

**RELIGION AND SECTARIANISM
IN MODERN SCOTLAND**

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DECLARATION:

This thesis has been composed by myself; the work is my own; and it has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

Michael John Rosie, 07 January 2001

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ABSTRACT:

'Sectarianism' is often viewed with unease in contemporary Scotland, as an exclusively Scottish and Irish peculiarity, and evidence that Scotland is unworthy of modern nationhood. This thesis argues that such views represent a superficial analysis, lacking in particular a comparative framework looking beyond Scotland and Ireland. A broader view reveals that religious identity is, or has been until recently, a key organisational principle in European politics, and that 'sectarianism' has been a feature of most societies where Catholic and Protestant have mixed. If the term 'sectarian' is used to denote a society in which systematic discrimination affects the life chances of religious groups, and within which religious affiliation maps closely on to other social cleavages, the thesis argues that Scotland is not sectarian. Scotland's 'sectarianism' is not systematically structured and is better understood as bigotry or prejudice. In terms of religious connections and activities, Scotland is an increasingly secular country. Through analysis of social surveys it is demonstrated that religion does not provide the marker of political cleavage that some of the literature on modern Scotland would suggest. Most accounts of religious conflict in Scotland agree on one thing: it was worse in the past. A key focus of this study, therefore, is an examination of inter-war Scotland, a period which saw a particularly sharp polarisation between Protestants and Catholics. This demonstrates that most accounts of the present depend upon a selective interpretation of the past. The relationship of religion and politics defies a simple and symmetrical division between Catholic and Protestant. Religious conflict was not the defining character of inter-war Scotland - rather, it was an outcome of other, secular and profane processes. The study concludes by examining why religious division emerged as a controversial topic at the end of the 20th century. The question of sectarianism belongs within a broader debate about issues of identity and the place (or the absence) of religion within a new, re-imagined, configuration of Scottishness. The debate around sectarianism has been an invocation of past (and selectively interpreted) ghosts, an echo of a misunderstood past at the outset of a new era for Scotland.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis examines ‘sectarianism’ in twentieth century Scotland. Relating to division or conflict between Catholics and Protestants, sectarianism is viewed with unease, evidence that Scotland is unworthy of modern nationhood. It is often seen as a peculiarity exclusive to Scotland and Ireland, something other modern nations have outgrown. This question has particular resonance at the present time given the re-establishment of the Scottish Parliament, and the debate over the meaning and nature of Scotland and Scottishness. It has strong implications for ‘new’ Scots, from an English or New Commonwealth background, given that the dominant theme of sectarianism has been held to be hostility on the part of ‘native’, Protestant Scots towards Catholic, and particularly Irish Catholic, immigrants. For some, sectarianism reveals that Scotland “has no capacity for tolerance ... Scotland is a divisive, bigoted society”¹. Sectarianism represents the dark underbelly of the forward-looking, self-confident, apparently inclusive civic nationalism of contemporary Scotland; no ghost from the past but a cancer behind the civic facade.

This thesis argues that such views represent a superficial analysis of contemporary Scotland, their key weakness the absence of a comparative framework. It is assumed that Scotland and Ireland are deviant, in that religious differences elsewhere are largely absent. It is to Ireland, particularly Ulster and, subsequently, Northern Ireland that most accounts look for comparison. Research into party politics, class, gender, indeed any number of social and political issues, routinely compares Scotland with the rest of Britain, Western Europe and beyond. Popular accounts of religious division, by and large, look little further than Northern Ireland². To some degree this myopia springs from belief that religion and politics should not mix, and that in most parts of the modern world they *do not* mix. Northern Ireland, where politics and religion are inextricably linked, and with which Scotland has very many cultural connections, is seen as the obvious, the only, comparator. A broader view reveals that religious identity is, or has been until recently, a key organisational principle in

¹ O’Hagan (2000:25)

² For example, *Witness: Football, Faith and Flutes* (Channel 4, 12/11/95)

European politics. Religion and politics have mixed, and do mix, in societies generally regarded as outstanding examples of post-war European pluralism and tolerance. In West Germany, Switzerland, Scandinavia and the Netherlands, the class politics of left and right have largely mapped onto religious divisions between Protestant, Catholic and secularist. In England, Wales, North America and Australasia a clear political division between Protestant and Catholic, 'native' and 'Irish' can be historically traced.

There is also a fundamental problem with the terminology with which the debate is conducted. Terms such as Protestant, Catholic and sectarian are used without precision, taken as self-evident. Sectarianism in particular is imprecisely used, often as a casual, often superfluous, prefix. In this thesis 'sectarian' is used more carefully, denoting a society in which *systematic discrimination* affects the life chances of religious groups, and within which religious affiliation stands for much more than theological belief. It will be argued that, in this sense, 'sectarian' is not a sustainable description of contemporary Scotland. Scotland is an increasingly secular society where religious differences are diminishing in social significance. What passes for sectarianism in modern Scotland is better described as bigotry or prejudice - it is not systematic and it does not materially affect the life-chances of entire religious groups. This being said, there is a widespread perception that religious bigotry, or even simple religious difference, remains a serious social problem - hence the debate. Bigotry, of course, offers a challenge to any society, but the concern of this study is whether bigotry is a reflection of structured patterns of religious division in Scottish society.

In large part, Scots are concerned about religious bigotry because it lingers in one particular high-profile arena of Scottish life: football. Scottish football is uniquely dominated in the European game by just two clubs - Celtic and Rangers, collectively known as the 'Old Firm' - which have appropriated distinctive ethno-religious identities. Celtic 'represent' Scotland's Catholic community and its Irish immigrant heritage, its fans adopting the symbols and songs of Nationalist/Republican Ireland. Rangers, on the other hand, 'represent' a version of Protestant Scotland, its fans

adopting the songs and symbols of British Unionism, of Orangeism and of Ulster Loyalism. Rivalry between the clubs is thus given an exotic twist, one that suggests that sectarian divisions have a worrying resonance in Scottish society. Many studies of sectarianism begin with this rivalry, and some go little further, viewing it as a measure of the vibrancy of religious and political identities in Scotland. Indeed, it seems the *obvious* place to begin: where else can one find regular confrontations over religion? This is itself revealing. Studies of religious conflict in, say, Northern Ireland or Latin America would view the obvious starting point as the political system itself. It would look to Church-State relations; the role of religious identity in political organisation and support; relations between the Churches themselves. Sport, if investigated at all, would be seen as an interesting, but subsidiary, arena of study. Many studies of Scotland have reversed this process, looking at the conjunction of religion and political identities in Scottish football, and then generalising their findings to a societal level. This study does not focus on football, not because it is seen as unimportant (to many Scots, including the author, it is *anything* but that), nor because it is seen as unworthy of academic attention, but because it stands as a distorting mirror for broader Scottish society. Football is a voluntaristic realm where partisanship is intrinsic, indeed demanded. Searching for religious bitterness precisely where we know it exists tells us only what we already know - that some football supporters utilise religious and political symbolism to demonstrate loyalty to their team, but also (and just as importantly) to offend, annoy, and infuriate opponents. In other words, the dynamic of the Old Firm may be at heart a footballing, rather than religious, rivalry.

This study asks whether religion *really makes a difference* in Scotland. More precisely, it asks how widespread religious activity is in Scotland, and whether religious affiliation in Scotland can be shown to stand for more than just theological belief. In terms of religious connections and activities, Scotland is an increasingly secular country. Religious attendance and membership are declining; little more than a half of all Scottish marriages are celebrated religiously; once consecrated buildings lie empty, or have been converted to secular use. Further, it will be shown that on two central issues in the supposed religious divide - Northern Ireland and separate

Catholic schools - religion actually plays a fairly weak role; the Scots are *not* religiously polarised on these core 'sectarian' issues. Yet a significant proportion of Scots view the influence of religion, or more precisely of religious antagonisms, as a worrying problem in contemporary Scotland. Such a paradox seems puzzling: the *perception* of conflict remains although conflict itself has diminished. This paradox can be explained in terms of Scotland's increasingly secular nature. As fewer people are actively religious their knowledge of religious controversies is only rarely formed through personal experience. Rather it is media coverage of religious division - most frequently football-related bigotry and violence - which frames the public view of a sectarian problem. Those who are religiously active are most likely to dismiss religious conflict as not very serious or non-existent. Perceptions of religious conflict are highest amongst those who are not religiously committed, or who have no religious affiliation.

More importantly, this study seeks to determine how far religion matters in terms of political attitudes and behaviour. Scotland stands at an important point in its history: the rise of political nationalism, expressed not only in the emergence of the Scottish National Party but also in broad support for constitutional change, has given Scotland a Parliament. Have these changes received support from all the religious constituencies of Scotland, or is there an underlying religious division on key political questions? Has the increasing sense of Scottishness embraced all religious groups, or have some proved more reticent, perhaps fearful of the religious dimensions of Scottish identity? A good deal of the literature highlights these issues as potential problems for Scotland. Scottish Catholics, it has been argued, have historically felt distanced from Scottishness, in part due to the Irish heritage of many Catholics, in part because of the historic connections between Scottishness, Protestantism and Britishness. It is claimed that Catholics have suspected that constitutional change contained a danger that the 'new' Scotland would also be a more vibrantly *Protestant* Scotland, that an Edinburgh Parliament might have parallels with Stormont. The demonstrable weakness of the SNP vote amongst Catholics has been taken as evidence that Catholics feel 'less' Scottish than other Scots and that they have opposed constitutional change - in other words that they

stand apart on two of the defining political issues in late twentieth century Scotland. The weakness of such an analysis is shown in twenty-five years of social surveys, painfully under-used in this area. While Catholics are less likely to *vote* SNP than others they do not hold particularly negative *attitudes* towards the SNP. It will be demonstrated that there seems to be little religious difference in terms of Scottish identity, and that Catholics have been as supportive of constitutional change, including independence, as non-Catholics. In short, religion does not provide the marker of political cleavage that much of the literature on modern Scotland would suggest.

Where does this leave 'sectarianism'? In particular why do so many Scots view the relatively rare demonstrations of religious animosity with concern? Firstly, expressions of religious animosity in Scotland - whether on the football terrace or on the ritualistic parades of the Summer Marching Season - have adopted the symbolism and political aspirations of the Northern Irish conflict. Scotland and Northern Ireland share not only geographic proximity, but close cultural and human connections. It is unsurprising that Scotland should be sensitive to expressions of the kind of political and religious animosities that have torn a close neighbour apart. But there is another reason, encapsulated in Bruce's dismissal of a continuing 'sectarian iceberg' - "the relatively rare public displays of sectarian animosity" are feared to be only "the visible tip of a submerged mass of ice"³. For Bruce only the visible tip remains; others discern a mass of ice.

Most accounts of religious conflict in Scotland - whether concerned with prejudice, bigotry, violence or discrimination - agree on one thing: it was worse in the past. There is a strong sense that the potential for very serious religious conflict - and indeed for a sectarian social system - existed in the Scottish past, and that to some extent it *still* exists. At its most superficial, such a view is encapsulated in the claim that Scotland is 'Ulster without the guns'. More sensitive analyses point to apparently deep divisions in the nineteenth century between, and the mutual hostility of, 'immigrant' Irish Catholic and 'native' Scottish Protestant. The first point that

³ Bruce (1988:151)

this study makes is that, once again, a broader comparative horizon is instructive. Such divisions were not uniquely Scottish and Irish, they existed - often more violently - throughout the receiving societies of the Irish Diaspora, in North America, Australasia, and in England and Wales. The second point is that we cannot simply transplant the concerns of the present into the Scottish past: present day religious animosity cannot be understood as 'the same as in the past, only less of it', it is *qualitatively*, not just quantitatively, different. In large part this is because Scotland was more religious in the past. Religious imagery, practice and controversies resonated differently in the past because they *mattered* more. Religious antagonisms must be seen within the historical context of their time.

A key focus of this study, therefore, is an examination of religion and politics in inter-war Scotland, a period widely agreed to have seen the sharpest polarisation in modern times between Scotland's Protestant and Catholic communities. What this section of the thesis shows is that the understanding of religious conflict in the present is to some degree the result of a misunderstanding (or rather a selective interpretation) of the past. Whilst sectarian conflict - in terms of ideas, of political action, and physical violence - was indeed very sharp between c.1918-39, it can only be understood in the quite extraordinary circumstances of the time. Economic slump coincided with real fears of 'the end of Scotland' as a distinctive national community, and the emergence of a new British political dualism, firmly rooted in class cleavage. It was also a period of bullish Catholic confidence and dispirited Protestant gloom - found internationally and not simply in Scotland - which provoked a 'Protestant' backlash in many societies. But what this study shows is that even in that period of sharp religious conflict, the relationship of religion and politics defies a simple division between Catholic and Protestant. Religious conflicts were secondary to, and depended upon, the seismic social events of the period. Mass-produced poverty followed victory in the war to end all wars. Imperial confidence was shaken in Ireland, close to the (geographical and ideological) heart of the British sense of world mission. The rise of mass popular entertainment accompanied the universal franchise, the rise of Labour, and radical street politics of Left and Right.

An inexorable drift back to War, Churches emptied by poverty. the attractions of mass leisure: these were the defining features of the period.

Religious conflicts mapped on to these transformations and were provoked by them. but they rarely influenced them. Religious conflict was not the defining character of inter-war Scotland - rather, it was an outcome of other, secular and profane, processes. Unlike Northern Ireland, where social and political conflict was conducted through a religious prism, Scottish religious controversies were short, sharp, and with little consequence (except the impression that 'sectarianism' was more important than it really was). This is not to say that there were no genuinely religious conflicts, for there were. However, religious controversies produced, at least to late twentieth century eyes, unexpected alliances - there was, for example, a section of the Scottish Left resolutely wedded to Protestantism and prepared to defend it, all the while defending the liberties of Scotland's Catholics. Such controversies did not always involve a cleavage between Protestants and Catholics. More frequently the controversy stemmed from antagonism between the sacred and the secular, pitching clerical interests against that of the secular state. In such cases the close tactical association of supposed sworn enemies (Catholic priests and Orange chaplains, for example) reveals the poverty of an analysis which focuses on Catholic *versus* Protestant alone, and ignores religious *versus* secular.

A key problem in studying religious conflict in Scotland is that the past, to a varying degree, represents a 'Golden Age' for sectarianism. Accounts of the present are invariably drawn into history, either to explain the decline of sectarian conflict, or to support claims for its contemporary divisiveness. By convention, it would seem to make sense to design the structure of this study in a roughly chronological fashion: examine the past to illustrate the present. However, this study inverts this conventional architecture: Section One examines the position of religion, and of religious conflict, in contemporary Scotland, whilst section Two is concerned with conflict, and its context, in the inter-war period. Such an approach is necessary because, above all, this is a debate about *contemporary* Scotland, about what Scotland *is* as it enters a new era. The purpose of this study is to demonstrate that

Scotland is *not* a sectarian country (at least when the term is used with care), and, further, that the Scottish past was not sectarian in the way it is often claimed to be. The importance of the second part of the study is that it serves two functions. Primarily this is to show that the contemporary absence of a deep religious cleavage in Scotland politics is entirely consistent with the position of religion in politics during the relatively recent, and politically polarised, Scottish past. Secondly, it circumvents the response that ‘maybe Scotland isn’t sectarian now, but it certainly used to be’, by illustrating that the concerns of the present cannot be simply pushed neatly into a vaguely defined ‘bad old days’. The second part of the study, then, emphasises the argument of the first: twentieth century Scotland is not, and was not, polarised between Catholic and Protestant.

Chapter One argues that an adequate treatment of this topic requires careful consideration of the central terms involved. In particular, consideration is given to the casual deployment of the term ‘sectarianism’ and, building upon research in Northern Ireland, a more concrete definition is provided. Evidence that a broader international view reveals that Scotland is not unique in possessing religious divisions is presented, focusing upon party politics, violence, education, and the ‘ghettoisation’ of a Catholic minority.

Chapter Two demonstrates that on two core ‘sectarian’ issues in Scottish politics - Northern Ireland and Catholic schools - there is little religious polarisation. Sectarianism - as a *systematic* phenomenon - is examined, concluding that Scottish ‘sectarianism’ comprises religious bigotry and prejudice at the level of ideas, more rarely in the realm of action, and not in terms of the social structure. Many Scots, however, are concerned with religious conflict: whilst in objective terms religion is declining in its social significance, in subjective terms many Scots view religious conflict as a serious problem, that religion still *matters*.

Having found scant evidence of a religious divide over these ‘sectarian’ issues, Chapter Three demonstrates that religious affiliation matters less in terms of Scottish political behaviour and attitudes than has often been assumed. Whilst religion plays a

significant role - at least amongst some denominational groups - in how people *vote*. It is shown that the position in terms of *attitudes* towards political parties is less clear. The Chapter focuses on some defining issues in late twentieth century politics: the rise of political nationalism; the constitutional question; the emergence of the SNP; the fall of Scottish Conservatism; the decline of British identity and the dominance of Scottishness. That religion does not appear to be a significant factor in predicting individual attitudes on these crucial issues suggests that religious divisions have been exaggerated, in large part through a historical selectivity on the question of sectarianism.

Chapter Four, therefore, considers the religious divide in inter-war Scotland, a period widely viewed as experiencing the sharpest communal tensions in twentieth century Scotland. The period witnessed high levels of political and criminal violence on British streets, and sectarian violence is placed within this context. The period was one of *international* Protestant crisis and Catholic confidence, and it is shown that Scotland was by no means unique in experiencing religious tensions in this period. Finally, the controversy over 'mixed marriage' in Scotland and England is examined, revealing that the barriers between Protestants and Catholics were more permeable than many clerics liked to admit.

In Chapter Five the relationship between religion and politics is more closely examined, revealing that a party politics did not map easily on to religious divisions. The weakness and marginality of anti-Catholicism amongst the Scottish Unionist Party is shown, explaining a historic frustration amongst those who wished to place 'Protestantism before Politics'. The campaign of the Presbyterian churches against Catholic Irish immigration reveals real Governmental concerns about immigration more generally, but that the campaign was utterly lacking in support or influence. The relationship between anti-Catholics, Protestantism and Scottish nationalism is explored, and the curious case of the Scottish Nationalist movement - which included both anti-Catholic and anti-Protestant tendencies - is highlighted.

Chapter Six demonstrates that the incorporation of Catholic schools into Scottish state-funded education has never been under serious threat of revision, let alone annulment. This issue continues to be controversial, and it is shown that Catholic schools – far from being a unique defence against Scottish Protestant bigotry - are an international phenomenon rooted in Catholic doctrine. Legal and political opposition to the 1918 Act in the first decade of its operation is examined, revealing both its strength and limitations. While it is shown that religious prejudices were mobilised with some short-lived electoral success, ostensibly antagonistic religious interests on the Boards themselves co-operated closely.

Chapter Seven examines the intrusion of anti-Catholic parties into 1930s municipal politics. Far from demonstrating the vibrancy of anti-Catholicism during this highly polarised decade, they illustrate the marginality of anti-Catholicism to mainstream Scottish political life. Whilst militant Protestant success does reveal a latent, and relatively passive, reservoir of religious prejudice, it was an insufficient basis upon which to build anything other than an ephemeral, and sensational, protest over what were in fact largely secular grievances.

It seems puzzling that a serious debate on ‘sectarianism’ did not arise until the late twentieth century, by which time Scotland had undergone rapid and deep-reaching secularisation. The study concludes by considering why religious division has emerged as a controversial topic now. The question of sectarianism belongs within a broader debate provoked by constitutional change and the necessity to confront key questions of identity. Who are the Scots, where are we going, where have we been? At the heart of the debate on sectarianism is a question about the place (or the absence) of religion within a new, re-imagined, configuration of Scottishness. National identities are not summoned from the void, and neither are they fixed, constant. The debate on ‘sectarianism’, therefore, can be seen as part of a broader debate on the identity of Scotland and the Scots.

CHAPTER ONE:

PROTESTANT AND CATHOLIC IN MODERN SCOTLAND

One day in the Abbotsford School playground ... a gang of boys had rushed at us shouting a challenge:

‘Wha’ are yese - Billy or a Dan? Billy or a Dan!’ Fists up, they were going to beat us to a pulp if we gave the wrong answer. This was the first time either of us had heard of ‘Billy’ or ‘Dan’. And we had no idea what faction *they* belonged to. This was war and no mistake ... we stood a fifty-fifty chance of getting that beating ...

Charlie’s deeply sunken chin moved up a fraction. Undisturbed, he studied the gang one by one as they crowded round us. Red faced, their excitement crackling electrically in the air, they hurled the challenge at us over and over again. In a quiet, enquiring voice, he asked: ‘Whit’s a Billy? An’ whit’s a Dan?’

They were shocked into silence. Then from their midst came a thin, plaintive cry: ‘Och don’t yese know then?’

‘No.’

The leader, a heavily built, shock-headed boy ... pushed up close to us and seemed about to explain. And then, as if something snapped in the air around us, all the dynamism of the moment faded. To explain to us a cause whose meaning they themselves almost certainly did not understand, was suddenly too heavy a burden. They had never enquired into it, sanctified by battle as it was. Charlie’s question came to them as sacrilege, and ... left them nothing to oppose, nothing to do battle about The gang shuffled and muttered, and in a moment streamed away to find some other target, and we were left alone.¹

The key motif of much writing on Protestant and Catholic in modern Scotland has been that of conflict. The dominant chord discord, the defining images football rivalry and the Marching Season. The key reference point and the symbolism, has been provided by Northern Ireland. In 1995 a television documentary broadcast across the UK portrayed a post-industrial wasteland saturated with ethno-religious hatred as a ‘natural’ result of the religious mix in Scottish society. The film ended with the apocalyptic words of a young Orangeman: “The only difference between Scotland and Ulster is there’s no guns on the street ... that the guns aren’t here yet - and hopefully it will never happen”².

¹ Glasser (1990:2-3)

² *Witness: Football, Faith and Flutes*, Channel 4, 12/11/95

The theme re-emerged with a controversial lecture at the 1999 Edinburgh International Festival. Composer James MacMillan complained that Scottish “anti-Catholicism, even when it is not particularly malign, is as endemic as it is second nature”³. The speech was controversial before it was made, *Scotland on Sunday* reporting “Scotland is ‘Ulster without guns’ says composer” (this was not a parallel MacMillan drew)⁴. More interesting than the speech was the media reaction it spawned: Scottish front-page news for two weeks, the issues raised were examined by the UK broadcast media and led to hand-wringing by expatriate journalists that their former home was “a divisive, bigoted society”⁵. Significantly, interest in the issue led to the most comprehensive written treatment yet of the question of sectarianism in Scotland⁶. The collection was serialised by the *Herald*, which had carried three editorials and almost 100 letters on the issue in the fortnight following MacMillan’s speech⁷. Intriguingly, the serialisation did not elicit the same interest in the *Herald’s* letters pages. The issue, it seems, had faded as quickly as it had arisen⁸.

