected from the four SNP manifestos and parliament transcripts (listed in the references under 5.1 and 5.1.1) sorted after the two ideal point’s characters.
3.5 A reasonable position

There is a rather strong lean towards a member state ideal point when the material is categorized above. This also becomes prominent in that of the 39 analyzed transcripts the general SNP position can be labelled as mostly member state in 35 of them. Therefore SNP can overall be placed closer to the member state position, with some reservation. However, this is not a satisfying answer, because the aim is not only to place SNP between two ideal points. However, the ideal points are used to clarify SNPs position.

The goal is also to see if there is any incoherence in their argumentation; to see if the arguments follow any mutual principles (Beckman 2005:72f). Indeed, there are some common form of connection between the normative statements from SNP and a collection of coherent values and principles. This can be seen in that independence strive is exclusively directed towards the UK and not the European Union. If they would argue that the EU were in some way (character) not in Scotland’s best interest this wouldn’t be the case. They can, however, argue that they would like to change some aspects of the European Union, this will undoubtedly only influence SNPs position between the two ideal points. In practice this can be portrayed in MSP Alex Neil’s statement that “[w]e are not the member state; that is the UK” (SP OR 14 September 2016, col. 54). It is not necessarily in the way that EU works which is the issue for SNP, but rather Scotland’s perceived lack of influence (cf. SP OR 22 April 2014, col. 29906, 29922). This complaint is reasonable, because it correspond to both the principle of autonomy and EU integration (two distinct goals that they want to combine).

So the SNP autonomy strive must not necessarily be incompatible with integration, because it is solely directed against the UK (particularly England). Reflecting on these basic differences in principles, there is an older historical background for this (SP OR 4 June 2014, col. 31824 & Laible 2008:42ff). Nevertheless, this does not give a fully satisfying answer to the potential outcome that EU is only being used as a “lever” against Westminster to achieve independence. Certainly, there is an economic reality that motivates SNP towards EU integration. Yet, more interesting is probably the identity part summarizes by MSP Michael Russell (in a “Brexit” debate) in that:

European citizenship is, of course, an addition and not a substitution; we enjoy it in addition to our UK citizenship. We are presently Scottish, British and European, but now we are being forced to give up one of those. That is truly an existential choice because it goes to the heart of who we are and who we will be (SP OR 28 June 2016, col. 41).

Given that the SNP has no problem with the implication for sovereignty in an EU membership (as discussed above) and their position on identity is to some degree built on “sameness” (Gibbins 2014:14, 16ff). Additionally, there are also no clear national state limitations in the SNP concept of identity (Anderson 1993:22, 53f).
This results in that principal idea boils down to a *reasonable* position in the sense that the value of the territory’s autonomy is highly regarded, but the identity is partly separated from the territory (you only need to live there, in contrast to classical nation state).
The Scottish independence debate might have fallen into the shadow of a “Brexit”, or perhaps more correctly, it has been pulled into the aftermaths of UKs EU-referendum (e.g. SNPs determination to protect Scotland’s interest). One of the perhaps most central features in this analysis is the SNPs view on identity. The situation of SNP standpoint has been made clearer by Bickerton’s state models. Interestingly the analysis also points towards the importance of how sovereignty is understood for the acceptance of a membership. However, in understanding the characteristics of SNPs position, economy seems to play a less important role, yet it is still present. The SNP seems to a certain degree accept outer regulations in the national economy (Laibles 2008:205).

The theories helped to explain the SNP argumentation. It also helped in clarify if the SNP stance could be considered reasonable. It was concluded in the analysis that the SNP position could be viewed as reasonable because to a certain degree was the self-rule of the territory vital. Scotland shall by itself choose which international or supranational constitutions it would like to join. However, in the different organizations that Scotland might become a member, the SNP can accept to give up part of the country’s sovereignty (in the same amount as all other members).

This is a feature that is quite prominent in the SNP discussion about the EU; Scotland’s lack of representation. Interestingly the SNP here blames the UK for it and not the EU. This might explain why the SNP can overlook some issues that it has with the EU. Here Laible’s concept of post-sovereignty viable, in that limitation in sovereignty can be established if it is divided equally (Laible 2008:11, 76f). SNP therefore argues for increase influence and ultimately that Scotland should sit at the top table.

Perhaps even more important for the reasonability is in the SNPs viewpoint is that identity is relatively separated from the territory. The Scottish identity applies on all individuals that lives in Scotland, and not like the more limited version of national identity represented in the nation state ideal type. This is in line with the diversity in culture that Keating associate with the member state (Keating 2001:135).

In the implementation of Bickerton’s (et al.) built ideal types, it could be argued that the characterization of Scotland could be seen as closer to that of a member state. There seems to be a relationship between the feeling of sovereignty in combination with the understood identity and the will for cooperation. Posed this way, it is interesting to highlight the connection that Bickerton sees between the member state and populism. Populism is according to Brickerton hostile towards the notion of the individual in the creation of an identity and supranational decision making. Interesting it is here that the SNPs stance has similarities to a populism one.
in regard of it heavy emphasis on identity and sovereignty (Bickerton 2012:184,186f, 195). However, there is an important distinction in the SNPs standpoint, it is clearly the opposite in both categories, with its EU positive stance. Here shall however not the concept of “sameness” in the construction of identity be ignored (Gibbins 2014:14, 16ff).

This is an interesting finding in relation to other separatist movements in Europe. It is not a picture of a torn apart Europe that emerges in the SNP stance, thou the chances of new borders might be drawn internally shall not be overlooked. Yet the goal is not to split the people of the continent, but rather the opposite.

4.1 Future research

Perhaps the most notable in the result is the special roll identity and the perception of sovereignty plays in the understanding of the SNP position. The Bickerton description of populism in the member state has here been briefly touch upon. I would argue that the “reversed” populism in the Scottish case might give a new approach to Bickerton’s concept. However, on the contrary, one could make the argument for the uniqueness in Scotland’s case.

The use of the nation state and member state as an analytical tool have been proven to work. But this study cannot completely dismiss Schimmelfennig’s earlier mentioned critique fore it being more of a case study theory/method. This study could possibly be considered somewhat of a pilot study in trying to apply the Bickerton’s (et al.) theories on a specific issue (cf. Bickerton 2012:193f).
5 References

5.1 Primary sources


5.1.1 Scottish Parliament Official Reports: Meeting of the Parliament

Reference guidelines taken from:


List of SP OR (=Scottish Parliament Official Reports):


5.2 Literature


5.3 Internet