A useful point about MacMillan’s speech, and the resultant debate, was made by Walker:

The extreme nature of the claims made and the language employed have been the cause of both the vigour of the subsequent debate and, it might be said, the frustrating circularity of it. ... The long-standing difficulties of debating this issue - of penetrating the fog of anecdote, grievance, claim and counterclaim in the absence of much hard evidence - have been compounded by a sterile stand-off between demands for acknowledgement of guilt, and irritation about being invited to feel guilty.⁹

Walker’s comments highlight the problems facing research into religious conflict: instead of “hard evidence” there is myth and grievance. ‘Myth’ is chosen with care:

³ MacMillan (2000a:15). The lecture was given on 09/08/99

⁴ *Scotland On Sunday* (hereafter *SoS*), 08/08/99. Also *Daily Record* and *Guardian*, 09/08/99

⁵ O’Hagan (2000:25)

⁶ Devine [ed.] (2000)

⁷ Between 10-23/08/99 there were seven news reports; three editorials; ten feature articles; and 98 letters on sectarianism. This interest was not sustained into the third week.

⁸ The serialisation, and related features, were published between 28-31/03/2000. Only eleven related letters were published by the *Herald*, all within days of the serialisation.

⁹ G. Walker (2000:125)

Like traditions, myths connect with past realities. They do, however, draw selectively from the past, a process which involves selective exclusion as well as inclusion. In doing so, myth becomes a contemporary and an active force providing, in most instances, a reservoir of legitimation for belief and action.¹⁰

Such myths are not constructed out of falsehood, but from a highly selective understanding of the past. As such, myths are “fairly impervious to falsification”: they represent “a truth [or truths] held to be self-evident”¹¹.

Where, then, should a study of sectarianism in Scotland begin? Much of the following chapter will tease out some of the initial problems in addressing the myth, firstly by examining two common-sense starting points, subsequently by noting that common-sense - that which is portrayed as self-evident - is itself a central motor of the myth. In subjecting the term ‘sectarianism’ to some scrutiny, the need for a re-evaluation of religion’s place in modern Scottish politics will become clear. All accounts of Scottish sectarianism agree on one general point: conflict was worse in the past. This consensus informs the basic outline of this study. Section One, using survey data covering the last quarter of the twentieth century, will examine the significance of religious identities in contemporary Scottish society. Section Two then examines the place of religion in the politics of Scotland’s past, specifically in the period c.1918-39. Both of these approaches provide an analysis of sectarianism in contemporary Scotland and in the first half of the twentieth century. In doing so it will give perspective not just to ‘Ulster without the guns’, but also Scotland as “a divisive, bigoted society”.

RELIGION, POLITICS AND FOOTBALL

The starting point for such enquiry has been taken for granted. Many accounts begin (and some end) with the bitter atmosphere pervading football in Glasgow, because it seems the obvious, the common sense, place to start. Gallagher is correct to argue that “The hate and hysteria on display at Old Firm matches does not tumble out of

¹⁰ McCrone (1992:90)

¹¹ McCrone (1992:90); (1996:113,114). See also Schopflin (1997)

the social void”¹², but there is danger in assuming that attitudes expressed on the terraces are straightforwardly imported from other areas of life. Bradley, for example, has argued that research amongst Scottish football supporters “gives some validity” to the view “that Conservative Unionism is as strong as ever among Protestants in Scotland”¹³. It is difficult to reconcile this claim with the hard fact of Conservative electoral collapse occurring as it was written. The culture of the football terrace need not translate into actual political behaviour. We can relate this disparity more widely to the problem at hand: is the rivalry between Celtic and Rangers reflective of wider social conflict between Scotland’s Catholics and Protestants? This is a fairly popular view in Scotland, but one can easily point to fierce rivalries in Scotland and elsewhere which seem to have little social significance *except* in sport. The problem is to distinguish how far Old Firm rivalry is fuelled by the ordinary processes of sporting competition, and how far by wider social cleavages¹⁴. Football is theatre, and fans often tailor their songs and symbolism as much to antagonise their opponents as to display particular allegiances. It is far from clear that we can take the symbolic claims of football supporters at face value.

Football’s lusty expressions echo weakly in Scottish politics. Taking Rangers fans’ ultra-Loyalism at face value, for example, we might have expected a larger protest than 300 Loyalists for Gerry Adams’ 1995 visit to Govan Town Hall. After all, the day before 40,000 Rangers supporters had loudly expressed their hatred of Republicanism half-a-mile away at Ibrox. When John Paul II met Kirk Moderator John McIntyre under the statue of Knox at Edinburgh’s New College in 1982 - a meeting rich in symbolic meaning - barely 800 militant Protestants were present to demonstrate. Such protests were overwhelmed by the huge crowds (Catholic and non-Catholic) welcoming the Pope. “‘No Pope here’ said the predictable wall graffiti. ‘He’s been and gone’ a 1982 postscript added”¹⁵:

¹² Gallagher (1985c:44)

¹³ Bradley (1997:29)

¹⁴ For Kuper (1994:217): “the Old Firm rivalry has outlived religious hatred ... the Old Firm has survived as a phenomenon because the fans enjoy it so much. They are not about to give up their ancient traditions just because they no longer believe in God.”

¹⁵ Aspinwall (1989:76)

The final nail in the coffin of Scottish sectarianism was driven in by the Papal visit of 1982, less by His Holiness himself ... than by the Protestants and agnostics, Jews and atheists and others who welcomed him. The Pope's visit to Ireland seemed more a reaffirmation of monoculturalism, while in Scotland he symbolised polyculturalism. This may be a starting point for some constructive reflection.¹⁶

ECUMENICISM & SECULARISATION

That the *Churches* have not offered the most obvious starting point reflects the fact that relations between the major Christian Churches since the 1960s has been characterised not by conflict but by co-operation. Emphasis on sectarianism marginalises the fact of ecumenical co-operation, and more importantly, fails to adequately acknowledge *the* central process in religion in the late-twentieth century: secularisation. The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland has been described as “the whisper that was once the voice of Scotland”¹⁷. Clerical diminuendo - hardly unique to Scotland - has pushed historically hostile denominations together; co-operation has replaced competition (and conflict) as religion's influence has waned. Whilst Scottish Protestantism has a fairly long history of co-operation, until recently Catholicism viewed such initiatives with mistrust. In 1928 Pius XI denounced ecumenicism as leading to “indifferentism” and emphasised that worship alongside non-Catholics was “entirely forbidden”¹⁸. From 1950, the Vatican allowed local Catholic-Protestant conferences “to further the union of all Christians” and the World Council of Churches welcomed this “clear indication that the ecumenical movement has begun to make its influence felt” amongst Catholics¹⁹. The broad trend since has been towards co-operation and fellowship, although prejudice and mistrust lingered on both sides. In 1962 Protestant bodies were invited to a Catholic conference in Glasgow, a delighted Clerk to the Glasgow CoS Presbytery noting:

For a long time we have lamented the intransigent attitude which has been taken by the Roman Catholic Church, and their refusal to admit that those outside their Church are in the body of Christ. Here we have evidence of a

¹⁶ O. D. Edwards (1994:181-82)

¹⁷ Ian Bell, ‘Whisper that was once the strongest voice’, *Scotsman* 20/05/2000

¹⁸ McCarthy (1998:179-181)

¹⁹ *Glasgow Herald* (hereafter *GH*) 01/03/50; 10/03/50. Whilst the Catholic Church is not a member it has had close relations with the WCC since 1966.

change in attitude ... We see here the suggestion that we should sit down together as Christians. If anyone feels he cannot do it, I would suggest it is not his function as a Presbyterian but his function as a Christian that he ought to look at with great care.²⁰

The Dowanhill Convent conference received prominent and sympathetic coverage in the press, as “almost certainly the biggest gathering of Roman Catholics and Protestants, meeting as such, which has been held anywhere since the Reformation”²¹.

Dowanhill marks a public break from the cold war of the preceding four centuries. From here the Churches immersed themselves in co-operation, and although this has certain limits - for example shared communion is still a matter of dispute - it ushered in an atmosphere of mutual respect. By the early 1970s, Catholics and Protestants were joining in religious services, notably during a Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Détente led to small protests at Kirk General Assemblies: unperturbed, a Catholic observer attended in 1969, and from 1971 the Kirk issued a standing invitation. In 1975 the Archbishop of Glasgow, Thomas Winning, addressed the Assembly, Cardinal Gray attended in 1977, and in 1995 Cardinal Winning attended not only the Kirk’s Assembly but also that of the theologically conservative Free Church. Within a decade cautious dialogue had led to joint worship and cordial co-operation: since 1989 Action of Churches Together in Scotland (ACTS) has brought together the bulk of Scotland’s Christians in discussion, social initiatives and worship²². This is, in institutional terms, the big picture of Catholic-Protestant relations in contemporary Scotland, and it would be a central failure not to address this from the outset. The contrast with Northern Ireland is instructive. In 1999 the Presbyterian Church of Ireland voted against involvement in the Irish Council of Churches, rejecting formal links with Catholicism²³. One can find examples of mutual religious dislike in Scotland, but such instances should not obscure the fact

²⁰ Rev. Andrew Herron, quoted in *Scotsman* 07/03/62. Presbytery members attended two private meetings with Catholics in 1961. What made 1962 different was that it was a *public* meeting.

²¹ *GH* 27/04/62

²² ACTS member bodies comprise 90% of Scotland’s Christian churchgoers.

²³ McKay (2000:69)

that the Churches have developed a relationship of mutual trust and co-operation that seemed improbable as recently as the 1950s.

Beginning with the Churches, however, would only partially penetrate the myth of sectarianism in Scotland. Being a Catholic or a Protestant in Scotland can mean much more, or indeed less, than attending a particular Church or holding a particular view of God. A fundamental difficulty of getting to grips with sectarianism in Scotland is that of disentangling the meanings invested in seemingly straightforward terms, not least of 'Protestant' and 'Catholic'.

'PROTESTANTS' AND 'CATHOLICS'

In 'common-sense' terms the meaning of Protestant and Catholic appears unproblematic. However, common-sense is a cultural construct, specific to a particular place in a particular time. 'Religion' in contemporary Scotland has a variety of meanings relating not to the nature of God, but to cultural practices, ethnic identity, and a range of leisure choices. This complexity is revealed in the informal mechanisms for 'identifying' another person's religion according to school attended; place of residence; name; political party supported; and football team followed. If O'Brien, educated at a Catholic school, living in Coatbridge, voting Labour and following Celtic football club, meets Robertson, non-denominationally educated, living in Larkhall, voting Conservative and supporting Rangers, then the cues are present for each to place the religious identity of the other. Such stereotypes are highly fallible: Catholic schools are not exclusively Catholic, and many Catholics do not attend Catholic schools; residential segregation is not a marked feature of Scotland²⁴; and there is no easy denominational demarcation in political preference. Football cues may seem more robust, in that both Glasgow giants have cultivated an identity that stresses a Catholic (Celtic) or Protestant (Rangers) heritage. However, neither support is exclusively Protestant or Catholic, whilst other clubs have long discarded any 'religious' identity, or never had one in the first place. It is difficult to place an Aberdonian, a St.Mirren supporter, or a Liberal Democrat. Ascertaining a

person's name is the most basic (and discreet) way of placing them, but is highly inefficient, not least because of high rates of religious intermarriage. Some research utilises men's 'Irish' names as a marker for Catholicism, and Catholic parentage as a marker for Irish descent²⁵, conflating Irishness and Catholicism. Williams estimates that "in Scotland as a whole around 65 per cent of Catholics - and in Clydeside ... 80 per cent or more - are of Irish descent"²⁶. This reveals the limitations of conflating 'Irish' and 'Catholic'. One-third of Catholics, if Williams is correct, are *not* of Irish ancestry, and since this proportion falls to one-fifth in the industrial west, it is necessarily higher in the rest of Scotland. 'Irish' names might well be a good indicator of Irish ancestry, but they are less efficient as a marker for Catholicism. Further, not all Catholics of Irish ancestry have identifiably 'Irish' surnames: Edinburgh's Hibernian football club in the 1870s - whose players were all, by definition, practising Catholics and almost exclusively Irish or Scoto-Irish - featured players named Watson, Browne, Smith and Clarke, alongside more readily identifiable Irish surnames²⁷.

Such cues create a hierarchy of religious identity - being a *real* Catholic, or a *real* Protestant depends on a range of demographic and attitudinal characteristics. A politically-neutral Highland Catholic possesses fewer cues - is 'less Catholic' - than a Lanarkshire Celtic supporter with strong Irish Republican leanings. In a secular society within which many people claim no religious affiliation, this makes the terms Protestant and Catholic very complex indeed. A tension exists between self-definition and ascription, with 'religious' identities ascribed on the basis of traits which are, at the very best, only indirectly connected with religious belief and practice.

²⁴ Scotland bears no resemblance to Northern Ireland where Housing Executive figures suggest that "Belfast housing estates were almost totally segregated by 1998. In the rest of Northern Ireland 70 per cent of public housing was segregated, and that figure was rising". McKay (2000:78)

²⁵ See Mullen *et al* (2000)

²⁶ Williams & Walls (2000:233)

²⁷ See Lugton (1999)

SCOTLAND AND 'THE IRISH'

The key issue in Scottish sectarianism was mass emigration from Ireland. From the early nineteenth century the Irish Diaspora created a substantial Irish presence not only in industrial Clydeside, but Northern England and, subsequently, the English Midlands and South²⁸. Irish immigration transformed Scottish Catholicism from the small pockets in the Gaidhealtachd and North East to a sizeable community concentrated in the industrial central belt. Most accounts focus on this aspect of Scottish Catholicism to the detriment of the other influences on its development. Burnett describes the "Catholic Gaedhealtachd's cultural absorption into the Greater Glasgow [Catholic] ghetto" suggesting that this:

highlights the continuing hegemony of the Irish Catholic urban West as the dominant cultural bloc within Catholic Scotland and the continuing insistence that the 'basic background' to understanding modern Scottish Catholicism remains the historical experience of this constituency. There is profound irony in the fact that the obstacle to a further understanding of the nature of the contemporary Scottish [Catholic] community is ... the denial of parity of esteem by an overbearing hibernocentrism.²⁹

In recent years other ethnic components within Scottish Catholicism - Italian and Lithuanian - have received some attention³⁰, but as Aspinwall has recently emphasised "the suggestion that Catholicism in Scotland is an Irish phenomenon needs to be challenged"³¹.

Devine argues that this "almost exclusive concern with the Catholic Irish" proves a "weakness in the traditional historiography of the Irish in Scotland":

Scotland ... was distinctive within mainland Britain because it attracted large numbers of Protestant Irish from Ulster ... This important and substantial minority has resisted detailed and systematic historical treatment. Unlike the Catholic Irish they appear to have assimilated relatively quickly and did not stand out as different or alien. Contemporary evidence about them is therefore thin and meagre.³²

²⁸ J.Jackson (1963), Drudy (1986b), Delaney (1999), Handley (1943 & 1947), Devine [ed.] (1991)

²⁹ Burnett (1998:178,186-87)

³⁰ Burnett (1998), Macdonald (1978), Colpi (1993), Millar (1998), Bradley (1995d)

³¹ Aspinwall (2000a:105). US Catholicism also experienced this "hegemony of the Irish" - Herberg (1960:136-161)

³² Devine (1991:vi)

The dearth of historiography is surprising: a majority of Irish immigrants to Scotland in the first half of the nineteenth century, and over 80% in the period c.1880-1910, came from heavily Protestant Ulster. Estimates for the overall proportion of Protestants amongst nineteenth century immigrants vary between one fifth and one third, although it is clear that at certain times, and in certain places, the proportions were significantly greater³³. During 1880-1910 between a quarter and one-third of all Irish migrants to Scotland came from predominantly Protestant Antrim³⁴. The Irish brought with them a reservoir of mutual suspicion and a legacy of conflict, expressed for Protestants through the Orange Order. The Order arrived in Scotland around 1800, and by 1848 had an estimated membership of 700; by c.1914 its membership was 40,000³⁵. Into the 1930s “the most salient characteristic of the Orange Order was its importance as a focus for the Protestant Irish in Scotland”, demonstrating “that an Irish Protestant community identity was a fact of life ... although its profile was not as high as that of its Catholic Irish counterpart”³⁶. The Irish, then, “formed a significant part of the working-class membership” of many Protestant congregations in west central Scotland³⁷. Into a strongly Protestant culture with its own anti-Catholic traditions came large numbers of Irish Catholics and Protestants with a bitter history of conflict.

Conflation of ‘Irish’ with ‘Catholic’ can imply that Catholics are ‘alien’, and relegates Irish Protestants and non-Irish Catholics to the margins of discussion. In the 1940s, Handley complained that “the Scottish equation: Irish and therefore Catholic = Catholic and therefore Irish” denied “absorption into the stock” to “descendants of [Irish] immigrants ... so long as they remain Catholics”³⁸. Of Willie Gallagher’s claim that “in Scotland the Fascists are not anti-Jewish but anti-Irish”, Gallagher notes:

³³ Gallagher (1991:20), G.Walker (1991:49), McFarland (1990:154), C.G.Brown (1993:34)

³⁴ Collins (1991:14-15)

³⁵ MacRaid (1999:113,117)

³⁶ G.Walker (1992:178,179)

³⁷ G.Walker (1991:59)

³⁸ Handley (1947:305)

It is perfectly illustrative of their marginal status that even a sympathetic observer termed the Catholics as ‘the Irish’ - as members of a separate nationality - when, by the closing decades of the previous century, the majority of Roman Catholics hailing from immigrant stock were already Scottish-born.³⁹

Others claim equating ‘Irish’ with ‘Catholic’ is denigratory. For Reilly, “The glib, age-old equations - Catholic = Irish, Presbyterian = Scot - will no longer serve, and it is long past time to have done with such perniciously anachronistic labels”⁴⁰. For Bradley, “Irish and Catholic are clearly not the interchangeable terms they once were, though for those of an explicit anti-Catholic disposition, they remain so”⁴¹.

It seems strange, therefore, that Bradley and Handley themselves conflate the terms. Irish Protestants were marginal to Handley who claimed that the “vast majority” of Irish immigrants between 1798-1845 were, contrary to the evidence, Catholic. Quoting an 1834 claim that “a large number of the Irish in [Wigtownshire] are not Catholics”, Handley comments “Originally their forebears were, but lost that faith through lack of Catholic pastors and through intermarriage with the natives”⁴². The eight Orange Lodges operating within a 25 mile radius of Wigtown in 1835 suggest that many of the Wigtownshire Irish were, in fact, Protestant. Bradley’s conflation is explicitly expressed as ‘Catholic/Irish’ or ‘Irish/Catholic’ and contemporary Catholics are termed the “Scottish born Irish”⁴³. MacMillan too conflates the term, marginalising other threads within Scottish Catholicism: “Is the Pope Catholic?, asks the joke. Not if he is Italian, MacMillan would seem to answer”⁴⁴.

The invisibility of the Protestant Irish stems from the fact that Ulster Protestants claimed Scottish ancestry, and to some extent had maintained a Scottish culture in Ireland. This leads to an assumption that such immigrants “had little difficulty in

³⁹ Gallagher (1987b:1), quoting *Forward*, 4/11/33. Willie Gallacher was of a Scoto-Irish Catholic background.

⁴⁰ Reilly (1998:160)

⁴¹ Bradley (1995a:464). Note the marginalisation of Irish Protestants and non-Irish Catholics in this statement.

⁴² Handley (1943:287,294,82)

⁴³ Bradley (1995e:137), (1998d:216), (1998b:110)

⁴⁴ O.D.Edwards (2000:8)

settling down in Scotland and indeed re-integrating with their kith and kin"⁴⁵. Whilst it seems clear that the Protestant Irish had fewer problems in Scotland than their Catholic compatriots, some aspects of their culture and politics were seen as problematic, indeed alien, to 'native' Scottish Protestantism. From its arrival, Orangeism, the foremost organisational expression of Ulster Protestant emigrant identity⁴⁶, faced hostility:

feelings of outraged and contemptuous neutrality in the face of what was seen as an 'alien import' of party feeling were to remain constant in the 'respectable' bourgeois view of the Orangemen's activities throughout the nineteenth century.⁴⁷

Scottish Protestant suspicion of the Orange Order was motivated by its perceived *national* complexion, leading to complaints that Orangeism was "misunderstood and misrepresented", dismissed as "a mere Irish faction, a foreign import brought to disturb the peace of the country"⁴⁸. Orangeism also faced a *religious* problem, as it:

tended to be viewed by Presbyterians for a long time as essentially an Episcopal or Anglican organisation. Protestant Irish participation in militant lay Protestant organisations ... seem to have been minimal, and these organisations were careful to keep their distance from the Orange Order.⁴⁹

One must be cautious not to overstate the ease with which the Protestant Irish were absorbed into Scottish society: Orangeism had many aspects which were seen as alien, even in the eyes of home-grown No Popery campaigners.

One explanation of Protestant Irish invisibility is the perception that *authentic* Irishness is Catholic Irishness. This view is shared by those employing the 'Scottish equation' to denigrate Scotland's Catholics as alien and those who employ a parallel 'Irish equation': that in Ireland, Catholic = Irish; and Protestant = alien/British.

⁴⁵ Bradley (1995e:134)

⁴⁶ Witness the opening line from two versions of *The Sash My Father Wore*:
For it's here I am an Orangeman, *just come across the sea* ...
Sure I am an Ulster Orangeman, *from Erin's Isle I came*

⁴⁷ McFarland (1990:52,54). One 1856 Orangeman complained that Scottish Orangemen "are usually shunned as returned convicts, many intelligent and conscientious men avoid them as they would a mad dog." Quoted in McFarland (1994:80)

⁴⁸ Quoted in McFarland (1994:80)

⁴⁹ G. Walker (1991:52)

Bradley, for example, quotes an elderly Scottish Catholic dismissing Ulster Unionists as “impostors from Scotland”⁵⁰. ‘Irish’, like ‘Scottish’ in the Scottish equation, denotes not geographical origin or ancestry, but a political claim to ethnic authenticity. It seems clear that most Northern Irish Protestants have abandoned claims to Irishness:

In a 1968 survey, the three labels of ‘British’, ‘Irish’, and ‘Ulster’ were chosen with equal frequency. In 1992 two-thirds of Protestants but only one in ten Catholics called themselves British. Three out of five Catholics but only one in fifty Protestants called themselves ‘Irish’.⁵¹

‘Irish’, then, is an identity claimed by 60% of Northern Ireland’s Catholics, but only 2% of Protestants: conversely, 10% of Catholics and 65% of Protestants describe themselves as ‘British’. The Irish equation plays well in Northern Ireland, yet the Scottish equation plays very poorly in Scotland. Surveys find that both Catholics and Protestants primarily define themselves as Scottish and only a small minority of Catholics describe themselves as ‘Irish’⁵². Although many Catholics feel an affinity with Ireland, for most - like non-Catholics - their primary national identity is Scottish. The issue of national identity does not play the concrete and crucial role in Scottish constitutional politics as is witnessed in Northern Ireland⁵³. Nevertheless, the link between Irishness and Catholicism has been deployed from two quite different perspectives - to portray Catholicism as essentially alien and ‘disloyal’ to Scottish values, and to claim that Catholics suffer from a deep ethno-religious cleavage in Scotland. Aspinwall argues that: “Irish equals Catholic is a useful tool for interested parties on both sides. Unfortunately it was not always true in Scotland. Reality is somewhat more complex”⁵⁴.

⁵⁰ Bradley (1995c:109)

⁵¹ Bruce (1994:146)

⁵² See Chapter 3.

⁵³ On the Scottish ‘non-alignment’ of national identity, voting and constitutional attitude see Bond (2000)

⁵⁴ Aspinwall (2000a:106)

“ALONE AMONGST THE NATIONS”?

Memories of religious injustice - and the myths that envelop them - linger long:

Catholics still labour under the heavy weight of the bitter memory of non-acceptance in a society overwhelmingly and self-consciously Protestant ... Despised as foreigners of low-grade stock, ... they early developed the minority defensiveness that led them to withdraw into their own ‘ghetto’ with a rankling sense of grievance and to divide the world into ‘we’ and ‘they’ ... These feelings of rejection, exclusion and grievance, though they no longer correspond to the facts of ... life, and though they are deplored by more thoughtful Catholics, are still a real force among the great mass of Catholic people in this country. It takes a long time for such wounds to heal.⁵⁵

Such wounds were deep between *c.*1870-1914:

Protestants regarded Catholics as lazy, as primitive and superstitious in their religion, as slavishly submissive to pope and priests; they believed that Catholicism was associated with economic and technological backwardness; ... and ... regarded Catholics as being generally unpatriotic ... Of course, Catholics were equally uncomplimentary about Protestants, but the concentration of economic, and often political, power in Protestant hands ... meant that Protestants were far more often in a position to put their prejudices into practice.⁵⁶

Whilst the above passages could pass as descriptions of Scotland, they in fact describe the United States and Germany. In North America, like Scotland, Catholicism’s immigrant heritage played an important role in defining Catholics as ‘alien’, but German sectarian suspicions had no clear ethnic component. The bitter legacy of the Reformation echoed wherever Protestants and Catholics mixed. Comparisons between Scotland and Northern Ireland seem obvious, common sense, but wider comparisons are revealing.

One reason that Ireland is deemed the most obvious comparator lies in the perception that politicised religion belongs firmly in a backward past and that “whenever they have been mixed the result has generally been explosive”⁵⁷. Religio-political loyalties, in this view, are a throwback to what other, mature and civilised, societies have discarded. However, “The image of Scotland as a society riven with

⁵⁵ Herberg (1960:232-33)

⁵⁶ McLeod (1986:421-422)

sectarianism proves less convincing when the importance of religion in the politics of every European state is considered”⁵⁸. Religion is - or has been until recently - at the heart of western European politics. Confessional parties have been key players in every western European state *except* the United Kingdom and the Irish Republic⁵⁹. These parties belong to the mainstream of popular European politics: the largest bloc in the European Parliament, for example, began life as the Christian Democrat Group⁶⁰.

Religious identity provided a key organising principle in Western European democracy and extended far beyond the electoral realm. John Whyte has attempted to explain differing forms of religio-political engagement, and his model is useful in constructing an international perspective. Whyte describes two poles of religio-political structure, ‘open’ and ‘closed’. Closed structures feature parties drawing support from, and dominating, a particular religious community, complemented by confessional social organisations (such as associations of workers, employers, farmers, youth and women), and confessional leisure, media and education systems. Open structures are precisely the opposite: there is no specifically religious party, nor one which draws exclusively from one particular religious group; social organisations are generally secular; and the Churches play a subordinate role within the political system⁶¹. For Whyte, a clear division exists between Continental Europe, tending towards a closed system, and the ‘Anglo-American’ countries tending towards the open⁶²: “In Continental Europe, it might be said that a closed Catholicism has been faced by a closed socialism, a closed communism, even a closed Protestantism”⁶³.

⁵⁷ SoS editorial 27/10/96

⁵⁸ J.Mitchell (1996:29)

⁵⁹ The position here of Northern Ireland is less clear, although no party has appropriated a specifically religious label.

⁶⁰ Now clumsily known as the Group of the European People’s Party (Christian Democrats) and European Democrats. See S.Berger [ed.] (1982); Hanson (1987); Whyte (1981)

⁶¹ Whyte (1981). The relationship between confessional organisations and their respective churches has not been straightforward, vacillating between clerical patronage and hostility.

⁶² For Whyte: Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom.

⁶³ Whyte (1981:21)

The closed system reached its zenith in the Netherlands with confessional parties taking half the popular vote as late as 1967, and confessional economic, social and leisure organisations commanding the loyalty of their communities⁶⁴. Education, broadcasting and the printed media were organised on confessional lines with Catholics expressly forbidden to listen to Socialist broadcasts until 1965⁶⁵. Politics was organised in distinct 'pillars' (*verzeilung*) which expressed social and political cleavages in vertical (denominational) rather than horizontal (class) terms. Pillarisation produced a remarkably stable form of democracy by rigidly isolating religious and political communities in their own organisational pillars, and pursuing a 'politics of accommodation' between the leaderships of these structures⁶⁶. In the 1950s 95% of Dutch Catholics belonging to a women's, youth or farmers' organisation belonged to a specifically Catholic one. Similarly, 90% of Catholic primary school children were Catholic-educated; 79% of Catholic newspaper readers bought a Catholic daily; and 61% of Catholics belonging to sports clubs were members of the Catholic sporting federation:

But the central importance of sectarian sub-cultures was reflected in two other statistics: 91 per cent of [Dutch] Catholics marrying in 1957 married a fellow Catholic; a study of friendship networks showed that 85 per cent of practising Catholics included fellow Catholics among their closest friends, and a majority of them had no non-Catholic on their list.⁶⁷

Rigid separation led not to religious conflict but to an elite-dominated "regime of peaceful *though unfriendly* co-existence"⁶⁸. Although Dutch pillarisation far exceeded that found elsewhere - Switzerland and Germany for example - a thoroughgoing fusion of religious, political and social behaviour has produced cultures generally admired for their pluralism and tolerance⁶⁹.

⁶⁴ In 1946 the various confessional parties accounted for 54% of the Dutch vote and 47% in 1967. By 1977, with the merger of the major religious parties into 'Christian-Democrat Appeal', the confessional vote had declined to 35%. Bakvis (1981:3)

⁶⁵ Bakvis (1981:15)

⁶⁶ Lijphart (1968). Thung *et al* (1982:130) described this process as "coupling political passivity of rank-and-file members with close co-operation at the level of elites".

⁶⁷ McLeod (1986:413)

⁶⁸ McLeod (1997:18) - emphasis added.

⁶⁹ Swiss Catholics "remained loyal to the Catholic butcher, cafe, plumber and carpenter, even when the quality of a Protestant competitor was said to be better". Linder (1994:19)

Specifically Catholic parties exist in overwhelmingly Catholic countries - Spain, Italy, Portugal - and this should alert us to a major aspect of religion and politics in the modern world. Religious conflicts have often been at their most fierce when waged between Churches and the secular state. Conflicts over education, marital law, and the constitutional role of the Church were defining questions across Europe until c.1914. The *Kulturkampf* against late nineteenth century German Catholicism had strong echoes elsewhere in Europe⁷⁰. Conflict between Liberalism and the Catholic Church led to disestablishment in France (1905) and Portugal (1910)⁷¹.

Increasing state dominance in the realm of education led to the consolidation, or the beginning, of largely self-funded systems of Catholic education throughout Europe, North America and Australasia. Scottish Catholic schools have proved a focus of debate on the religious question in Scotland and it is symptomatic of the narrow, even parochial, focus of much of this debate that some commentators argue that this is largely, or exclusively, a Scottish phenomenon:

only in Scotland are Catholic schools [seen as] perniciously divisive, which tells us more about the country than the schools ... Alone among the nations, we are allergic to Catholic schools ...⁷²

The day Scotland is relaxed enough to recognise separate Catholic schools as the absolute right of a community which contributes to the enrichment of our national life and ethics, and is therefore not questioned as to its rights, Scotland will have arrived.⁷³

In these accounts Scotland is abnormal in its view of separate religious schools, that *alone* amongst the (mature, democratic) nations, Scotland has yet to *arrive*. Again, a broader view is instructive. Since 1918 the state has funded, administered and extended the Scottish Catholic school system; Catholic religious instruction is guaranteed by law; and the Church enjoys a religious veto on the teachers employed.

⁷⁰ The Swiss Constitution, for example, prohibited the Jesuits and the (re)establishment of monasteries between 1874-1973. Linder (1994:19-20). Similar prohibitions occurred in Germany and France.

⁷¹ In Portugal the founding of the republic "led not merely to the separation of Church and State but to a programme of anti-clerical legislation on a scale not witnessed in Europe since the French revolution". Conway (1997:26)

⁷² Reilly (2000:37)

The Scottish State-Church compact on Catholic education goes far beyond that found in many other modern societies, and at no point in the last 80 years has it come under serious threat of revision, let alone dissolution. As Chapter Six of this thesis demonstrates the Catholic ‘struggle for the schools’ was an international phenomenon, and Catholic schools remain politically sensitive in many countries. One might also note that even in ostensibly Catholic societies the Church has maintained its own schools: “the Church has sought, *wherever possible*, to develop its own structures of Catholic ... education independent of the secular power of the state”⁷⁴. In short, it is quite obvious that Scotland is not ‘alone amongst the nations’ in finding separate Catholic education problematic. As the *Tablet* recently noted:

Division and controversy, not always conducted with the charity that is due from the followers of the Prince of Peace, have dogged the issue of religious education in Catholic schools in England & Wales as long as most people can remember.⁷⁵

Neither does one have to search too far for sectarian violence in societies to which Scotland is all too rarely compared. The United States witnessed two nineteenth century Catholic-Protestant riots resulting in 100 deaths⁷⁶. As Aspinwall notes, “Unlike American sectarian savagery, the Scottish variety never developed into burning down convents or firing cannons on bigoted opponents”⁷⁷. In England the re-establishment of the Catholic Hierarchy in 1850 (to some ‘the Papal Aggression’) fuelled serious disturbances with deaths in Liverpool and Stockport. In 1862 Irish Catholic attacks on pro-Garibaldi rallies led to rioting in West Yorkshire, London and Birkenhead. In the 1860s William Murphy provoked anti-Catholic riots across the English Midlands and North ending only with his violent death. Orange-Green violence was common in Northern English areas of Irish settlement into the 1900s,

⁷³ Jim Sillars in the Archdiocese of Glasgow’s monthly journal, *Flourish*, May 1991, approvingly quoted by Bradley (1995e:158)

⁷⁴ Conway (1997:42) - emphasis added.

⁷⁵ *Tablet*, 20/05/2000

⁷⁶ See Herberg (1960:141-142); Carwardine (1992). In 1871 New York 100 died as militia protected Orangemen from Irish Catholic rioters. For a highly biased contemporary account see Headley (1873). McGimpsey (1982) offers a more measured view.

⁷⁷ Aspinwall (1989:76)

and in Liverpool, “Britain’s sectarian capital”, until the Second World War⁷⁸. Scotland also experienced considerable sectarian violence, particularly in the mid-nineteenth century. Coatbridge witnessed “a particularly vicious riot” in 1857 as Catholics attacked an Orange parade. Shots were exchanged and “After routing the Orangemen, the mob took control of the town, assaulting anyone and everyone at will ... Order was not restored ... until the military arrived from Glasgow”⁷⁹. A provocative march by Paisley Orangemen in 1859 was attacked by Catholic Irish miners, leading to severe rioting, one death, and 150 troops being sent to the town⁸⁰. Partick saw Scotland’s “most notorious” sectarian clash in 1875 after Irish Home Rule demonstrators were attacked by “hundreds of Orangemen armed with clubs and stones. Fighting broke out and continued well into the night”. During three days of disturbance the Riot Act was read and 90 arrested⁸¹. In 1883 Coatbridge, after 100 arrests in July, the August Home Rule procession was attacked. In Motherwell, returning Home Rulers were attacked and shots fired. In both towns the Riot Act was read⁸².

Whilst such disturbances represent a very serious level of violence, it can be seen that their scale and ferocity were equalled in England and surpassed elsewhere. This extended to non-violent protest: the restoration of the Scottish Catholic Hierarchy in 1878 occasioned no dissent comparable with the English ‘Papal Aggression’ scare of 1850. Indeed, the Scottish Restoration “was received with civilised tolerance; the few exceptions were predictable and they made little impact on public opinion”⁸³:

⁷⁸ MacRaid (1999:172-84). On Murphy see MacRaid (1996 & 1998) and Arnstein (1975); on the ‘Garibaldi riots’ see Gilley (1973); on Liverpool, see Waller (1981), Bohstedt (1992), and Murdoch (1992)

⁷⁹ Marshall (1996:34-35)

⁸⁰ McFarland (1990:64); Marshall (1996:35-37). Handley (1947:117) notes only that the procession “became involved in a row with some miners” but his primary source (*GH* 13/07/1859) states unequivocally that the miners twice attacked the Orangeman, the second assault being the bloodier.

⁸¹ Handley (1947:117)

⁸² Handley (1947:117). McFarland (1990:153) claims that the 1875 Partick fracas was “the last time the riot Act was read in Scotland”, but Handley has it read eight years later.

⁸³ McRoberts (1978b:28). See also Handley (1947:111). The Catholic adoption of English ecclesiastical titles was interpreted as an insult to the Church of England. In Scotland such a challenge was offered only to the small and fairly influential Episcopal Church as the Presbyterian Churches, of course, had no bishoprics.

Recent work on Catholic/Protestant conflict in England shows that it was not a phenomenon peculiar to industrial Scotland but one which could flourish just as vigorously, perhaps even more so, in areas like the north-west of England which witnessed serious outbreaks of large scale disorders in the 1850s and again in the later 1860s ... Therefore, given the Scottish reputation for religious extremism, one is tempted to wonder not at the many incidents of communal friction as such but, given the scale they could take in England, that they were not worse.⁸⁴

‘GHETTO’

One final comparative aspect remains to be addressed: the issue of the Catholic ‘ghetto’. The term is used in this context to imply the careful separation of Catholics from non-Catholics in terms of culture, religious ideology and institutional and personal life. The creation and sustaining of the Catholic ghetto in Scotland had three central, inter-related, factors. The first was desire to maintain the Faith, to protect it from corrosive contact with Protestants and agnostics. The second was the immigrant character of many Catholics in Scotland and their desire to maintain a distinct identity. Lastly, there was hostility from the wider society both towards Catholicism and the expression of immigrant identities. The ghetto was fortified from within and without, and suspicion and hostility on both sides fed off each other. The use of the ghetto concept has been criticised, Bradley arguing that:

The use of ghetto, with its inevitable conceptual limitations, means that the Irish are frequently seen as being in some way broadly responsible for limiting their own life chances and in becoming victims of prejudice ... [Tom] Gallagher is typical of some writers on the Irish in that he is often too willing to accept that the ghetto to which Irish Catholics often belonged was frequently self-imposed, particularly by sometimes cruel, prejudiced and small minded clergy, and that the Irish were willing dupes to the will of the cassock and a contradictory emotional attachment to their ‘homeland’ which invariably kept them in a social, religious and political hinterland.⁸⁵

Bradley, rejecting that isolation was self-imposed, shifts ‘culpability’ onto hostility from the wider society. Others have emphasised the role of such hostility: Callum Brown argues that a “fortress mentality” developed in face of “discrimination in employment and Protestant hostility in politics and culture”. Bruce argues that the Catholic Irish, “Like immigrant communities the world over ... responded to their

⁸⁴ McCaffrey (1983:291)

⁸⁵ Bradley (1998b:96-97). Again the easy conflation of ‘Irish’ with ‘Catholic’ should be noted.

hostile reception by turning inwards”⁸⁶. Anti-Irish prejudice is undeniable: the 1871 Census noted that the presence of the Irish-born in Scotland: “has undoubtedly produced deleterious results, lowered greatly the moral tone of the lower classes, and greatly increased the necessity for the enforcement of sanitary and police precautions”⁸⁷.

It is equally clear that influential components of the Scoto-Irish community saw isolation as a necessary defence against the lower moral tone of the *non*-Catholic community. For one Irish Nationalist newspaper in Victorian Scotland:

The dangerous association with ... those who differ so much from us in morals, manners, habits, customs, and religion ... is hard to avoid and so sure as we associate with them, so sure will we be defiled; their very breath is enough to do it ... If we do not gather ourselves from among them, they will corrupt the hearts of even the wise and good amongst us.⁸⁸

In England, the Irish Nationalist Hugh Heinrick insisted that “Isolation so far as possible, is the safety and salvation of the Irish people resident ... in the large towns of England”. Of the English urban working class:

Their example is evil, their contagion moral ruin. I am not stating this of the English people generally, though on the whole their example is bad enough. I am referring to those with whom the poor Irish are forced to associate, and of those it may be safely affirmed that Christendom does not produce anything lower or worse.⁸⁹

The maintenance of Catholic Irish identity was essential to the Nationalist project, for it ensured that “the Irish vote [in England] will be held for the service of Ireland, irrespective of the needs of English political parties”. Integration diluted the community’s Irishness and weakened the ‘Irish’ nature of its politics. Heinrick *regretted* any reduction in hostility: “the destruction of the barriers of prejudice

⁸⁶ C.G.Brown (1992:70); Bruce (1995:25). For McEwan (1973:93), Scotland’s Catholics were “too ready to accept with silent thanks the ghetto status which had been conferred on them”, although the Church’s role in constructing/buttreassing such status was ignored.

⁸⁷ *Census of Scotland*, 1871, volume II, xxxiv

⁸⁸ *Free Press*, 20/08/1864 - quoted in W.M.Walker (1972:651)

⁸⁹ Heinrick (1872:36). Of the English rural labourer, Heinrick (1872:37-38) was more scathing: “The typical Saxon...is slow, heavy and inelastic [with] pumpkin head, listless, unmeaning eyes ... His beard, in common with all inferior races, is scant and weak... His...mind, which is slow, dull, and unimaginative [is] not capable of originality or the less elevated mental qualities.”

promotes a social intercourse which is a curse rather than a blessing to the Irish people”⁹⁰.

More importantly, however, the Scottish Catholic ghetto represented one outpost of a *global* Catholic movement behind defensive walls. Internationally, Catholicism responded to the social and political transformations of the nineteenth century by retreating into the certainties of dogma:

For the Catholic Church the initial response to the new environment in which it found itself was to *denounce modernity*.... The Church encouraged detachment and isolation ... [and] promoted a ‘ghetto Catholicism’ in which Catholics were encouraged to forge their own institutions and organisations which stressed Catholic autonomy from political institutions.⁹¹

Viewing itself “as the divinely appointed embodiment of true religion” and all other religions heretical, Catholicism insisted that the ‘isms’ of modernity were transitory, ephemeral:

By choice the Church became an isolated fortress surrounded by an alien world made up not only of other Christian churches and other religions but also of atheists, secular scientists, and governments that had overthrown ... traditional values ... in the name of liberalism and democracy. The Church developed what has been aptly called ‘a state of siege mentality’.⁹²

The organisational expression of this mentality across Continental Europe was the closed politics Whyte contrasts with the politically open Anglo-American world. For Hugh McLeod, however, such a division:

overstate[s] the difference between the forms of Catholicism found in the two areas. In both there was a strong tendency towards the formation of a Catholic ‘ghetto’ in this period [1870-1914], though the types of organisation that this entailed were not precisely the same.

⁹⁰ Heinrick (1872:67,51)

⁹¹ Williamson (1998:17) - my emphasis.

⁹² McCarthy (1998:40,39-40). Pius IX’s ‘Syllabus of Errors’ (1864) denounced, amongst other things: freedom of religious conscience and worship; salvation outwith the Catholic Church; secular public schools; and the separation of Church and state. The final condemned Error was that “The Roman Pontiff can, and ought to, reconcile himself ... with progress, liberalism and modern civilisation”.

One key difference was the immigrant dimension of Catholicism in the Anglophone world:

The concentration of Catholics within certain ethnic communities assisted the Church in its endeavours to isolate them from anti-Catholic influences. Furthermore, the mutual reinforcement of religion and nationalism made it less likely that Catholics would give up their faith entirely. But the possibility of mobilising Catholics as Catholics was limited by the fact that ethnic loyalties were as strong as sectarian loyalties, and when the two came into conflict, ethnic loyalty often received a higher priority ... Thus in [pre-1914] Britain, preoccupation with Ireland meant that Catholics voted overwhelmingly for Liberal candidates ... in spite of the insistence by many clergy that Catholic schools would fare better with the Conservatives.⁹³

Given the coincidence of Liberal (and later Labour) and Catholic interests on both Ireland and wider socio-economic issues, there was little scope within Britain for a specifically Catholic politics, at least at the national level⁹⁴. The strategic position of the Catholic vote in Britain's industrial centres blunted Liberal secularism and anti-Catholicism, and the Catholic vote was attractive to Conservative supporters of Church of England schools. For these reasons the ghettoisation of Catholics in Britain did not develop politically in the same way as it did over much of Europe. It did, however, develop socially and culturally. Scotland is by no means unique in possessing a culturally defensive Catholic community. Indeed one need only look southwards to where a key change in English Catholicism in the latter half of the twentieth century has been the "dissolution of the boundaries which defended a distinctive Catholic sub-culture from contamination in a basically secular society"⁹⁵.

PROBLEMATISING 'SECTARIANISM'

The final concept which requires exploration is sectarianism, a term so pejorative that there are grounds for avoiding it altogether. Boyle & Lynch suggest: "Rather than the emotive use of sectarianism with all its historical baggage, the simple terms

⁹³ McLeod (1986:415-16). On Irish Nationalist -v- Catholic tensions in Scotland, see Handley (1947:47-92)

⁹⁴ However, School Board elections in England & Wales (1870-1902) and in Scotland (1873-1928), were generally fought between explicitly religious/secular platforms (See chapter 6)

⁹⁵ Hornsby-Smith (1987:214)

of prejudice, bigotry, dislike, and at certain times discrimination would be perhaps a more useful lexicon”⁹⁶.

Likewise, for Finn:

Although sectarianism usually signifies some allusion to bigotry, its precise meaning still remains confused and lacks genuine clarity ... Sectarianism is a coy term that blankets the social phenomenon to which the speaker alludes. Its very use allows the accuser, for that is the intent behind the speaker’s action, to make the accusation without the need to substantiate the case with anything resembling evidence.⁹⁷

Before asking how significant sectarianism is within Scotland we must decide what it is, and, indeed, what it is not. This is an approach markedly lacking in much academic literature. Lynch argues:

Key questions lack clear answers. How much sectarianism is there, when and where does it occur, who is involved in the discrimination, what effect does it have? Is it institutionalised or individualised, is it violent or merely low-level banter? These are all questions for which we have very few answers. Instead, we have lingering suspicions, stories our parents tell us and lots of speculation.⁹⁸

Lynch’s concern, therefore, is to *quantify* sectarianism, and implies that the term alludes to “religious discrimination”⁹⁹. For Damer,

Sectarianism in Glasgow can be defined as an insensate anti-Irish Catholic feeling, historically expressing itself as an active and pernicious discrimination in the housing and labour markets, not to mention physical violence. Its roots are old and deep and complicated ...¹⁰⁰

Here sectarianism entails a mixture of prejudice and discrimination and goes beyond religion, in that its target is not simply Catholics, but Catholics of an Irish background. This accords Scotland’s Catholics a rather passive status as victims.

⁹⁶ Boyle & Lynch (1998:197)

⁹⁷ Finn (1999:869)

⁹⁸ Lynch (2000:253)

⁹⁹ Lynch (2000:255). However, Lynch also talks of “sectarianism *and* religious discrimination” [emphasis added], suggesting the two are separate, if entwined, phenomena.

¹⁰⁰ Damer (1990:94)

Sectarianism, thus defined, becomes something that non-Catholics *do*, and Catholics *suffer*.

Bradley, criticising abuse of the term sectarianism, notes: “Of course, the ... term ... is appropriate in a number of instances; certainly when applied to narrow mindedness, bigotry and intolerance”. Such sectarianism by “many different sections of the populace has been responsible for much of the change that has taken place in the character of the Irish identity in Scotland”¹⁰¹. For Bradley, sectarianism is exclusively Protestant: “there is no anti-Protestant history in Scotland and there are no specifically anti-Protestant bodies that sectarian Catholics can join. Indeed, there is no demand for such bodies from Catholics”¹⁰². Gallagher, however, notes that some Catholics “can at times actively promote sectarianism” and that up to the 1950s some parishes “could be firmly anti-Protestant in outlook”¹⁰³. As Chapters Four to Seven of this study will confirm, an anti-Protestant history is not difficult to unearth.

In some accounts of sectarianism its meaning is treated as self-evident, and definitions remain implicit¹⁰⁴. Murray, for example, claims that Hibernian “were the first sectarian [football] team in Scotland”, as it was initially open only to Catholics¹⁰⁵. Here sectarian means exclusive, ‘Catholic-only’¹⁰⁶. Finn accepts that “By definition, a church choir is a sectarian body”, but insists this should not “identify the choir ... as sectarian in any pejorative sense”. However, he rejects that Hibs were sectarian: “it was not anti-Protestant. Participation by Hibernian in Edinburgh football was seen to be a means of mixing with Protestants and breaking

¹⁰¹ Bradley (1995a:443,453). Again the interchangeable use of Catholic and Irish may be noted.

¹⁰² Bradley (1995e:182)

¹⁰³ Gallagher (1997:423)

¹⁰⁴ In his *Old Firm: Sectarianism, Sport and Society in Scotland*, for example, B.Murray (1984) finds no place in his index for ‘sectarian/ism’. Likewise, in an article entitled ‘Racism, Sectarianism and Football in Scotland’, Horne (1995) makes no attempt to draw out the parallels and differences between the two phenomena.

¹⁰⁵ B.Murray (1984:19). The club, formed in 1875 emerged from, and required (until c.1892) that all members belonged to, the Catholic Young Men’s Society (CYMS). The club’s official centenary history describes it as founded on “sectarian grounds”. Docherty & Thomson (1975:43)

¹⁰⁶ Denominational schools and colleges in the USA routinely describe themselves as sectarian in this sense. Kenneson (1999:30)

down barriers and prejudices”¹⁰⁷. For Finn a Church choir is sectarian by definition due to its religious exclusivity, but a similarly exclusive sporting body is sectarian only if it fulfils some *other* criteria. Finn clearly believes that the connotations of sectarian in terms of choirs are relatively neutral, whereas in football they are heavily value laden.

This reflects normative views about the ‘proper’ position of religion in modern society. Exclusivity in organisations operating *only* in the religious arena is accepted, indeed expected. In other social contexts religious exclusivity is less acceptable because such contexts are widely viewed as ‘properly’ secular. One might expect that in an increasingly secular Scotland, the scope of acceptable religious exclusivity is rapidly diminishing¹⁰⁸. As Kenneson writes of US education:

to label something as sectarian requires that there be a normative mainstream from which sectarians deviate. The assumption ... is that being part of the mainstream entails being ‘secular’. This reinforces the widespread assumption that being secular is synonymous with being open, rational, and inclusive, whereas almost by definition being religious or sectarian involves being narrow, dogmatic, and parochial.¹⁰⁹

Bruce insists that certain issues associated with sectarianism in Scotland do not entail discrimination or prejudice, and in fact represent a desire for religious separation:

That a separate Catholic school system still exists is entirely due to the wish of the Catholic Church in Scotland to socialise Catholic offspring in the culture and ethos of Catholicism. This can hardly be regarded as evidence of anti-Catholic discrimination ... Some degree of segregation follows inevitably from the desire of orthodox Catholics and Protestants to maintain their own religious cultures. To see separation as a ‘social problem’ is to endorse improperly the view that religions should be liberal and ecumenical. Likewise, to regard membership of voluntary associations (such as the

¹⁰⁷ Finn (1999:869,873). See also Finn (1994). Any ‘mixing’ was regulated by the club’s rules - barriers and prejudice remained. One player was released because his faith had lapsed: “Brogan was in a quandary, all alone in a strange place. So he contacted Hearts - and signed for them with shouts of *traitor* echoing in his ears” Docherty & Thomson (1975:39). Finn insists that the ‘first’ sectarian club, due to the supposed influence of anti-Popery campaigner John Hope, was the Edinburgh RV club. However, Hope’s biographer - Jamie (1907) - makes few references to football, and Lugton (1999:37) describes Hibernian-ERV relations as unusually friendly.

¹⁰⁸ Note that the first debate of the Scottish Parliament was concerned with whether “non-denominational” prayers were an appropriate part of its official business - see *Scottish Parliament Official Report*, 1 (3), 36-53, 18/05/99

¹⁰⁹ Kenneson (1999:30)

Orange Order or the Troops Out Movement) which support conflicting political positions as a matter of public concern, as something which modern democracies should have outgrown, is curious. It seems most sensible to confine the shorthand 'sectarianism', and the concern it connotes, to the maintenance or re-introduction into the public arena of religious particularisms which, in modern societies, are supposed to be confined to the private world. The question of whether there is in Scotland a degree of sectarianism which is significant ... should not be answered by a measure which includes voluntary association as an index. More properly, what is at issue is the extent to which private prejudices are acted upon in the public sphere so as to affect the lives of those who do not wish to be affected.¹¹⁰

It is worth dwelling upon Bruce's point. Much of what passes for sectarianism in Scotland could be better understood as 'separation', a desire to maintain a distinctive religious culture or identity. As this study demonstrates, this is an extremely useful distinction.

DEFINING SECTARIANISM: A NORTHERN IRISH MODEL

It should already be clear that sectarianism remains under-theorised. A theoretical framework has, however, been developed by Brewer based on Northern Ireland. Examination of his arguments provides a working definition of sectarianism with which Scotland can be profitably compared to Northern Ireland. Brewer notes sectarianism is "more nebulous" than racism:

Its social markers are more opaque and less deterministic, and are much more context-bound to the beliefs of the people involved. It also invokes a social marker (sect/religion) whose saliency was long thought to have declined in the western world (unlike that of 'race'). Instances where religion remains a potent social marker are usually marginalised by being seen as a third-world problem (India) or as an aberration of modernity (the Lebanon, Northern Ireland). Thus, sectarian conflict is seen as both peculiar to the context in which it occurs ... and relatively unintelligible ...

This has led to a greater propensity to draw upon "lay notions of sectarianism" than in the analysis of racism. Brewer notes "points of convergence" between racism and sectarianism - both produce "inequality in a structured manner rather than randomly" and:

¹¹⁰ Bruce (1988:155-56)

Both also describe a set of social relations which permeate through all levels of society, rather than refer simply to a set of individual attitudes or prejudices ... Thus, there is similarity in the way that they are experienced at the levels of ideas, individual action and the social structure. Both are expressed, in various forms, as negative and pejorative beliefs, inequality, discrimination and harassment.¹¹¹

Brewer provides the definition for sectarianism used in this study, and offers an illuminating point of contrast between Scotland and Northern Ireland. Sectarianism is here defined as: “behaviour, policies and types of treatment that are informed by religious difference”; where “Sectarianism describes a set of social relations that are codified into a stratification system which religion causes or comes to represent”. Thus sectarianism “involves recognisable social patterns of inequality, some of which are predicated on discrimination”¹¹².

Brewer argues that Northern Irish sectarianism “involves stereotypical cues ... generalisations and stereotypes concerning behaviour rather than the perception of variations in physical appearance”¹¹³. Such cues:

cannot exist independently of sectarianism; they only function as cues because of sectarian beliefs about the assumed or real differences between the groups ... the use of stereotypical cues is only possible because of the social significance placed on assumed or real differences in behaviour, the attaching of importance to which already constitutes sectarianism.¹¹⁴

Brewer concludes that sectarianism in Northern Ireland is experienced on three levels: ideas, individual action, and social structure; and that “in one form or another, is experienced by all groups in Northern Ireland”:

At the level of ideas ... sectarianism is expressed in negative stereotypes, and pejorative beliefs ... about members of the other religion. It thus exists on this plane as much within the Catholic community as within the Protestant one. At the level of individual action, it shows itself in direct discrimination and

¹¹¹ Brewer (1992:352, 353)

¹¹² Brewer (1992:359)

¹¹³ Brewer (1992:360)

¹¹⁴ And crucially, “sectarianism depends for its existence on a popular culture which invokes religion as the boundary marker and hence is *already sectarian*.” Brewer (1992:360-61)

various forms of intimidation and harassment ... [to which] Individual Protestants are just as subject as individual Catholics ...¹¹⁵

Sectarianism in Northern Ireland is not monodirectional, but is perpetrated, and suffered, by Protestant and Catholic alike. However:

At the level of the social structure, sectarianism is experienced solely by Catholics, because it expresses itself in the patterns of indirect or institutional discrimination that Catholics alone experience and in their greater social and economic disadvantage.¹¹⁶

SQUARE HOLES AND ROUND PEGS: SCOTLAND AND NORTHERN IRELAND

Whilst Brewer's model highlights points of connection between Northern Ireland and Scotland, there are clear and fundamental differences. Brewer firmly roots Irish sectarianism within British colonialism and the fact that Northern Ireland is a "settler society"¹¹⁷. Scotland was not a colony but a coloniser, a junior partner in the imperial mission¹¹⁸. Neither is Scotland a settler society: migration to Scotland was economically rather than imperially inspired. Whilst the Planters saw themselves creating a new Ireland, many coming to Scotland saw themselves, initially at least, as sojourners¹¹⁹. Whilst orthodox historiography has long claimed that the Catholic Irish were from the outset a despised minority in Scotland:

It is now evident that the Catholic Irish in the west of Scotland in the first half of the nineteenth century were not as isolated and despised as some historians have claimed. Many members of that community participated in strikes, trade unions and political movements with native workers. Scottish reformers welcomed the Catholic Irish presence in the political agitations.¹²⁰

¹¹⁵ However, "Catholics in the working-class ghettos (as distinct from those in the middle-class suburbs) are subject to intimidation from a source which Protestants do not experience; namely the security forces" Brewer (1992:362-63)

¹¹⁶ Brewer (1992:363)

¹¹⁷ Brewer (1992:354)

¹¹⁸ One could, of course, make a case that the Gaelic-Highland 'periphery' was victim to British imperialism, but 'culpability' rests as much with the Scottish Lowlands than with England. Neither were the Highlands settled by non-Gaels, rather it depopulated.

¹¹⁹ This mirrors the expectations of later migrant groups. See, for example, Ballard [ed.] (1994)

¹²⁰ M.Mitchell (1998:258). The welcome was broad: after Glasgow Presbyterians raised a petition against Government funding to Ireland's Catholic Maynooth College in 1832, Glasgow Reformers raised a larger counter petition, to "encourage Religious Toleration". (1998:167)

This contribution to Scottish politics illustrates the different political resonance of Protestant-Catholic relations in Scotland and Ireland. Whilst there was considerable antagonism within Irish Protestantism before c.1800, the rise of Nationalism forced Protestants together, polarising Irish politics between Catholic/Nationalist and Protestant/Unionist¹²¹. “Catholic demands for first emancipation and later home rule, brought Protestants in Ulster together into a homogenous political bloc” and the ‘double minority’ problem became the central political issue in Ireland¹²². Protestants found themselves on one side of a serious conflict over the meaning of Ireland and Irishness itself. Religio-national loyalties had far less consequence in Scotland, and did not map onto conflicting views of the meaning and future of the Scottish polity. Along with the bulk of the electorate, Scotland’s Catholics supported the Liberals until c.1918. Whilst this support has been largely attributed to Liberal policy on Ireland, it was also consistent with the broader aspirations of Scotland’s urban Catholics¹²³. Whilst religio-political schism entrenched a sectarian political culture in Ireland, the Scottish political reality - Liberal hegemony - severely limited the potential of religious antagonisms¹²⁴. Scotland’s relationship with the British state was never seriously questioned in the nineteenth century, and Catholics remained a small minority, regionally concentrated and of limited economic power. Further, whilst Irish Protestantism spent the nineteenth century drawing into defensive alliance, Scottish Protestants were busily engaged fighting between themselves. Catholics did not pose sufficient threat to:

counter ... the [Protestant] fragmentation which already existed and which increased between 1870 and the present ... Scottish Protestants spent most of the nineteenth century arguing with each other, rather than with Catholics, and produced a *de facto* pluralism which hastened secularisation.¹²⁵

¹²¹ More precisely it might be noted that Irish Presbyterianism, like Irish Catholicism, long suffered a number of legal disabilities when compared to the Church of Ireland.

¹²² Bruce (1988:159). The ‘double-minority’ refers to the fact that Protestants were a majority of the Ulster population, but a minority across all Ireland whereas the position of Catholics was the reverse.

¹²³ See M.Mitchell (1998); Smith (1980)

¹²⁴ This was as true for antagonism between Protestants as it was for antagonism between Protestant and Catholic.

¹²⁵ Bruce (1988:159,160)

SCOTLAND AND SECTARIANISM

Bearing these major differences in mind, where does Scotland fit with this model of sectarianism? The first point to make is that the informal processes of ‘placing’ someone’s religion in Scotland seem almost identical to the ‘stereotypical cues’ of Northern Ireland. Brewer notes that such cues “cannot exist independently of sectarianism”¹²⁶ but there does seem to be a key difference between Scotland and Northern Ireland in the way such cues are used. In Northern Ireland they may be employed to ensure that “people avoid offending one another”, but they may also serve to highlight those who are to be avoided, mistrusted, discriminated against, attacked or murdered because of their religion. More generally they serve to demarcate those who are safe to be associated with from those with whom contact is undesirable or dangerous - they are, in other words, the means to discern the key social marker in Northern Ireland, religious affiliation¹²⁷. Cues are essential for everyday life across much of Northern Ireland, and for that reason they are generally effective in placing other individuals. In Scotland, as we have seen, the purposes of stereotypical cues are much more limited and much more fallible.

Crucially, Brewer insists that sectarianism “involves recognisable social patterns of inequality, some of which are predicated on discrimination”¹²⁸. If, then, Scotland is to be seen as sectarian in this sense, we would expect to find religious identity of central social importance, and materially determining life-chances. It has proved remarkably difficult to substantiate religious discrimination and disadvantage in Scotland. Nearly all accounts agree that discrimination was fairly widespread in the past and directed against Catholics, primarily by small, locally owned companies¹²⁹. Fundamental shifts in the labour market reduced the capacity for discrimination:

As the old economy based on shipbuilding and heavy engineering collapsed between the 1960s and the 1980s, the main employers came to be firms

¹²⁶ Brewer (1992:360-361)

¹²⁷ A.Finlay (1999:1.18)

¹²⁸ Brewer (1992:359)

¹²⁹ It might be noted that past discrimination is widely assumed but poorly documented.

owned in England or overseas who operated much more meritocratic forms of selection.¹³⁰

Such meritocracy is largely based on educational credentials, and a number of studies have noted that Scottish Catholic schools, once social class is taken into consideration, outperform the non-denominational sector. Research by Paterson found that whilst the likelihood of getting a job upon leaving school “shows a persisting but small disadvantage [for pupils] in Catholic schools”, Catholic schools had “a clear advantage” in the proportion of their pupils entering Higher education¹³¹. Labour market change and the rise of credentialisation means that “the occupational status of both younger Catholic men and younger Catholic women is now close to that of non-Catholics”¹³². The key problem in this respect is the scarcity of data. No consensus has formed other than that the disadvantage experienced by the Catholic community has declined in the late twentieth century. Williams & Walls in their interpretation of the occupational data used by Paterson, insist that Catholic disadvantage is still measurable, although declining: it “is indeed going but it is not yet gone”¹³³.

Disadvantage and discrimination are not the same thing, although if discrimination was widespread one would expect to find more convincing evidence of disadvantage. There is a perception within the Catholic community that it suffers from discrimination¹³⁴, and some argue that this reflects a tangible social reality:

It is, of course, all too easy to claim that you lost the game because of a biased referee, but that in itself does not prove that every referee is fair. The fact that some people pretend to be victims doesn't mean that there are no real victims: there *have* to be real ones, otherwise why bother to pretend?¹³⁵

¹³⁰ L.Paterson (2000a:146). A similar argument is found in Gallagher (1987a); McCrone (1992); Bruce (2000)

¹³¹ L.Paterson (2000a:149) - it must be stressed that in this part of the analysis, Paterson is discussing pupils at Catholic schools, rather than young Catholics *per se*: this distinction is more significant than it first appears. See also L.Paterson (2000b & 2000c)

¹³² L.Paterson (2000a:155)

¹³³ Williams & Walls (2000:247)

¹³⁴ Bradley (1995b: 91-92) found that 45% of Catholics surveyed in the St Mary's, Hamilton study “believe that discrimination in favour of Protestants is a social reality in Scotland”.

¹³⁵ Reilly (2000: 31). The football metaphor refers to a perception amongst Celtic supporters that Scottish referees are biased against Celtic. Reilly compares rejection of such bias with Holocaust Denial in an article in Celtic fanzine *Not the View*, February/March 1997.

On the surface this position seems strong, but one might ask how much anecdotal evidence about a phenomenon, how widespread the perception of it, is required before we must assume that there is an underlying and significant social reality¹³⁶. The lack of convincing empirical evidence - despite considerable contemporary interest on sectarianism - casts significant doubt on any claim that Scotland's social stratification system fits with Brewer's definition of sectarianism.

Whilst accepting that economic change has removed sectarianism from the occupational sphere, Reilly maintains a pessimistic note:

Crucially important though employment is, it is *not* the only thing that counts. And the trouble is that sectarianism does not disappear, but simply moves to other lodgings. That a cancer moves from lung to colon is not really a cause for celebration. It is pointless to look for discrimination where, *by definition*, it can no longer exist ...¹³⁷

Reilly's argument begins bullishly: "To ask if there is anti-Catholicism in Scotland is like asking if there are Frenchmen in Paris"¹³⁸. It seems highly significant that once he concedes that sectarianism is no longer prevalent in the occupational lung he turns to football to provide the colon.

CONCLUSION

This introductory chapter illustrates that much thinking on sectarianism in Scotland has adopted a common-sense view, and often this has simply served to perpetuate "the fog of anecdote"¹³⁹. The central terms of the debate – Protestant, Catholic, discrimination, prejudice, disadvantage – have frequently been deployed without any consideration of their complexity, their meanings taken as self-evident. To understand a concept or process it is essential to disentangle some of the meanings invested in the core terms used. As this chapter has demonstrated this is an approach markedly lacking in much of the literature concerned with 'sectarianism' in Scotland.

¹³⁶ How are we to judge, for example, the perception that some Catholic Labour councillors in the west of Scotland 'look after their own' to the detriment of the wider community? See G.Walker (1995:182)

¹³⁷ Reilly (2000:33) - emphasis added.

¹³⁸ Reilly (2000:29)

The lack of clarity adds to the mythology of religious division in Scotland, as does the tendency for the debate to degenerate into a grievance-fuelled swapping of generalities. A more critical approach – and one that considers broader comparative horizons – illustrates the poverty of generalities. The adoption of Brewer’s definition of sectarianism reveals the need for a careful account of religion’s place in contemporary Scotland. As Aspinwall notes, the question deserves “some substantial, intelligent debate rather than the 15-second sound-bite. Reality is more complex”¹⁴⁰.

¹³⁹ G Walker (2000:125)

¹⁴⁰ Aspinwall (2000a:114)

**CHAPTER TWO:
SECULARISATION AND 'SECTARIANISM'**

In the last chapter, sectarianism was defined as “a set of social relations ... codified into a stratification system which religion causes or comes to represent”, and involving “recognisable social patterns of inequality, some of which are predicated on discrimination”¹. Empirical evidence for religious disadvantage, let alone discrimination, in late twentieth century Scotland has proved remarkably elusive. Further, allegations that Scotland is ‘sectarian’ run up against another problem: sectarianism is founded upon the perception of, and the building of social inequality around, religious difference. Yet Scotland is increasingly secular, a society in which religious difference is declining in social significance. Can we then reconcile claims of a sectarian Scotland with the evidence of widespread secularisation? The short answer is that we cannot, unless we accept that what passes for ‘sectarianism’ in Scotland is, in fact, better understood as religious bigotry or even religious difference. This is not to claim some easy connection between religiosity and sectarianism: to define a society as religious is not the same thing as defining it as sectarian. On the other hand, a sectarian society depends upon high levels of religiosity, and inequality is structured around religious differentiation. The first concern of this chapter, therefore is to develop the definition of sectarianism (focusing on its anti-Catholic form) and its connection with popular religiosity. The decline of religiosity in Scotland will be examined and it will be shown that whilst popular religious connections remain high in Northern Ireland, Scotland fits into a broader international pattern with a sharp decline across a number of indices of religiosity since the 1960s. In this ‘objective’ sense, religion is declining in social significance in contemporary Britain, but not in Northern Ireland. However, it is also demonstrated that there is a widespread *perception* that religious conflict remains a problem in Scottish society. In this ‘subjective’ sense, many Scots seem to believe that religion still matters in a negative and divisive way. This lies at the heart of the question in Scotland: Scotland is not a sectarian country (at least when that term is used carefully) but concern about religious conflict, or, perhaps, religious difference

¹ Brewer (1992:359)

seems widespread. Consideration, therefore, is given to the form of such conflict, and concludes that public concern is based on media reports rather than direct personal experience. The chapter concludes by examining Scottish attitudes on two cornerstones of the alleged religious divide in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Catholic schools. It is on these issues that conflict is alleged to be focused, and it is here that we might expect to find sharp attitudinal differences between Scotland's Protestants and Catholics. The absence of religious polarisation underlines that 'sectarianism' in Scotland is more a matter of perception, of myth, than of tangible social division.

ANTI-CATHOLICISM IN NORTHERN IRELAND

To recapitulate Brewer's view of sectarianism, it produces "inequality in a structured manner rather than randomly" and involves:

a set of social relations which permeate through all levels of society, rather than ... simply ... a set of individual attitudes or prejudices ... [Sectarianism is] experienced at the levels of ideas, individual action and the social structure ... [and] expressed, in various forms, as negative and pejorative beliefs, inequality, discrimination and harassment.²

Anti-Catholicism has systematically "permeated the social and cultural structures of Northern Ireland" and has "shaped a whole social structure for centuries"³. Brewer and Higgins argue that anti-Catholicism at the level of the social structure should be understood as a resource "which achieve[s] some purpose in society". Anti-Catholicism:

is used to expedite goals, forms a source of support, and supplies material benefits anti-Catholicism in Northern Ireland is a sociological process for the production of different rights, opportunities and material rewards between people in a society where religious labels are used to define group boundaries.

Northern Irish Protestants mobilise anti-Catholicism to establish, defend, and legitimise their privileged socio-economic and political position. Anti-Catholicism

² Brewer (1992:353)

³ Brewer with Higgins (1998:viii-ix)

has proved an effective mechanism of demarcating group identities, and of reinforcing feelings of group solidarity:

[Anti-Catholicism] is used as part of a hegemonic process by which a sacred canopy is thrown around Protestants when their unity is essential to their interests. It has helped to overcome divisions between Protestants and to heal past conflicts between them ...⁴

The *effectiveness* of anti-Catholicism explains “its continued resonance” in Northern Ireland: “it helps to define group boundaries and plays a major sociological role in producing and rationalising political and economic inequality”. More importantly, anti-Catholicism in Northern Ireland “fits seamlessly with society and its patterns of cleavage and conflicts. Without this seamlessness, there is no sociological dynamic to facilitate its reception amongst those who listen to it, believe it, and who use it”⁵.

This seamlessness exists partly because the emergence of a modern industrial society in the North of Ireland “has not produced secularisation on a grand scale, and religious difference remains critical to many Protestants”:

However, the continued saliency of religion is only partly to be explained by the slow ravages of secularisation, with the commensurate high levels of religiosity in Northern Ireland. It also continues because religion stands in place for ethnic identity and thus represents the patterns of differentiation in an ethnically structured society.⁶

Crucially, that ethnicity in Northern Ireland is reducible to religion, and that religious identity remains of great importance to the people of Northern Ireland, means that the “seamlessness” of anti-Catholicism and Northern Irish society proves a serious “constraint for those people and groups which seek to move beyond sectarian politics”. In particular, attempts to mobilise on the grounds of social class in Northern Ireland have foundered “because of the saliency of ethnic differences as marked by religion”⁷.

⁴ Brewer with Higgins (1998:11-12,14)

⁵ Brewer with Higgins (1998:211)

⁶ Brewer with Higgins (1998:212)

⁷ Brewer with Higgins (1998:211,209)

Anti-Catholicism is not monolithic in character. Brewer describes several modes, with an important distinction between its 'active' and 'passive' forms. Passive anti-Catholicism is "unsystematic at the level of ideas and not reflected in behaviour":

imbibed unreflexively, without thought or systematic formulation, and reproduced unthinkingly in language with no malicious or discriminatory intent the kind that some Protestants have transmitted to them as part of their social learning but which remains as a cultural backdrop, rarely articulated and enacted.

In its active form, on the other hand, anti-Catholicism "represents a fully formulated structure of ideas, language and behaviour"⁸. Brewer outlines three modes of active anti-Catholicism", differing in ideological motivation, rhetoric, and articulation. Two of these modes - 'covenantal' and 'secular' - can be used "as a resource in social stratification and closure", that is in the production of sectarianism, whilst the third - 'Pharisaic' - "has no implications at the social structural level"⁹. The Pharisaic mode is rooted in the belief that Catholicism is founded upon doctrinal error, and articulated through "irenic language based on the New Testament" - love for the sinner but not for the sin. It is characterised by its theological content and the absence of a political agenda. Covenantal anti-Catholicism fuses theological and political concerns. Founded on notions of a Protestant chosen people, it articulates itself through prophetic Old Testament rhetoric. Catholicism is "baptised paganism", worshipping wafers, idols, and pre-Christian deities", the Pope the predicted Antichrist¹⁰. 'Rome' exists as a political conspiracy bent on obliterating political and religious liberty, with Republicanism (and, indeed, secularism) its instrument in Ireland. The religious struggle against 'Rome' is identical to the political struggle against Irish Nationalism, hence the historic slogan: 'Home Rule is Rome Rule'. Secular anti-Catholicism is primarily political, focused on the defence of Northern Ireland's place in the UK:

Reference is made to Protestantism, but it is primarily used as a political identity marker and political affiliation. Little stress is laid on the theological dispute with Catholicism; the complaint is more with the political and

⁸ Brewer with Higgins (1998:132)

⁹ Brewer with Higgins (1998:135)

¹⁰ Brewer with Higgins (1998:141)

constitutional position that [Irish] Catholicism represents ... the intent is political, the context secular: the struggle is clearly identified as a political one.¹¹

Here anti-Catholic Protestants need not attend Church, need not even believe in God. Their 'Protestantism' is political, its "*idee fixe*" the defence of the Union of Northern Ireland and Britain. Paradoxically, however, anti-Catholicism in its 'secular' form is dependent on continued high levels of religiosity in the wider society, in that conservative Protestant beliefs and activities remain popular amongst the broader Protestant community:

secular Protestants in Northern Ireland are attached to the symbols of religion despite their own low level of church participation because they are so exposed to conservative evangelicalism. In part this is also because there are no alternative lines of division other than religion in Northern Ireland around which to construct identity ... so closely do religion, politics, nationhood and locality coincide ...¹²

ANTI-CATHOLICISM IN SCOTLAND

Anti-Catholicism is the predominant form of alleged sectarianism in Scotland, and Brewer's account allows us to understand its decline. Any given society possesses numerous lines of cleavage, and in Northern Ireland there is close alignment between ethnic (indigenous/Planter), religious (Catholic/Protestant) and political (nationalist/unionist) cleavages. In Scotland, however, because Irish immigrants were both Protestant and Catholic, ethnic (Irish/Scot) and religious (Catholic/Protestant) cleavages were not closely aligned: "Catholicism was thus a poor boundary marker for ethnicity and could not represent other conflicts". The only way a sense of 'Catholic threat' could be manufactured in Scotland, according to Brewer, was through "claims of malevolent conspiracies emanating from Rome" but "the liberal inclination of Scottish Protestants made these unbelievable"¹³. Bruce notes that the Reformation developed unevenly in Scotland: by the time the Highlands had become largely 'Calvinised', "the Lowlands had become secularised and the dominant form of Protestantism, for those who still had any, was moderate,

¹¹ Brewer with Higgins (1998:155)

¹² Brewer with Higgins (1998:130)

¹³ Brewer with Higgins (1998:217)

rational, and ecumenical". Lowland Scotland simply did not have the religious conditions essential for "sustained ethnic tension" by the time the Catholic Irish began to arrive in numbers¹⁴. Conservative Protestant evangelism - the 'sacred canopy' for Ulster Protestant cohesion - gave Highland Protestants the ideological basis for ethnic conflict, but the Highlands were overwhelmingly Protestant, and untouched by Catholic Irish immigration:

The position for the working-class Scots of the Lowlands was the reverse. They had day-to-day competition with Roman Catholics for employment and housing, for political power and for the superior status of their culture and its symbols but they did not possess the religious beliefs which could have given a sustainable legitimate basis to their conflict. This can be seen very clearly in the complete alienation of working-class Protestants (in this sense meaning no more than 'non-Catholics') from the major Protestant Churches.¹⁵

It might be noted that Mitchell concludes that Catholic Irish immigrants in nineteenth century Lowland Scotland were participating in "strikes, trade unions and political movements with native workers", and suggests that socio-economic conflict between these groups should not be overstated¹⁶.

Secularisation, therefore, played a central role in the decline of anti-Catholicism in Scotland and highlights the sharp contrast with Northern Ireland:

Scottish society was ... experiencing secularisation, with reduced levels of religiosity, a declining social role for the Church in politics and a reduction in the salience of religious affiliations within the social structure ... Patterns of differentiation gave religious difference no resonance ... there was no specifically Protestant politics, no recognisable set of political or economic interests for Protestants, and no cultural stress on Protestantism as an ethnic boundary marker in the competition for scarce resources.¹⁷

This is not to deny that some Scots attempted to utilise anti-Catholicism as a resource for political mobilisation, but these processes made Scotland infertile ground for sectarian politics¹⁸. Precisely the same processes are found in England, a society historically as anti-Catholic as Northern Ireland. Through secularisation

¹⁴ Bruce (1988:151)

¹⁵ Bruce (1985a:42)

¹⁶ M.Mitchell (1998:258,257)

¹⁷ Brewer with Higgins (1998:217-8)

“Catholicism becomes less objectionable, if only because religion no longer provokes strong emotions”:

Moreover, Protestantism does not have the functional role in forging social unity and national identity that it formerly had in Britain ... National myths are no longer religious, politics is not structured by theological allegiance, and sets of interests do not correspond to religious differences. Thus, even if one claims that anti-Catholicism at the level of ideas remains latent in English society, it does not occur there at the level of individual action or the social structure. Other lines of fissure at the structural level make anti-Catholicism irrelevant to the competition for scarce resources and pointless as a means of social closure. All of this marks Ulster in the late twentieth century as unique in the British Isles.¹⁹

How does Brewer's work help us to characterise that anti-Catholicism still evident in Scotland? His typology of anti-Catholicism can be summarised around the axes of theology and of politics - where does Scottish anti-Catholicism fit?

SCHEMA OF ANTI-CATHOLICISM²⁰:

	<i>theological content:</i>	
	low	high
<i>political content:</i>		
high	secular mode	covenantal mode
low	passive mode	Pharisaic mode

For MacMillan, Scottish anti-Catholicism is “as endemic as it is second nature. Scotland is guilty of ‘sleep-walking’ bigotry, [as] a writer recently claimed”²¹. Such ‘unconscious’ bigotry matches Brewer’s definition of a ‘passive’ anti-Catholicism, “without thought or systematic formulation, and ... which remains as a cultural backdrop, rarely articulated and enacted”²². For the most part, Scottish anti-Catholicism exists at the level of ideas, it is unsystematic and unstructured, and only rarely reflected in behaviour, that is at the level of individual action. How do the ‘active’ modes play in Scotland? The theological modes do not play well at all.

¹⁸ See Bruce (1988)

¹⁹ Brewer with Higgins (1998:219). See also Colley (1992)

²⁰ Brewer with Higgins (1998:134)

²¹ MacMillan (2000a:15-16). The writer was Patrick Reilly (*Herald* 31/07/99). MacMillan draws more heavily on Reilly than his vague reference implies.

²² Brewer with Higgins (1998:132)

Contemporary anti-Catholicism is remarkably bare of theological content although some (mainly Highland) Protestants continue to insist on Catholicism's 'unscriptural' character, and it is possible to find small organisations virulently opposed to 'Rome'²³. However, the dominant form of anti-Catholic expression in Lowland Scotland - whether on football terrace or Orange Walk - is saturated by political, secular issues²⁴. In its symbolism, Scottish anti-Catholicism is resolutely secular: the Union Flag; Red Hand; the initials of Loyalism - UDA, UVF, UFF; the *Sash* and *Derry's Walls*. The most common abusive epithet for Catholics in Scotland is 'fenian', at heart a political term while the rarer 'papist' is resonant of theology. The politics here are not directly the politics of Scotland, but the historic conflict in Ireland. The flags, the symbols, the songs, the concerns, are effectively that of 'Protestant Ulster' expressed in a Scottish setting. However, there are crucial differences between 'secular' anti-Catholicism in the two countries. In Northern Ireland it is embedded in the social structure, expressed within important social, paramilitary and political organisations, and focused upon the key political issue in Northern Ireland. It also inter-connects with a powerful covenantal anti-Catholicism pursuing the same political goals within a theological framework. Additionally, Northern Ireland is a society where religion and religious identity *matters*, even to those who are themselves not particularly religious. In Scotland, on the other hand, theological disputes have lost their popular resonance. Anti-Catholicism (or, for that matter, anti-Protestantism) is articulated, but within very limited arenas, namely through football and the Marching Season.

The argument thus far is that sectarianism is a system of structured inequality, permeating a social system, and operating at the level of ideas, of individual action, and the social structure through pejorative beliefs and discrimination founded upon,

²³ E.g. the Scottish Reformation Society (SRS) which, since 1850, has sought "To resist the aggressions of Popery [and] To promote the instruction of Roman Catholics in Bible Truth" [*SRS Annual Report*, 1936], and the Scottish Protestant Union (SPU) who sell 'Loyalist fancy goods' at Orange gatherings.

²⁴ Many Orangemen possess deeply sincere theological convictions - the point is that the popular culture of Scottish Orangeism is political.

and articulated through, religious difference. Sectarianism is *not* “simply ... a set of individual attitudes or prejudices”²⁵:

Religious bigotry is found throughout the world and in all faiths ... but what distinguishes Ulster Protestant bigots is not the level of religious bigotry but the sociological purpose to which it is put and the enactment of this project as the social structural level.²⁶

It seems striking that what passes for ‘sectarianism’ in Scotland is precisely that which does not constitute sectarianism proper, that is “individual attitudes or prejudices”. Anti-Catholicism largely takes a passive form, a set of pejorative beliefs existing – unsystematically - on the level of ideas, and only rarely manifested in behaviour. Anti-Catholic behaviour in Scotland is mainly focused upon episodic ‘showpiece’ events, such as the Orange Walk or football fixtures and expressed in political terms, the frame of reference being Northern Ireland.

A key question is whether or not religion still *matters* in Scotland. Whilst one cannot say that a religious society is sectarian, it can be said that a sectarian society is necessarily religious. Northern Ireland is sectarian because religion still matters, is *the* social marker, and this is partly expressed through continuing high levels of religiosity. We must ask, therefore, how religious is Scotland? Has it higher rates of religiosity than the rest of Britain, and how does it compare to Northern Ireland? Equally important, however, is the way in which the Scots view religion, the importance they invest in it. As we shall see, there is a significant constituency which views ‘religious conflict’ in Scotland as a serious problem, and some Scots view the influence of religion in Scottish life as undesirable. There is some disjuncture between ‘objective’ and ‘subjective’ answers to the question of religion’s place in Scotland. One way of posing the question is to ask whether religious affiliation can be shown to have an effect on political attitudes and political behaviour. The concluding sections of this chapter will examine some of the key issues around which ‘sectarianism’ has been constructed in Scotland. The key political issue here is Northern Ireland, and if anti-Catholicism (passive or otherwise) were a notable factor

²⁵ Brewer (1992:353)

²⁶ Brewer with Higgins (1998:221)

in Scottish society we would expect to see strong support amongst Protestants for the continued union of Britain and Northern Ireland. Similarly, the issue of Catholic schools has been trailed as symptomatic of religious cleavage in Scotland, and again here we will investigate how important religious affiliations are in formulating attitudes.

SECULARISATION IN BRITAIN

One of the crucial elements of sectarianism in Northern Ireland is the continuing high level of religiosity. By contrast, religious connection has declined dramatically in Britain suggesting, on the face of it, that a sectarian society proves fairly resistant to secularisation²⁷. A range of statistics illustrate the trends in popular Church connection²⁸. The overall picture in the United Kingdom has, in the latter half of the twentieth century, been one of sharp decline. One-third of UK adults in 1900 were 'members' of a Christian Church. By 1950 this had declined to one-quarter, by 1975 to less than one-fifth, and the estimated proportion in 2000 is around one-eighth²⁹. Membership has not simply been outstripped by population increase; since the early 1960s the *number* of Church members in the UK has fallen by four million, a decline of 41%. Between 1960 and 2000 the number of active Church of England communicants halved, whilst Catholic Mass attendance across the UK fell by 39%. In 1900 over half of Britain's children were enrolled in Sunday Schools; by 1950 this proportion had declined to one third and the projected proportion for 2000 is just 4%³⁰. In 1900 85% of marriages in England & Wales were solemnised in a consecrated religious building; by 1950 this had fallen to 69%; by 1975 52%; and by 1999 stood at 39% in England and 44% in Wales³¹. This has been an international phenomenon: "Different countries show different rates of decline and different sorts

²⁷ This is not to say that resistance to secularisation is evidence of sectarianism - Church connection remains remarkably high in the USA - rather to say that we would expect that sectarian societies would retain a large degree of religiosity.

²⁸ An overview of religious statistics and their strengths and weaknesses is provided by Currie *et al* (1977)

²⁹ Brierley (1989 & 1999). 'UK' figures include England, Scotland, Wales and only those counties of Ireland remaining in the UK after 1922. 'British' figures exclude Northern Ireland.

³⁰ Brierley (1999)

³¹ Brierley (1989); Office of National Statistics 'Where people marry in England & Wales', ONS (2000) 121, 31 March 2000 (www.statistics.gov.uk).

of measures show different aspects of the change, but the direction of change in all indices of involvement in institutional religion is the same: downwards”³².

Critics of the secularisation thesis, while accepting institutional decline, point out that religious belief remains widespread:

Regarding practice or active membership of religious organisations, the findings [are] unequivocal. Such activities involve a relatively small proportion of the population ... But it is equally evident that between two-thirds and three-quarters of British people indicate fairly consistently that they believe in some sort of God, though exactly what they mean by this phrase is not at all easy to say.³³

For Davie the vagueness of this “some sort of God” suggests that the key issue is a “drifting of belief ... nominalism remains a more prevalent phenomenon than secularism”³⁴. However, whilst belief in God remains high throughout Western Europe, it too is falling and disbelief rising³⁵. There has also been some secularisation of religious institutions themselves, most reducing “the specifically supernatural in their product”:

Major elements of the Christian faith - the miracles, the Virgin Birth, the bodily resurrection of Christ, the expectation of Christ’s return, the reality of eternal damnation - have quietly been dropped from the teachings of the major Christian churches.³⁶

Finally, it is worth noting that secularisation is a fiercely contested concept. Berger argues that “the assumption that we live in a secularised world is false. The world today, with some exceptions ... is as furiously religious as it ever was ...”. Berger concedes that “modernisation has had some secularising effects”, but insists that “it

³² Bruce (1996:31)

³³ Davie (1994:74-75)

³⁴ Davie (1994:76)

³⁵ The British belief in God declined from 84% in 1947 to 71% in 1990 - Ashford & Timms (1992:40-42). According to Brierley (1999), disbelief has risen from 2% in the 1940/50s to 27% in the 1990s. The drifting from Orthodox belief makes such data somewhat unreliable: Bruce (1996:33) reports that two differently worded questions in one 1991 survey measured belief in God at 72% and 50%.

³⁶ Bruce (1996:36). Robertson (1987) notes that 87% of CoS churchgoers regarded themselves as Christian; 87% believed in God; 74% believed in the resurrection; 53% in life after death. Catholics were more orthodox, being more likely to regard themselves as Christians (98%); believe in God (94%); the resurrection (92%); life after death (72%)

has also provoked powerful movements of counter-secularisation”: “The world today is massively religious, is *anything but* the secularised world that had been predicted (whether joyfully or despondently) by so many analysts of modernity”. However, Berger makes a key exception to his position: “In Western Europe, if nowhere else, the old secularisation thesis would seem to hold”³⁷.

SECULARISATION IN SCOTLAND

Whilst Scotland may not be wholly secular, it is certainly deeply *secularised*. Some indices of the decline of religious connection in Britain and the UK have already been noted, but how far has Scotland shared in this decline? One problem underlying the available data is that they mask underlying demographic trends. In particular, Church membership, communicants etc. have declined over a period where the general population has increased. The English population, for example, rose by 27% between 1900-50 and by 17% between 1950-2000, whilst over the same periods the Scottish population rose by 12% and 1%. As our concern is with the *rate* of religious decline, in the following tables the positions in 1950 have been indexed at 100 so that broad historical change can be quickly grasped. The figures for 1900 and 2000 have been adjusted to take into account overall population change relative to 1950³⁸. The tables thus reflect more accurately the decline in the level of church connection over the twentieth century.

Taking first membership of Protestant churches (as the Catholic Church regards all baptised Catholics as ‘members’ their inclusion in the following table is inappropriate), there is clear evidence that: “Secularisation as a widespread breach of popular church connection ... occurred only from about 1963-65. From then until the present, the slide in all indices has been very severe for most Protestant churches”³⁹:

³⁷ P.L. Berger (1999:2,3,9)

³⁸ The population bases (not shown in the tables) are based on the 1901 and 1951 Censuses and on mid-1999 estimates by the Office for National Statistics www.statsbase.gov.uk/popest_mid99.asp

³⁹ C.G.Brown (1992:54)

INDEX OF SCOTTISH PROTESTANT CHURCH MEMBERSHIP, 1900-2000⁴⁰:

Year	CoS	FCoS	UFC	SEC	SBU	SCC	MCS
1900	104	79	-	121	98	98	65
1950	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
2000	48	68	21	46	74	27	28

Bases:

1900	1155000	15740	-	116000	16899	30170	8000
1950	1271000	22720	24556	109000	19704	35030	14000
2000	609450	15600	5300	49900	14550	9550	4000

Key:

CoS - Church of Scotland

FCoS - Free Church of Scotland

UFC - United Free Church

SEC - Scottish Episcopal Church

SBU - Scottish Baptist Union

SCC - Scottish Congregational Church

MCS - Methodist Church in Scotland

All the main Scottish Protestant Churches have seen a sharp decline in members since 1950. Until *c.*1965 Church of Scotland membership rose roughly in proportion with the population, constituting 24-26% of all Scots. By 2000 the proportion of Scots who are Kirk members has fallen to 12%⁴¹. For the Episcopal Church there is evidence that decline set in slightly earlier (during the 1950s), and for the smaller liberal Churches (UFC, Methodist and Congregationalist) there has been particularly severe decline since the 1980s. The Baptists and Free Church have been more successful in maintaining their membership, although there is evidence of the beginnings of a sharper downward trend.

Protestant membership decline in Scotland is very similar to that in England and Wales. What is most striking, however, is that Northern Ireland bucks the trend:

⁴⁰ Brierley (1989 & 1999). Pre-1929 CoS and UFC figures combined.

⁴¹ Brierley (1999)

INDEX OF UK PROTESTANT CHURCH MEMBERSHIP, 1900-2000⁴²:

Year	Church of England	United Reform Church	Methodist (E & W) ⁴³	Presbyterian Church of Wales	Church of Ireland	Presbyterian Church in Ireland (NI)	Methodist (NI)
1900	127	161	140	106	99	107	139
1950	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
2000	38	26	38	24	64	67	73
<i>Bases:</i>							
1900	2796000	333506	762406	158000	183800	226986	63573
1950	2959000	279266	730321	160000	204900	234800	50634
2000	1360000	87250	331000	41200	160800	193960	45400

Scottish Protestant membership decline has proceeded a little more slowly than in England & Wales, but considerably more rapidly than Northern Ireland. With Northern Ireland, where the Census measures religious identity, we can trace demographic effects more accurately. Here the key change is an increasing Catholic population: between 1951-1991 there was an 18% decline in the number claiming to be Presbyterian, a 21% decrease in Church of Ireland identifiers, and a 28% increase in self-described Catholics⁴⁴. Much of the membership decline amongst Northern Ireland's main Protestant denominations, therefore, is explained by demographic changes.

Changes in membership figures are problematic, in that they may reflect changes in record keeping or the removal of those who were no more than nominal members⁴⁵. However, when we turn our attention to active communicants⁴⁶ we find remarkably similar patterns since 1950:

⁴² Brierley (1999). No figures available for the (Anglican) Church in Wales. The URC was formed in 1972 through merger of the Presbyterian Church of England and the Congregational Union of England. Figures for 1900 & 1950 comprise the membership of these bodies.

⁴³ That is, the British Methodist membership minus its Scottish members.

⁴⁴ *NI Census*, 1991. 'No religion' accounted for 4% - Scottish surveys around that time found 25% claiming such an identity.

⁴⁵ See Brierley (1989:6)

⁴⁶ For Presbyterians, those members receiving communion at least once in the year, for Episcopalians/Anglicans those receiving communion on Easter Sunday

INDEX OF ACTIVE PROTESTANT COMMUNICANTS⁴⁷:

Year	Church of Scotland	Scottish Episcopal	Church of England	(Anglican) Church in Wales	Presbyterian Church in Ireland (NI)
1900	109	94	139	108	94
1950	100	100	100	100	100
2000	43	59	47	42	79
<i>Bases:</i>					
1900	830000	46000	1902000	141000	107000
1950	863000	56000	1847998	168000	126000
2000	375000	33000	1059000	80200	123000

Again Scottish decline is very similar to that in the rest of Britain, and again Northern Ireland stands apart. The stable level of Northern Ireland's active Presbyterian communicants amongst a shrinking Presbyterian community suggests a relative *increase* in participation over the past 50 years⁴⁸. This is confirmed by survey data: 46% of Northern Irish Protestants claimed to attend Church at least weekly in 1968; by 1978 this had fallen to 39%, but by 1989 had risen again to 44%. The proportion of Scottish Protestants claiming to attend weekly in 1992 was 16%, little more than a third of the Northern Irish level⁴⁹.

Institutional decline is not exclusively Protestant: adult Catholic Mass attendance in Scotland almost halved since 1950, a rate of decline only slightly lower than that of England and exceeding that of Wales. Northern Ireland is once more exceptional with the level of Mass attendance falling only slightly:

⁴⁷ Brierley (1989 & 1999)

⁴⁸ Comparing Presbyterian communicants and the Census population suggests that participation amongst Northern Irish Presbyterians rose from 27% in 1901 to 38% in 1991. Assuming around 40% of Scots would identify themselves with the Church of Scotland (as surveys suggest) then participation is around half the Northern Irish level and falling.

⁴⁹ Curtice & Gallagher (1990:187); Scottish Election Survey (SES), 1992. For evidence that respondents "grossly" overstate church attendance see Bruce (1996:130-1)

INDEX OF ADULT CATHOLIC MASS ATTENDANCE⁵⁰:

Year	Scotland	England	Wales	N.Ireland
1900	93	100	95	101
1950	100	100	100	100
2000	54	51	61	94
<i>Bases:</i>				
1900	341660	1109020	42610	408870
1950	420100	1495390	57460	447890
2000	226500	922000	39720	521500

Again these figures are confirmed in surveys: in 1968 95% of Northern Irish Catholics claimed to attend Mass at least once a week, and in 1989 86%. Census figures suggest an attendance rate of 95% in 1901 and 1951, and 85% in 1991. In 1992 51% of Scottish Catholics claimed to attend at least weekly and in one 1994 survey 41% of Catholics were found at Mass⁵¹.

Further data support the case that Scotland fits a British pattern of secularisation. In 1900 94% of Scottish marriages were celebrated religiously, compared to 85% in England & Wales, and 98% in all Ireland. In 1999 the rates were 58% in Scotland, 39% in England, 44% in Wales, and around 75% in Northern Ireland⁵². There is considerable regional variation. In Greater London only 25% of marriages in 1999 were religious, whereas on Merseyside they accounted for 48%, and in Greater Manchester 43%; Welsh rates vary between 31-54%⁵³. Recent Scottish figures are not available, but in 1982, when 60% of marriages were religious, rates varied between 50% in Lothian and 85% in the Western Isles⁵⁴. Relatively low rates (around 50%) were found in parts of urban East-Central Scotland, and high rates (70% and over) in some rural areas and in parts of Strathclyde. In sharp contrast, whilst 75% of Northern Irish marriages in 1995 were religious, the lowest rates were found in North Down (57%), Carrickfergus (59%), and Newtonabbey (66%)⁵⁵. These districts share two other features - the lowest proportions of Catholics, and the

⁵⁰ Brierley (1999)

⁵¹ Curtice & Gallagher (1990:187); *NI Census*; SES, 1992; Brierley & Macdonald (1995)

⁵² Brierley (1989), *Annual Report for the Registrar General for Scotland* (hereafter *RGS*) 1999. Brierley estimated the 2000 rate in N.Ireland as 82% but the *RGNI* 1998 reports the 1997 rate at 77% - the 1999 N.Irish estimate is my own.

⁵³ Adapted from *ONS* (2000):121

⁵⁴ Calculated from *RGS* 1982. No regional breakdown published subsequently.

highest proportions of those describing themselves as being of no religion⁵⁶. This suggests that where Protestantism is numerically dominant, and less immediately 'threatened' by ethno-religious rivals, there is evidence of a greater degree of secularisation. More generally, it would seem reasonable to assume that the continuing strong popular connections with institutional religion in Northern Ireland are in some part a consequence of sectarianism. Bruce argues that "modernity undermines religion" *except* where religion possesses social roles beyond the ostensibly religious, such as cultural defence:

where one has two communities in competition and they are of different religions - as is the case with Protestants and Catholics in Ulster, or with Serbs and Croats in what was Yugoslavia - then the religious identity of each side can acquire a new significance and call forth a new loyalty as church affiliation becomes a way of asserting ethnic pride.⁵⁷

Secularisation amongst Scottish Catholics gathered pace later than amongst Protestants: Callum Brown notes the "late development of - thus far - relatively-mild religious alienation amongst Catholics"⁵⁸. This may be partly due to the Church's role in cultural defence, and partly through the experience of a largely immigrant Church:

Ethnic minority religions in the United States and Britain not only give beleaguered minorities a sense of self-worth (and in that sense they are aiding in cultural defence) but they also help new immigrants in making the transition from old world to new world ... The church, by bridging old and new helped immigrants adjust to their new circumstances, and in doing so it acquired an importance and a loyalty it had often lacked in the old country.⁵⁹

Comparison with Northern Ireland is illuminating. There both religious traditions are mobilised in cultural defence of their respective communities and weakening in commitment to the faith is often seen as disloyalty to the community. Where in Scotland 'marrying out' may, at worst, lead to estrangement from family and friends, in Northern Ireland it may lead to harassment, even murder. 'Mixed marriage' provides an important glimpse into inter-communal relations at their most intimate

⁵⁵ *RGNI 1995*

⁵⁶ *RGNI 1995, NI Census 1991*

⁵⁷ Bruce (1992:146)

⁵⁸ C.G.Brown (1992:54)

level. Aspinwall claims that the evidence of “surprising numbers of mixed marriages from the late nineteenth century to the present” serves to undermine “hitherto unquestioned assumptions about a prevalent feverish bigotry until recent times”⁶⁰. Whilst the proportion of non-Catholic marriages involving ‘mixed’ religious partners is unclear, between 1966 and 1977 the proportion of Scottish Catholic marriages involving a non-Catholic increased from one third to just under half. The lowest rate was found in the Diocese of Motherwell, but even here some 37% of Catholic marriages in 1977 were ‘mixed’⁶¹. Recent figures are difficult to find, but 43% of Catholic marriages in the Diocese of Motherwell were mixed in 1998⁶². We might estimate that over half the Catholic marriages in the West of Scotland and a very sizeable majority elsewhere are religiously mixed. The highest rate of mixed marriage in Northern Ireland is found in Down & Connor (which includes Belfast) where, in 1991, some 20% of Catholic marriages were mixed. In strife-torn Armagh the proportion was 4%⁶³. This suggests that ‘cultural defence’ imbues Northern Irish religion with a deep importance at the most intimate level, but also that any ideas that Scottish Catholics and Protestants are embroiled in anything like the same kind of conflict, or the same kind of social segregation, require serious revision.

CHURCH ATTENDANCE IN CONTEMPORARY SCOTLAND

The 1994 Scottish Church Census provides a detailed snapshot of Church attendance. It found 746,420 Scots in Church on the last Sunday of October, 15% of the population. Whilst a substantial proportion of Scots remained churchgoers, their number declined by 140,000 since 1980. Between 1990-94 alone the decline was 68,000, a loss of about 630 worshippers a week:

⁵⁹ Bruce (1992:146).
⁶⁰ Aspinwall (2000b:56)
⁶¹ Darragh (1978:217,237)
⁶² I.R.Paterson (2000:223)
⁶³ I.R.Paterson (2000:223)

SCOTTISH CHURCH ATTENDANCE, 1980-94⁶⁴:

Year	All Churches	Church of Scotland	Other Protestant	Catholic
1980	887,070	371,220	148,770	367,000
1984	863,620	361,340	146,050	355,870
1990	814,610	320,770	146,720	347,120
1994	746,420	293,170	148,230	305,020

By focusing on attendance, we can begin to place the importance of religious *activity* in contemporary Scotland. Firstly, how does Scottish Church attendance fit in international perspective? The following table outlines the proportions of both Protestants and Catholics in a number of countries claiming to attend religious services at least monthly in 1992, as well as the proportion in each society claiming to have no religious affiliation. It can be seen, first of all, that in religiously mixed societies, Catholic rates of attendance are higher than rates amongst Protestants (the only exceptions here being the USA and Netherlands). Additionally, Scotland has a relatively high proportion of the 'non-religious'. Whilst Scotland is hardly in the vanguard of secularisation, it is not far behind:

⁶⁴ Brierley & Macdonald (1995)

CLAIMED MONTHLY RELIGIOUS ATTENDANCE AND PROPORTION CLAIMING NO RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION, 1992⁶⁵

	Proportion of Catholics attending monthly	Proportion of Protestants attending monthly	Proportion of population claiming no religious affiliation
Scotland	58	25	25
Britain	55	28	36
Northern Ireland	89	63	9
Irish Republic	83	50	2
New Zealand	43	28	31
USA	56	56	7
West Germany	40	14	11
Netherlands	55	68	55
Norway	-	10	6
Italy	59	-	6
East Germany	50	10	64
Hungary	28	19	5
Poland	80	-	3

Although Scotland's rate of church attendance is higher than that of England, it remains lower than in comparable societies. Within Scotland, as the next table demonstrates, the Church Census reveals significant regional variations. Proportionately four times as many people in Western Isles, Skye & Lochalsh were in Church than in Aberdeen, whilst double the proportions attended Church in Motherwell & Monklands and Renfrew & Inverclyde than in West Lothian or Fife. Such variation reflects denominational concentration. Whilst Strathclyde accounted for 43% of the Scottish population and 40% of all Protestant attenders, it contained 74% of Catholic attenders:

⁶⁵ Adapted from Heath *et al* (1993:51); SES, 1992. *Year Book Australia, 1999* reports that 17% of Australians describe themselves as 'no religion'; *Canada Year Book, 1997* reports 17% of Canadians take the same view.

CHURCH ATTENDANCE BY REGION AND DISTRICT, 1994⁶⁶:

REGION - District	Total Population	Attenders as % of total population	Denominational share of attenders		
			Church of Scotland	Other Protestant	Catholic
SCOTLAND	5,120,200	14.6	39.3	19.9	40.9
CENTRAL	273,530	11.6	48.1	20.0	32.0
FIFE	351,200	10.1	46.9	24.8	28.3
GRAMPIAN	528,100	10.5	59.8	28.2	12.0
- Aberdeen	218,220	9.1	51.2	32.0	16.7
- Rest of Grampian	309,880	11.5	63.4	24.9	11.7
LOTHIAN	753,900	11.3	45.6	25.3	29.1
- Edinburgh	441,620	11.9	47.2	28.1	24.7
- East Lothian & Midlothian	165,550	10.6	44.5	20.0	35.6
- West Lothian	146,730	10.0	42.5	17.2	40.3
RURAL NORTH	342,160	18.3	40.7	41.3	18.0
- Highland	258,290	15.4	47.6	32.8	19.6
- Orkney	19,760	14.9	67.6	24.7	7.8
- Shetland	22,830	13.8	37.5	58.2	4.3
- Western Isles, Skye & Lochalsh	41,280	41.1	27.8	56.9	15.3
RURAL SOUTH	253,200	11.7	62.6	20.0	17.4
- Borders	105,300	11.8	60.9	21.9	17.2
- Dumfries & Galloway	147,900	11.6	63.8	18.6	17.6
STRATHCLYDE	2,223,540	18.0	30.2	13.8	56.0
- Cumbernauld & Kilsyth	63,930	16.1	17.5	16.3	66.2
- Dumbarton & Clydebank	125,080	16.4	25.2	9.7	65.1
- East Kilbride	85,360	19.3	25.3	14.4	60.4
- Eastwood, Bearsden etc ⁶⁷	187,650	18.0	34.5	14.7	50.8
- Glasgow	681,470	16.2	26.2	12.5	61.3
- Hamilton & Clydesdale	165,790	17.2	33.5	13.2	53.3
- Kyle, Cumnock, etc ⁶⁸	376,800	13.9	51.7	20.1	28.2
- Motherwell & Monklands	246,320	25.9	23.5	12.2	64.3
- Renfrew & Inverclyde	291,140	22.1	27.2	13.0	59.7
TAYSIDE	395,200	11.6	50.9	20.6	28.4
- Dundee	170,120	12.4	40.2	18.8	41.0
- Rest of Tayside	225,080	11.0	60.0	22.2	17.7

Regional concentration is not limited to Catholicism: two-thirds of the smaller Presbyterian Churches' attenders were found in Highland (25%) and Western Isles, Skye & Lochalsh (40%), which together comprise less than 6% of the Scottish

⁶⁶ Brierley & Macdonald (1995)

⁶⁷ Eastwood, Bearsden & Milngavie, and Strathkelvin

⁶⁸ Kyle & Carrick, Cumnock & Doon Valley, Kilmarnock & Loudon, and Cunninghame

population⁶⁹. Episcopalianism is weak in the west of Scotland, with 75% of Episcopalian attenders found in the east and north, 20% in Edinburgh alone. A quarter of Baptist attenders (27%) were found in the two major cities, eight other urban areas accounting for a further half. The Church of Scotland was spread more evenly but had a majority of attenders only in the rural south, Grampian, Orkney and Tayside. In the area where Kirk services attracted the highest proportion of the local population (Western Isles, Skye & Lochalsh) it attracted fewer attenders than the other Protestant Churches⁷⁰.

Two further points should be noted. Firstly, more than 80% of Scottish Church attenders in 1994 were found in two denominations, the Church of Scotland and the Catholic Church. The primary focus in the rest of this study, therefore, will lie with these two bodies. However, it should be noted that whilst the largest share of attendance since 1990 has been Catholic this is because Catholic attendance is falling slower than that of the Kirk. Attendance at the other Protestant Churches has remained stable, suggesting that churchgoing will become less dominated by the two major bodies⁷¹. In some areas Catholics have held a lead in attendance for some time. One 1954 survey found 20% of Glasgow's adult population in church, with Catholics making up 62% of worshippers, twice as many as the Church of Scotland⁷². One must treat with caution claims that Scotland is a "land where the Kirk holds sway" and where "Presbyterianism still places its clear stamp upon the life of the land"⁷³. Scottish culture has been shaped by Presbyterianism, but it is difficult to see how Presbyterianism (except in a rather loose and secularised sense) can continue to be regarded as a hallmark of Scottish identity. The numerical decline of Presbyterianism, and the emergence of Catholicism as the leading denomination in

⁶⁹ The Highland concentration of conservative Presbyterianism is often overlooked by those quoting FCoS and FPCoS attacks on Catholicism.

⁷⁰ This is an exceptionally religious area of Scotland, often mocked with reference to 'Hebridean Ayatollahs' and claims that Portree Calvinists disapprove of sex before marriage because 'it might lead to dancing'.

⁷¹ Cardinal Winning's ill-received claim that twenty-first century Scottish Christianity would be united under Catholicism should be seen in this light. See *Scotsman* 16/01/99

⁷² The survey was repeated in 1956 and 1957 although Catholic authorities refused to participate. Hight (1958:729-731)

⁷³ Bisset (1989:51-52). Bisset's compares Presbyterian membership with adult Catholic mass attendance, two quite different measures.

terms of attendance has not resulted in defensive hostility on the part of Protestant bodies. This contrasts sharply with the extent of Protestant sensitivity to Catholic advances prior to 1939, as Chapters Four to Seven of this study will demonstrate.

Is there any evidence that particular areas of Scotland have proved particularly resistant to attendance decline? In particular, do urban areas associated with Protestant-Catholic tensions show higher levels of attendance than elsewhere? Outside the Western Isles the highest rate of attendance is found in Motherwell & Monklands (26%). Motherwell was a historic focal point for sectarian tensions, and Monklands (comprising the towns of Airdrie and Coatbridge) the scene of serious allegations of sectarian bias on the part of the District council in the mid 1990s. Lanarkshire has been described as “the historical cock-pit of sectarian friction in Scotland”⁷⁴ so it is here, if nowhere else, that we might expect to find evidence that ‘cultural defence’ has imbued religious connection with added importance. Rates of church attendance are comparatively high in the other parts of Lanarkshire and Renfrew & Inverclyde, another area with a ‘sectarian’ past, has the third highest rate in Scotland (22%). However, the key explanation for high attendance rates in urban Scotland is not ‘cultural defence’, but the presence of Catholics. Whilst it is difficult to make cross-denominational comparisons, Catholics - internationally - are more likely than Protestants to attend church. If we accept the Church’s own estimates of the Catholic population we can compare rates of attendance between Catholics and non-Catholics across Scotland by calculating the proportion of Catholics attending Catholic services, and the proportion of the non-Catholic population attending Protestant services⁷⁵. Such comparisons are crude, not least because they involve the clearly inaccurate, but adequate for our purposes, assumption that all non-Catholics are Protestant. Bearing this in mind we find that non-Catholic churchgoing remains low across all urban Scotland:

⁷⁴ G.Walker (1995:84)

⁷⁵ That is, Catholic attenders as a percentage of the estimated Catholic population and Protestant attenders as a percentage of everyone else.

COMPARATIVE CHURCH ATTENDANCE (selected areas), 1994⁷⁶:

REGION - <i>selected districts</i>	Total Population	Proportion who are Catholic	Catholic attendance rate	Non- Catholic attendance rate
SCOTLAND	5,120,200	14	41	10
CENTRAL	273,530	9	39	9
FIFE	351,200	7	43	8
GRAMPIAN	528,100	2	57	9
- <i>Aberdeen</i>	<i>218,220</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>52</i>	<i>8</i>
LOTHIAN	753,900	7	45	9
- <i>Edinburgh</i>	<i>441,620</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>10</i>
- <i>West Lothian</i>	<i>146,730</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>49</i>	<i>7</i>
RURAL NORTH	342,160	5	58	16
- <i>Highland</i>	<i>258,290</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>59</i>	<i>13</i>
- <i>Western Isles, Skye & Lochalsh</i>	<i>41,280</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>58</i>	<i>39</i>
RURAL SOUTH	253,200	6	35	10
STRATHCLYDE	2,223,540	25	40	11
- <i>Cumbernauld & Kilsyth</i>	<i>63,930</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>8</i>
- <i>Dumbarton & Clydebank</i>	<i>125,080</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>41</i>	<i>8</i>
- <i>East Kilbride</i>	<i>85,360</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>48</i>	<i>10</i>
- <i>Eastwood, Bearsden etc</i>	<i>187,650</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>46</i>	<i>11</i>
- <i>Glasgow</i>	<i>681,470</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>9</i>
- <i>Hamilton & Clydesdale</i>	<i>165,790</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>10</i>
- <i>Kyle, Cumnock, etc</i>	<i>376,800</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>41</i>	<i>11</i>
- <i>Motherwell & Monklands</i>	<i>246,320</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>15</i>
- <i>Renfrew & Inverclyde</i>	<i>291,140</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>43</i>	<i>13</i>
TAYSIDE	395,200	9	37	9
- <i>Dundee</i>	<i>170,120</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>35</i>	<i>9</i>

There is no evidence that Protestants have maintained higher levels of attendance in those parts of Scotland associated with religious division. In other words urban Protestants have not maintained church connections as cultural defence against urban Catholics. Catholic attendance has no clear pattern: it is relatively low (though still much higher than amongst non-Catholics) in the cities, and high not only in the smaller urban areas of the west but also in those areas historically free of religious friction.

⁷⁶ Brierley & Macdonald (1995)

The argument thus far has been that where religion possesses social characteristics beyond the ostensibly religious we would expect secular erosion of popular church connection to proceed relatively slowly. Whilst this is precisely what we find in Northern Ireland, Scotland has seen a steep decline in popular church connection since the 1960s, a trend shared with much of Western Europe. There is little evidence that religious connection is any higher in those areas traditionally associated with Protestant-Catholic tensions. In this sense, we can say that, objectively speaking, religion is losing its social significance. When we add to this the lack of convincing evidence that religion materially affects people's life chances through systematic discrimination or disadvantage, there is no case for arguing that Scotland is a sectarian society. However, there is evidence that the Scots are concerned about 'conflict' between Protestants and Catholics, suggesting that the *perception* of 'sectarianism' (used loosely to denote bigotry or difference rather than systematic discrimination) remains a feature of contemporary Scotland.

PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF 'RELIGIOUS CONFLICT'

Following James MacMillan's 1999 speech one poll found 34% agreeing "that there is a deep-rooted anti-Catholic attitude throughout Scottish society": 45% disagreed, the remainder answering 'neither' or 'don't know'⁷⁷. An earlier Glasgow poll found 55% believing that "sectarianism in Glasgow is still a big problem", 34% a "small problem" and only 6% "no problem at all". There was no difference in the responses of Protestants and Catholics, but other variables, particularly age and gender, showed considerable variation⁷⁸. Such polls are carried out when they are topical, when alleged 'sectarianism' is in the media spotlight, and they shed little light on the meaning respondents invest in the term 'sectarianism'. It seems significant that the Glasgow poll also asked whether Celtic and Rangers "have done enough to combat sectarianism among their supporters" and whether state-funded Catholic schools should continue⁷⁹. We are confronted again with the difficulty that in its popular usage 'sectarianism' lacks clarity, used as a blanket term to cover anything between

⁷⁷ System Three, *Herald* 03/09/99

⁷⁸ ICM, *Scotsman* 10/02/98

⁷⁹ ICM, *Scotsman* 10/02/98

religious bigotry and what we might call religious separatism, between football violence and Catholic schools.

A longer perspective can be found in the Scottish Election Surveys 1974-97, and the Scottish Parliamentary Election Survey of 1999⁸⁰ which, since 1979, have asked respondents about 'conflict' between Protestants and Catholics in Scotland:

PERCEPTIONS OF RELIGIOUS CONFLICT IN SCOTLAND⁸¹:

<i>% by column</i>	1979	1992	1997	1999
Very serious conflict	16	9	12	15
Fairly serious conflict	20	25	27	36
Not very serious conflict	41	49	48	40
There is no conflict	21	14	11	8
Don't Know	3	2	2	2
<i>Base</i>	<i>660</i>	<i>957</i>	<i>882</i>	<i>1482</i>

In such surveys we cannot know how respondents define 'conflict': it might be understood as anything between irreconcilable and potentially violent tension to differing lifestyles with little social consequence. What is striking is that over a period of 20 years there has been a steady decline (from 21% to 8%) of those believing there is no conflict, whilst those believing that conflict is fairly serious have risen steadily (from 20% to 36%). In all four surveys there were no statistically significant variations across religion or gender, and social class proved significant only in the 1997 sample⁸². Age and region proved statistically significant in all cases, with those aged 18-34 and those in west central Scotland more likely to believe that conflict is very serious than other groups. Church attendance proved significant in three surveys⁸³, with non-attenders much more likely to believe that conflict is very serious, and much less likely to believe there is no conflict, than those who attend at least monthly. In 1997 those describing themselves as 'very religious' were much more likely to believe that there was no conflict than those 'not at all religious'. In order to find those groups most or least likely to believe that religious conflict was

⁸⁰ On these surveys see: www.crest.ox.ac.uk

⁸¹ The precise question is "Turning now to Protestants and Catholics in Scotland. Using a phrase from this card, how serious would you say conflict between them is?"

⁸² All tables reported from the SES and from the British Social Attitudes Survey 1999 are statistically significant at the .05 level.

⁸³ 1992, 1997 & 1999.

either 'very' or 'fairly serious', a logistic regression analysis was conducted on the 1997 data. This confirmed that age, region of residence, and occupational class were significant predictors on this question whilst religion, church attendance and religiosity were not. Being younger rather than older, having a manual rather than a non-manual occupation, and living in west central Scotland all proved to be significant predictors of a perception that religious conflict was 'very' or 'fairly serious'⁸⁴.

Given that few argue that *actual* religious conflict in Scottish society is growing, how can we explain the apparent rise in the perception of conflict? One likely answer is the context in which people answer this question. Given the reducing levels of religious connection it is likely that, for an increasing number of Scots, knowledge of religious controversy is gleaned from the media rather than through direct experience. Frequent church attenders and the 'very' or 'somewhat religious' are more likely than others to believe that there is no religious conflict. Younger respondents - relatively unlikely to be church attenders - are most likely to believe that conflict is 'very serious'. The 1997 and 1999 surveys were conducted against precisely that background that led to MacMillan's speech. The Monklands scandals brought allegations of 'sectarian' corruption into prominence and Old Firm rivalry was unusually tense and violent. Indeed, many of the incidents used by MacMillan in his 1999 speech to underpin claims of Scottish anti-Catholicism were intimately related to football. The resignation of Rangers vice-chairman Donald Findlay (filmed singing sectarian songs), and the murder of two Celtic fans in 1995 and 1999, provided MacMillan with a powerful and contemporary motif. The Findlay incident undermined "the sanctimonious Scottish myth that all bigots are uneducated loutish morons from the lowest level of society"⁸⁵. These surveys, therefore, were conducted against a media background in which violence, bigotry and prejudice were prominent.

⁸⁴ Logistic regression estimates the probability of an outcome on a binary dependent variable. Thus the analyses found that age and region – other factors held constant – were significant predictors of an answer of very/fairly serious (as opposed to any other answer) whilst religion, religiosity, and Church attendance were not. More detail of the analysis can be found in Appendix 2.

⁸⁵ Indeed, his own drawing of "interesting parallels between Mao Tse-tung and John Knox. Pol Pot and Andrew Melville (well perhaps not)" prove this point. MacMillan (2000a:17-18)

The surveys also asked respondents how serious they perceive the 'conflict' between the Scots and the English to be, and it is interesting to note that there has been an even greater shift in responses to this question. Between 1979-99 the proportion believing there was a very or fairly serious Scots-English conflict rose from 15% to 43%, and those believing there was no such conflict fell from 35% to just 6%⁸⁶. There is a very strong overlap between the two questions, 51% of the 1999 sample giving identical answers to both. A further logistic regression analysis on the 1999 data found that a perception of a 'very' or 'fairly serious' Scots-English conflict was a very strong predictor of a similar perception of serious religious conflict⁸⁷. It seems, therefore, that changes in the perception of religious 'conflict' have less to do with religious conflict itself, and more to do with media-led concerns about 'divisions' in contemporary society.

On the ritualistic demonstrations of the Marching Season, the Scottish media has been "emphatic" in its condemnation although it "has stopped short of calling for parades to be banned"⁸⁸. Such a call seems in tune with public opinion: one 1995 poll found belief that Orange and Republican parades encouraged intolerance, and a desire for their prohibition:

ATTITUDES TO THE 'MARCHING SEASON', 1995⁸⁹:

Do you think marches tend to encourage religious intolerance?

Yes	64%
No	20%
Don't know	16%

Should the Government ban sectarian marches in Scotland?

Yes	57%
No	29%
Don't know	14%

⁸⁶ The question was not asked in 1997: in 1992 the proportion claiming there was no conflict remained comparatively high at 19%.

⁸⁷ See Appendix 2

⁸⁸ G. Walker (2000:130)

⁸⁹ SoS, 28/05/95

Parades are also viewed as an inconvenience: proposed Republican and Orange Marches in Edinburgh were reported under the headline “Marching towards a shoppers nightmare: Three processions in one month”:

it is disappointing that in the year 2000 ... people should still wish to close the Capital's streets and march in the name of triumphalism ... Rather than aspiring to make noble demands to end inequality and difference, both appear to extol sectarianism and bigotry. Their songs and banners are divisive and inflammatory. And though they seem to represent the very worst of intolerance and closed mindedness, in a democracy they must be tolerated.⁹⁰

It seems clear that most Scots resent such marches, not least because of a widespread feeling that religion and politics should not be mixed. The extent to which religious identity is influential in contemporary Scottish politics is investigated in the following chapter. Before doing so it is necessary to examine two particular issues which loom large in narratives about Scottish 'sectarianism', and which will reveal much about the role of religion in determining political beliefs: Northern Ireland and Catholic schools.

SECTARIAN QUESTIONS: NORTHERN IRELAND

Northern Ireland provides the dominant motif of religious conflict in modern Scotland. Finding three quarters of Rangers supporters taking a unionist position on Northern Ireland, and a similar proportion of Celtic fans supporting a united Ireland, Bradley concludes:

Given the extent of support for Rangers, such evidence is an indication of the variation of attitudes towards the Northern Ireland question in Scotland as compared to the rest of Britain. Whereas many people in Britain... wish to end Britain's involvement ..., the evidence here indicates a significant number of people have a more partisan view of the problem/solution.⁹¹

Again, the football terrace is taken as a barometer for Scottish opinion: as Rangers are very popular; the unionist position must be strong in the broader population. In fact, surveys suggest that Scottish opinion is close to that of Britain as a whole:

⁹⁰ Edinburgh *Evening News* (hereafter *EN*), 11/04/2000

⁹¹ Bradley (1998d:213). The sample sizes for the Glasgow clubs were 89 and 97. Findings for the other clubs, with samples of between 18-56, were less clear cut.

THE LONG-TERM FUTURE OF NORTHERN IRELAND⁹²:

% by column	Scotland	Britain	Scotland	England	Scotland
	(1992)	(1995)	(1997)	(1999)	(1999)
Remain part of United Kingdom	35	29	31	28	27
Reunify with rest of Ireland	46	52	48	55	52
Base	957	-	882	905	95

There is little evidence that Scottish opinion is religiously 'partisan'. Presbyterian support for continued union is stronger than that of Anglicans, but English Catholics are more likely than their Scottish co-religionists to support a united Ireland. In both countries the non-religious (whose 'partisan' positioning is unclear) are strongly in favour of unification:

DENOMINATIONAL POSITIONS ON NORTHERN IRELAND⁹³:

% by column	Scotland (1997)			England (1999)		
	Catholic	Church of	No	Catholic	Church of	No
		Scotland	Religion		England	Religion
Remain UK	17	42	23	23	34	23
Reunify Ireland	60	33	60	66	49	60
Base	126	365	270	71	292	396

In both countries Catholic support for reunification is very strong, indeed stronger than in Northern Ireland where 56% of Catholics favoured reunification in 1996. Protestant support for continued union is stronger in Scotland than England, although far below the 86% of Northern Irish Protestants wishing to remain in the UK⁹⁴. In 1992 those favouring either of the main options were asked how *important* that policy was to them. Equal numbers of Scottish Presbyterians felt unification or union was 'very important'. It also emerges that Catholics invest greater importance in reunification than the non-religious:

⁹² Scotland, 1992 & 1997: SES. Britain, 1995: G.Evans (1996:129). 1999 figures from British Social Attitudes Survey (BSAS) 1999

⁹³ SES 1997, BSAS 1999

⁹⁴ G.Evans (1996:128) reports N.Irish Catholic support for reunification varying between 49-60% 1989-96, Protestant support for the Union varied between 86-93%.

IMPORTANCE ATTACHED TO N. IRISH POLICY, 1992:

<i>% by column</i>	Catholic	Church of Scotland	No religion
Remain UK, very important	5	16	9
Remain UK, quite important	7	20	13
Remain UK, not very important	7	6	5
Other option/Don't know	17	19	20
Reunify Ireland, not very important	12	4	8
Reunify Ireland, quite important	24	20	26
Reunify Ireland, very important	30	14	20
<i>Base</i>	<i>148</i>	<i>442</i>	<i>235</i>

Presbyterian support for continued union is, however, a function of demography rather than of denomination. Logistic regression analysis on whether or not respondents favour continued union reveals that, other factors being equal, being Catholic is a highly significant *negative* predictor of that outcome. Whilst being of no religion is not found to be significant, being Presbyterian also proves a significant predictor of *not* supporting continued union⁹⁵. In other words there is no denominational polarisation on this issue, no symmetry between Catholics *as Catholics* opposing union and Presbyterians *as Presbyterians* supporting it. It is difficult to sustain the argument that Scottish opinion is any more religiously divided on this issue than the rest of Britain. Again what is striking is the way that football culture stands as a distorting mirror of Scottish opinion. This issue is at the very heart of the sectarian myth in Scotland, the very touchstone of a 'sectarian' identity. That Presbyterian Scots do not position themselves on Northern Ireland according to their religion demonstrates the marginality of sectarian politics in Scotland.

⁹⁵ See Appendix 2

SECTARIAN QUESTIONS: CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

The existence of state-funded Catholic schools has long provided a focus for religious friction. MacMillan complained of an “anti-Catholic-schools industry” in Scotland:

Fear and alarm are spreading in the Catholic community over what is perceived as an ideologically motivated campaign against Catholic education which seeks to remove a Catholic voice and Catholic presence from Scottish society. The slavering at the mouth, in some quarters, at the prospect of the new [Scottish] parliament being involved in this vandalism has become a depressing and frightening spectacle for many of us.⁹⁶

MacMillan is not alone. Bradley frames a discussion of the “antagonists of Catholic schools” under the heading “The Constant Threat”⁹⁷; and Finn describes the “prejudicial framework” of “repetitive, near-obsessive” criticism of Catholic schools⁹⁸. Cardinal Winning recently complained that “Catholic schools exist all over the world yet only in Scotland are they seen as socially divisive”⁹⁹. What makes the issue frustrating is that ‘antagonists’ are often presented as an undifferentiated bloc implicitly united by anti-Catholic prejudice. Bradley notes that the Churches, the Orange Order, the Liberal Democrats, the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS), and elements of the media have opposed separate Catholic schools using arguments “thematically similar over the period of time since these schools were accepted into the state system”¹⁰⁰. No attempt is made to differentiate those who oppose Catholic schools for their Catholicism, and those who oppose denominational schools more broadly. Secular criticisms of state-funded religious schools are thus merged with Calvinist and Loyalist critiques of ‘Rome on the rates’. Finn argues that opposition is evidence of the continuing influence of anti-Catholic prejudice, and though he concedes that “some opposition” springs from “secular humanism” this perspective is relegated into a footnote¹⁰¹. The Church itself seems defensively entrenched: when Glasgow Council decided, in 1998, to close two Catholic schools, the Church

⁹⁶ MacMillan (2000a:16-17)

⁹⁷ Bradley (2000:160)

⁹⁸ Finn (2000:77)

⁹⁹ *Scotsman* 10/02/98

¹⁰⁰ Bradley (2000:164,161-4)

¹⁰¹ Finn (2000:57,81)

complained that the decision was "unfair and discriminatory", making no comment on the simultaneous decision to close four non-denominational schools¹⁰².

Highland Calvinists and Orangemen believe that state subsidy to transmit 'false religion' is fundamentally wrong. For other 'antagonists', however, the complaint is that religious belief belongs in family and church, not in state-provided schools. This is a *secular* argument, directed towards state sanction of religion. Some reject this distinction: for Bradley "almost non-existent hostility" towards Episcopalian schools "seems to bear out the argument that it was Catholics who remained the target"¹⁰³. This rather misses the point. There are around 420 state-funded Catholic schools in Scotland, and "a few Episcopalian primaries and one Jewish primary"¹⁰⁴. Any 'targeting' of Catholic schools springs from the fact that they form perhaps 98-99% of Scottish denominational schools. Notably, the Catholic system has expanded and flourished since 1918, whilst the Episcopal system has virtually disappeared¹⁰⁵.

Many critics of denominational education claim that the 'segregation' of pupils on religious grounds is socially divisive, some going so far as to claim that the dual education system perpetuates, or fosters, religious bigotry¹⁰⁶. Many opponents of Catholic schools see their opposition as motivated by explicitly anti-sectarian motives. This point has been made elsewhere¹⁰⁷, leading Finn to comment:

It is a dramatic self-contradiction for McCrone and Rosie to hold that Catholic schools cause division in the middle of an account that 'sectarianism' has all but disappeared. Indeed, this accusation against Catholic schools cannot be sustained by anyone who does accept that religious conflict in Scotland has been much reduced.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰² *Scotsman*, 18/02/98

¹⁰³ Bradley (2000:160). This closely echoes Gallagher (1987a:139)

¹⁰⁴ L.Paterson (2000b:39)

¹⁰⁵ Urban Episcopalianism was too weak to maintain its schools. See, for example, *Minutes of the Edinburgh Corporation Education Committee*, 1933.

¹⁰⁶ The Humanist Society of Scotland sees denominational education "as dangerously divisive ... it fosters suspicion and antagonism ... bigotry, distrust and social strife", *Scotsman* 10/02/98

¹⁰⁷ McCrone & Rosie (1998)

¹⁰⁸ Finn (2000:76). Finn mistakes a *description* of a widespread criticism for the personal opinions of the authors, an example of the obtuse defensiveness this issue can provoke.

Leaving aside his distortion of the argument, Finn identifies an important point: state-provided Catholic schools have flourished as religious antagonisms have withered¹⁰⁹.

In the 1992 & 1997 Election Surveys, respondents were asked whether separate Scottish Catholic schools should be retained or phased out, the results indicating widespread opposition to the present system. Opinion is largely divided on denominational grounds, Catholics alone favouring retention of separate Catholic schools:

PREFERENCE ON SCOTTISH CATHOLIC SCHOOLS, 1997:

<i>% by column</i>	ALL	Catholic	Church of Scotland	No religion	Other religion
Retain separate schools	20	52	18	12	14
Phase out	77	45	80	86	86
Don't know	3	2	2	3	1
<i>Base</i>	882	126	365	270	110

The non-religious are most supportive of change and least supportive of separate schools, suggesting that secular opposition is particularly strong. More interesting is the substantial minority of Catholics who support change (45% in 1997 and 47% in 1992). Some argue that the timescale implicit in this question explains the Catholic figures: Catholics may favour integration, but only in the long, and distant, term¹¹⁰. However, the Surveys have also asked, without any time dimension, whether or not the Government should maintain Catholic schools, and the results are very similar. Here too we find strong opposition to the status quo, 33% believing in 1974 that it was 'very important' that the Government should not maintain separate Catholic schools, and (with a slightly different range of options to the same question), 40% in 1999 believing that the Government "Definitely should not":

¹⁰⁹ On the academic achievements of Scottish Catholic schools see L. Paterson (2000a)

¹¹⁰ Bennie *et al* (1997:111); Finn (2000:76)

GOVERNMENT MAINTAIN SEPARATE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS?:

<i>% by column</i>	1974	1979		1999
Very important they should	9	10	Definitely should	6
Fairly important they should	11	7	Probably should	11
Doesn't matter	25	20	No matter either way	13
Fairly important they should not	16	26	Probably should not	27
Very important they should not	33	34	Definitely should not	40
Don't know	7	3	Don't know	1
<i>Base</i>	928	667	<i>Base</i>	1482

Whilst a logistic regression analysis on the 1999 data finds being Catholic, all other factors being held constant, is the only significant predictor of believing that the Government definitely or probably should maintain separate Catholic schools¹¹¹, there are significant numbers of Catholics who oppose the present system:

GOVERNMENT MAINTAIN SEPARATE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS?, 1999:

<i>% by column</i>	ALL	Catholic	Church of Scotland	No Religion	Other religion
Definitely should	6	25	5	2	3
Probably should	11	23	10	10	11
No matter either way	13	10	10	16	16
Probably should not	27	19	28	28	28
Definitely should not	40	23	46	43	40
Don't know	1	1	1	1	3
<i>Base</i>	1482	201	521	594	162

On this question Catholic respondents in 1999 split 48% - 42% on whether or not present policy should continue: broadly similar to the results on the question of phasing out. As many Catholics believe that the Government "definitely should" maintain Catholic schools as believe that they "definitely should not". In the 1974 and 1997 data there were no differences in opinion between those Catholics who were parents of school age children and other Catholics, suggesting that there is no parent/non-parent split in opinion. Claims that "most informed research points towards an overwhelming support for [Catholic] schools amongst Catholics,

¹¹¹ See Appendix 2.

particularly amongst their church-going sector”¹¹², are not substantiated here. Catholic opposition to Catholic schools is well-documented. One 1994 poll found that 60% of Catholic Scots felt that “Catholic and Protestant children should go to the same schools”¹¹³. In 1978 a Church-commissioned poll described “overwhelming practical support for Catholic schools wherever they are available”, although “a sizeable minority [of Catholics] thought that Catholic schools should not continue”¹¹⁴. The issue of ‘practical support’ has been an important one for the Church, with regular claims that Catholics ‘vote with their feet’ in support of Catholic schools¹¹⁵.

Finn describes *Catholic* opposition to the present system as “the biggest cross-generation Catholic cringe”, directly attributable to anti-Catholic prejudice¹¹⁶. This seems to deny the presence of a secular critique of denominational schools, and may imply that Catholic opponents of Catholic schools are deficient in their Catholicism (*real* Catholics support their schools); and that the 1918 settlement is beyond reasonable criticism. Are those who question the educational status quo anti-Catholic bigots or weak Catholics? Is there evidence that such opposition is related to other questions relating to sectarianism? Strong connections between the schools issue and opinion on Northern Ireland and religious conflict would suggest that this issue was a strongly ‘sectarian’ one. But are there such connections?

THE ABSENCE OF SECTARIAN CONNECTIONS

Regardless of views on religious conflict in 1999, a clear majority of respondents believed that the Government (definitely or probably) should *not* maintain Catholic schools:

¹¹² Bradley (1998b:102). The only research referenced is Bradley’s own.

¹¹³ MRS, SoS, 23/10/94

¹¹⁴ Gallup, *Flourish*, 29/04/79

¹¹⁵ E.g. *Scotsman*, 10/02/98

¹¹⁶ Finn (2000:76)

GOVERNMENT MAINTAIN SEPARATE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS, AND PERCEPTION OF RELIGIOUS CONFLICT, 1999:

% by column	Government maintain Catholic schools?	Perception of religious conflict in Scotland			
		ALL	Very serious	Fairly serious	Not very serious
Definitely should	6	5	7	6	9
Probably should	11	10	10	13	13
No matter either way	13	8	12	15	18
Probably should not	27	26	27	28	22
Definitely should not	40	52	42	37	36
Don't know	1	-	2	1	2
<i>Base</i>	1482	223	526	590	112

We also find that opposition to the present system is highest amongst those who believe that religious conflict in Scotland is very serious - 52% of this group believe the Government 'definitely' should not maintain separate Catholic schools, compared to 36% of those who believe there is no conflict. But it must be stressed that even amongst those who believe there is no religious conflict, a majority (58%) believe that the Government should not maintain Catholic schools. A logistic regression analysis of the 1999 data confirms this conclusion. On the question of whether or not the Government should *not* maintain separate Catholic schools, believing that religious conflict was very serious proved to be the only significant positive predictor¹¹⁷. Whilst being Catholic was a significant negative predictor, being Presbyterian or non-religious was of no predictive significance. In other words, being Catholic, other factors being equal, is a significant predictor of supporting Catholic schools, and believing in serious religious conflict is a significant predictor of opposing them. There is no symmetry on the issue – being non-Catholic, or believing there is no conflict, are not significant predictors in supporting or opposing Catholic schools. However, perceptions of conflict are not a *decisive* factor in determining opposition to Catholic schools, except, perhaps, amongst Catholics themselves. Amongst Catholics there is a strong relationship between the two issues: 50% of those Catholics perceiving conflict as very/fairly serious oppose continued support for separate schools compared to 32% who see conflict as less serious or non

¹¹⁷ See Appendix 2.

existent. This suggests that Catholics themselves may see the existence of separate schools as connected to religious conflict:

CATHOLICS, RELIGIOUS CONFLICT AND CATHOLIC SCHOOLS. 1999:

Government maintain Catholic schools? <i>% by column</i>	All Catholics	Very/fairly serious conflict	Not very serious no conflict
Definitely should	25	20	31
Probably should	23	20	26
No matter either way	10	10	11
Probably should not	19	25	11
Definitely should not	23	25	21
Don't know	1	-	2
<i>Base</i>	<i>201</i>	<i>112</i>	<i>85</i>

Neither do we find strong connections with attitudes towards Northern Ireland. In 1997 a large majority favoured the phasing out of separate schools regardless of views on Northern Ireland:

POSITION ON NORTHERN IRELAND, AND ATTITUDES TO CATHOLIC SCHOOLS, 1997:

<i>% by column</i>	ALL	Remain in UK	Reunify Ireland	Other option	Don't know
Retain separate schools	20	24	18	17	19
Phase out	77	76	79	76	74
Don't know	3	*	2	6	6
<i>Base</i>	<i>882</i>	<i>272</i>	<i>420</i>	<i>62</i>	<i>124</i>

In 1992, no differences were found when attitudes to schools were compared to the preferred policy, and the importance attached to the preference, on Northern Ireland. In other words, those who felt that a united Ireland was very important were just as likely to believe that Catholic schools should be phased out, and just as unlikely to favour their retention, as those who regarded continued union as very important.

CONCLUSION

Scotland, then, has undergone rapid and far-reaching secularisation in the latter half of the twentieth century. In this, Scotland has shared the experience of the rest of Britain and other comparable societies. Northern Ireland, on the other hand, has proved exceptionally resistant to secularisation. This is only the first point of departure between Scotland and Northern Ireland. On issues central to the debate over religious conflict in Scotland - Northern Ireland and Catholic schools - we find that religion resonates more weakly than is often claimed. Opposition to separate Catholic schools is widespread, including a significant minority of the most-frequently attending Catholic churchgoers, and this opposition is only weakly connected to concern about religious conflict in Scottish society. Scotland is not religiously divided over Northern Ireland. Indeed being Presbyterian, other factors being equal, is a significant predictor of not supporting the continued union of Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK. Neither do Catholics have a monopoly on support for Irish reunification, although they are the group most likely to lay most importance upon it. None of this fits particularly well with the Scottish myth of sectarianism, but it does fit rather well with the picture of a largely secular Scotland with which this chapter began. We find a Scotland sitting uneasily with its self-perception as a society bedevilled with religious conflict.

**CHAPTER THREE:
RELIGION AND POLITICS IN CONTEMPORARY SCOTLAND**

This chapter broadens the analysis of religion's place in Scottish political attitudes. In terms of voting, it seems clear that religious affiliation does play a significant role in party choice, but it is equally clear that Scotland is by no means unique in this. This chapter investigates whether Protestants, Catholics, and the irreligious differ in their attitudes towards some of the defining questions of contemporary Scottish politics. These issues can be summarised: the decline of the Conservative Party; the emergence of the Scottish National Party; increasing Scottish 'national sentiment'; and the Constitutional Question. These issues have dominated Scottish politics since the late 1960s, and it is likely that they will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. To what extent has religious affiliation impacted on these issues? In particular, can we substantiate claims that Scotland's Catholics have remained cool towards Constitutional change, the SNP, and a sense of their Scottishness?

RELIGION AND THE VOTE

In an important study of Scottish politics, Kellas noted that:

There is considerable acceptance of the view that religion or quasi-religion divides Scots in parts of Scotland along Catholic-Labour and Protestant-Conservative lines Although no survey work has yet been done, it is widely believed by observers that certain constituencies are strongly affected by Orange and Green conflicts, which distort 'normal' class voting behaviour.

Kellas urged caution, noting that "the disunity which such religious cleavages bring about should not be exaggerated"¹. However, a simplistic association between religion and politics percolates into academic research. Finding that half of his sample of Church of Scotland attenders favoured the then constitutional status quo (Scottish affairs to be dealt with at Westminster); three quarters viewed the monarchy as "very important"; and one-third supported the Conservative Party, Bradley concludes:

¹ Kellas (1989:110)

Church of Scotland attenders are perceptibly unionist. The evidence does not differentiate between a unionism emphasising Royalty, the Northern Ireland connection, 'class' oriented politics, or even in terms of the constitutional position of Scotland within the United Kingdom. It does stress the links between factors which in other social settings are considered to be ... characteristics of a strong 'Protestant' identity ... the Conservative identification of many members of the Church of Scotland is not simply related to class but is rather an aspect of a broader Protestant identity.²

Ignoring his own finding that Conservatism is a minority taste amongst Presbyterians, Bradley characterises a 'strong 'Protestant' identity' in Scotland that, but for the absence of Orange sash, stands as an exact description of Ulster Unionism. We have already seen that Presbyterian support for a unionist position in Northern Ireland is far weaker than Bradley suggests, and it might be noted that in the 1992 Election Survey, only 11% of Conservative-voting Presbyterians believed continued union between Britain and Northern Ireland was 'very important'. Almost as many Presbyterian-Conservatives (8%) viewed Irish reunification as 'very important'.

These initial comments serve only to highlight the need for precision in investigating the links between religion and politics. Religion is not an inconsequential factor in Scottish elections, remaining a significant predictor of the way in which one particular religious group vote. In their analysis of the 1997 Scottish and British Election Surveys, Brown *et al* found that being Catholic was a significant predictor of voting behaviour independent of other variables such as age, gender or class. Being Protestant or non-religious, on the other hand, was *not* found to have any significant effect. Scottish Catholics were more likely to vote Labour than can be explained solely in terms of their socio-economic position, and were (to a weaker degree) less likely than non-Catholics to vote for the SNP. A similar Labour-Catholic relationship holds true in the rest of Britain³. However, the absence of symmetry must be stressed – it is amongst Catholics that religion appears to have an electoral significance, not amongst Presbyterians or the non-religious.

² Bradley (1995e:124). Bruce (1999:3) describes Bradley's sample as "informally constructed".

Crewe *et al* summarise the overall trends of the British Election Studies highlighting that connections between religion and voting is by no means an exclusively Scottish phenomenon:

RELIGION AND VOTING IN BRITAIN, 1964-92⁴:

<i>% by column</i>	Anglicans	Catholics	No religion
1964:			
Conservative	40	26	-
Labour	47	65	-
Other	13	9	-
<i>Base</i>	<i>1120</i>	<i>120</i>	-
1974 (Oct.):			
Conservative	44	26	30
Labour	35	60	51
Other	21	14	19
<i>Base</i>	<i>819</i>	<i>169</i>	<i>641</i>
1983:			
Conservative	52	34	42
Labour	23	43	30
Other	25	23	28
<i>Base</i>	<i>1478</i>	<i>373</i>	<i>779</i>
1992:			
Conservative	54	33	40
Labour	28	50	38
Other	18	17	22
<i>Base</i>	<i>1006</i>	<i>245</i>	<i>727</i>

Neither are such differences limited to Britain. Some 56% of US Catholics favoured the Democrat presidential candidate in 1952 compared to 37% of Protestants: in 1996 the proportions were 55%-44%⁵. Lapp argues that the “religious cleavage” in Canadian voting remains “quite vital ... the 1997 Canadian Election Study, like its precursors, found Catholics significantly more likely than Protestants to vote Liberal, other factors being equal”⁶. It is necessary, therefore, to view the role of Catholicism in electoral politics as something that Scotland shares with other countries, rather than something that sets it apart.

³ A. Brown *et al* (1999:68-70)

⁴ Crewe *et al* (1995)

⁵ See ‘Religion and vote in US Presidential Elections’, www.gallup.com

In the last UK general election in Scotland a differential pattern of religious voting was apparent although it should be stressed that Labour proved the best supported party in all groups. Amongst those who voted, three quarters of Catholics, over half the non-religious, and almost half of Presbyterians supported Labour:

SCOTTISH VOTE BY DENOMINATION UK GENERAL ELECTION, 1997:

<i>% by column</i>	All sample	Church of Scotland	Catholic	No religion
Conservative	14	19	5	10
Labour	51	46	76	53
Liberal Democrat	12	13	4	10
SNP	19	19	12	23
<i>Base</i>	<i>694</i>	<i>313</i>	<i>98</i>	<i>198</i>

There are a number of important points here, not least that a significant minority across all groups (14% of Presbyterians; 22% of Catholics; 27% of the non-religious) did not vote. Variations in this respect are related to the age profile of the religious groups; the Church of Scotland sample containing a larger proportion of older people, a group more likely to vote than younger age groups⁷. The level of non-voting alerts us to the fact that this is only one measure of political behaviour, and one in which a significant minority do not involve themselves. With this important caveat in mind we can now turn to some of the interesting relationships in the table. Conservatives find themselves a very poor third behind Labour and Nationalist amongst Catholics and the non-religious, and amongst the Church of Scotland and 'other religion' groups (the latter composed largely of Protestants⁸) garner about the same amount of support as the SNP. Protestant support for the Conservatives may be higher than amongst other groups, but we find only 19% of Church of Scotland voting Conservative: this hardly suggests that Protestant Conservatism remains a potent force in the Scottish electoral equation. It should be recalled that Brown *et al*

⁶ Lapp (1999:28,1)

⁷ Some 53% of the CoS sample were aged 55+ compared to 36% of the sample overall and 34% of Catholics. The age profile is partly due to a higher 'drop out' rate amongst younger respondents from a Protestant background: the non-religious are disproportionately young, and disproportionately from a Protestant family background, further evidence that secularisation has gone further and deeper amongst Scottish Protestants.

⁸ See Appendix 1.

did not find that being Protestant was a useful explanatory variable for voting Conservative (or for any other party). In other words, the relatively high Conservative vote amongst the Church of Scotland sample in 1997 is explained by its *demographic* rather than its religious profile. We also find that 76% of Catholic voters supported Labour, a degree of support which sets Catholics apart, and which Brown *et al* found could not be explained solely through the demographic character of the sample. In the first Holyrood election the religious differential is also apparent, although there are some differences. The SNP vote rose across all religious groups at the expense of Labour, although Labour voting remains remarkably high, and SNP voting relatively low, amongst Catholics:

SCOTTISH VOTE BY DENOMINATION, HOLYROOD ELECTION, 1999:

<i>% by column</i>	All sample	Church of Scotland	Catholic	No religion
Conservative	16	24	3	12
Labour	38	33	60	38
Liberal Democrat	15	17	8	13
SNP	28	25	20	35
Other	2	2	8	2
<i>Base</i>	<i>1045</i>	<i>397</i>	<i>147</i>	<i>381</i>

Before investigating the ways in which the connections between politics and religious affiliation cast doubt on a 'sectarian' analysis of Scotland, it is necessary to delineate how reliant the different parties have been over the last thirty years on each religious constituency. For example, Labour polls remarkably well amongst Catholics, but Catholics make up only a quarter of Labour voters. Conversely, whilst we cannot argue that Protestants are Conservative, we can say that Scottish Conservatives are largely Protestant⁹. The following tables show the Scottish vote broken down by denomination in the 1974 and 1997 general elections in Scotland:

⁹ The 'other religion' group is largely made up of Protestants of various denominational hues. See Appendix 1.

SCOTTISH PARTY VOTE BY DENOMINATION, 1974:

<i>% by column</i>	All sample	Conservative	Labour	Liberal	SNP
Church of Scotland	45	56	38	54	49
Catholic	12	5	24	3	5
Other religion	16	23	10	19	16
No religion	26	16	28	24	29
<i>Base</i>	<i>1187</i>	<i>252</i>	<i>381</i>	<i>78</i>	<i>283</i>

SCOTTISH PARTY VOTE BY DENOMINATION, 1997:

<i>% by column</i>	All sample	Conservative	Labour	Lib-Dem	SNP
Church of Scotland	42	60	40	49	46
Catholic	15	5	21	5	9
Other religion	13	16	10	22	11
No religion	31	19	29	24	34
<i>Base</i>	<i>871</i>	<i>99</i>	<i>356</i>	<i>85</i>	<i>132</i>

The Conservatives remain reliant upon Protestant support, with around three-quarters of their vote in 1974 and 1997 drawn from the non-Catholic religious groups, and are under-represented amongst Catholics and the non-religious. The Liberal Democrats, (and 1974 Liberals) also rely on Protestants, though less markedly so. The denominational profiles of Labour and SNP voters, on the other hand, has been closer to that of the population overall, with the exception that the Catholic presence amongst Labour voters is disproportionately strong, and amongst SNP voters is disproportionately weak. What is remarkable about these two tables is their striking similarity. Shifts in party fortunes have only marginally affected the denominational composition of each party's vote suggesting that these shifts have cut across religious boundaries. There is little evidence here that Conservative decline has meant that the party now relies on a core support which is any more Protestant than the 1970s. This relationship between Protestantism and Conservatism requires further examination. For Kellas, the presence of a substantial Catholic (and Labour-voting) population in certain constituencies in the west of Scotland "has affected the political behaviour of working-class Protestants" to the benefit of the Conservatives¹⁰. Such a view requires to be approached cautiously. In the mid 1960s, Budge & Urwin argued that one

¹⁰ Kellas (1989:110)

might expect religion to be important to Scottish voting patterns “because of the [religious] division which appears in ... English voting studies”:

Those studies carried out in the Lancashire area find significant correlations between religion and voting, whilst those conducted in southern England show no correlation. Since Lancashire is an area which is in many respects more similar to Scotland than is southern England, we might find a similar correlation among Scottish electors.¹¹

Budge & Urwin reported strong correlations between religion and voting in Glasgow’s Cathcart and Govanhill: “Catholics vote disproportionately for the Labour Party, while among Protestants there is a less marked tendency to support the Unionists”. However, they also found that:

It is only among Protestant voters that class relates strongly to political choice, due to the overwhelming preference of the middle class for the Unionists ... For Scottish Catholics religion appears as a more powerful influence.¹²

It should be noted, however, that Budge & Urwin’s study relied upon small sample sizes and it is difficult to generalise their findings further¹³.

More recently, in examining the decline of Scottish Conservatism, Seawright & Curtice have argued that Conservatism has *not* suffered from a ‘dealignment’ of religion and voting in contemporary Scotland. Rather, they argue that “The Conservatives appear, if anything, to be more of a Protestant party now than they were in the 1950s; they are just no longer a successful one”¹⁴. This conclusion, however, is based upon a comparison between only those Protestants and Catholics who vote either Labour or Conservative. If we use a different measure from Seawright & Curtice’s own data we find that 89% of Conservative voters in 1959 were Protestant compared to 79% in 1992¹⁵. In terms of *reliance* on any given religious constituency it is difficult to argue that the Conservatives were more

¹¹ Budge & Urwin (1966:60)

¹² Budge & Urwin (1966:61)

¹³ For example, in terms of Catholic and Protestant voters, their Cathcart sample numbered 133, and their ‘Scottish national sample’ 67.

¹⁴ Seawright & Curtice (1995:327)

¹⁵ Their data for 1959 was dependent on *recalled* vote in a 1963 Gallup poll.

'Protestant' in the late 1990s than in the late 1950s. However, this supports the general point that Seawright & Curtice wish to make. The Conservatives have not suffered unduly from a de-coupling of religion and politics in recent decades. Conservative decline has cut across religious boundaries: "Conservatism may no longer dominate the affection of Protestants but Protestantism remains an important social base for the Conservative Party"¹⁶. The nuances of this point have been lost on some commentators: Seawright & Curtice are *not* arguing, as has been claimed, that "Conservative Unionism is as strong as ever amongst Protestants in Scotland"¹⁷.

How far can Conservative voting amongst Scottish Presbyterians be explained by *demographic* rather than religious factors? In 1974 the Conservative vote amongst the entire sample stood at 25%, amongst Presbyterians 30% and Catholics 11%. How far can this be attributed to variations between the samples in terms of age, class, gender etc. and how far to religion? Using a logistic regression analysis on Conservative voting in the 1974 data supports the view of Budge & Urwin noted above. Other factors held constant, being Catholic or non-religious had a significant *negative* effect, while being Presbyterian had no significant effect either way. In other words, being Catholic or non-religious, regardless of age, class or class identity was a strong predictor of *not* voting Conservative in 1974. Being Presbyterian, on its own, had no significant predictive value on voting, or not voting, for the Conservatives¹⁸. To some extent this relates to the differential impact of secularisation on different religious denominations. The Presbyterian samples in the election surveys tend to be older and more middle class than the Catholic and non-religious samples, largely because secularisation has impacted very heavily upon young working class persons of a Presbyterian background. In other words, a young person from a Protestant background is more likely to describe themselves as being of 'no religion' than a young person from a Catholic background¹⁹.

¹⁶ Seawright & Curtice (1995:331)

¹⁷ Bradley (1997:29)

¹⁸ Full details in Appendix 2

¹⁹ In the 1992 sample, 21% of those who described their family background as Church of Scotland described themselves as being of 'no religion' compared to 11% of those describing their background as Catholic. The non-religious sample was disproportionately young and male.

Another factor militating against a simple reading of the relationship between religion and the vote is the issue of tactical voting. Many Scots in the 1980s and 1990s voted against Conservative candidates, with Conservatism:

victim of a tendency by Scottish voters to see the non-Conservative parties as inter-changeable: people who do not want the Conservative candidate to win ... are willing to switch to the best placed challenger. That has been most obvious in by-elections ... But there is evidence that this anti-Conservative voting happened even in general elections.²⁰

Before examining the development of anti-Conservatism in Scotland in further detail (and beyond the confines of the vote) the flip-side of 'Protestant-Conservatism' – the received wisdom on Catholics and 'Scotland' - needs close examination.

CATHOLICS AND SCOTTISH POLITICS: THE RECEIVED WISDOM

Tactical voting brings into question the orthodox view that Scottish Catholics have maintained their Labour loyalties through mistrust of other parties. That Catholics have been relatively unlikely to vote for the SNP has been taken as evidence of the unpopularity of the party amongst Scotland's Catholics. Further, it is said to reveal a relatively low level of Scottish sentiment amongst Catholics, and fears of what constitutional change might entail. Examination of this issue is crucial to the political position of Catholics in modern Scotland. Should we find that this received wisdom is accurate, there would be strong grounds for suspecting that religious divisions are an important factor in modern Scottish politics. After all, the rise of the SNP, the demand for constitutional change, and the emergence of a strong and politicised sense of Scottish identity are key markers of Scotland's political landscape since c.1960. If Scotland's Catholics have not shared in these crucial phenomena then we need to explain it.

In the 1970s, noting the low Catholic SNP vote, Brand argued that:

If we are to identify support for the SNP we would not expect to find it in strength amongst Catholics. We would expect Scottish sentiment to exist in

²⁰

A.Brown *et al* (1998:153)

the Church of Scotland since this institution bears much of the tradition of Scotland ...²¹

As well as this equation of 'Scottish sentiment' with Presbyterianism, Brand suggests that Catholicism's "universalistic tradition" mixed with suspicion that an independent Scotland might be "a more intransigently Protestant Scotland. The experience of Ulster would alienate Catholics from this solution"²². This has become the orthodox explanation of the seeming reluctance of Scotland's Catholics not simply to vote for the SNP, but also to support constitutional change or to embrace a Scottish identity. For Walker, the political emergence of the SNP "was identified as a Protestant phenomenon by Catholics who largely steered clear, fearful of a Stormont-style Parliament in Edinburgh. In the 1979 devolution referendum this was one factor in the substantial 'No' vote"²³. Likewise, Gallagher has argued that:

in the last 200 years we have had the paradox that it has tended to be Orange and Catholic members of the working-class who are most willing to support the unionist status-quo, who are most opposed to devolution. It is too much of a leap into the unknown for Catholics, and a betrayal of the Unionist heritage for Protestants.²⁴

A number of authors have also noted a Catholic perception that the SNP remains a broadly 'Protestant' party. Gallagher claims that "the body language of the otherwise blameless SNP contains a whiff of the Presbyterian superiority that was often to be found in some of the worst detractors of the Catholic community before the war"²⁵. Boyle reported "a strong perception of the SNP as being a party with links with Orangeism and Protestantism" amongst Celtic supporters. One young interviewee commented: "I definitely think the identity of Scotland is to be Protestant and that is what they (the SNP) are trying to achieve ... I couldn't vote for them"²⁶. In his 1999 speech, James MacMillan claimed that "it is usually the SNP who have played the Orange card in local politics"²⁷.

²¹ Brand (1978:130) - emphasis added.

²² Brand (1978:130)

²³ G.Walker (2000:127)

²⁴ Tom Gallagher, *Two Tales of a City*, BBC Radio 5 Live, 24/12/95

²⁵ Gallagher (1991:39)

²⁶ Boyle (1994:90). Such perceptions were strongest among those fans aged under 25.

²⁷ MacMillan (2000a:21). His evidence was somewhat anecdotal.

The SNP have proved sensitive to Catholic feeling in recent years, particularly after the Monklands East by-election in 1994, during which one newspaper accused the party of ‘tawdry’ campaigning, an accusation subsequently withdrawn with full editorial apology²⁸. One leading Nationalist felt obliged to complain:

[We are] aware of the ability of other forces to stir up anxiety about our message in the Catholic community. We are conscious of an element of smear that has been labelled against the SNP. We want to display our credentials as the party of all of Scotland.²⁹

Here the party seems to have been successful with a reduced gap between support for the SNP amongst Catholics and non-Catholics. A Church statement prior to the 1999 election seemed warm to the Nationalist social-democratic policies ‘New’ Labour was thought to be abandoning, and was interpreted as a clerical warning that Catholic support for Labour remained conditional³⁰. Gallagher has discerned a “swing to nationalism among Catholics”, and that: “The [Catholic] fear that, in the absence of a British safety-net, a Scottish state might reproduce some of the ugly features of a self-governing Northern Ireland seems to have receded”³¹. This is a view shared by Curtice, who in 1994 argued that: “One of the big differences between SNP support now and in the 1970s is that the party has managed to overcome Catholic fears that an independent Scotland would be a Protestant Scotland”³². For Seawright & Curtice this shift is a key one in Scottish politics:

In so far as there has been any religious dealignment in Scotland in recent years it has been in the apparent crumbling of traditional Catholic hostility to the SNP, an indication of the threat that the Nationalists now pose in Labour’s traditional heartland.³³

How can we explain this remarkable change in Catholic attitudes? Gallagher argues that the experience of Thatcherism reconciled Catholics to ‘Scottishness’:

Thanks in no measure to the long-term occupant of Downing Street, ordinary people from an Irish Catholic background find the composite Scottish image

²⁸ *Herald*, 01 & 02/07/94

²⁹ John Swinney, *Herald*, 24/09/94

³⁰ The statement was issued four days before the election. *Herald*, 03/05/99

³¹ Gallagher (2000:43)

³² *SoS*, 26/06/94

³³ Seawright & Curtice (1995:330)

more appealing than at any time perhaps in the past 200 years. Suddenly, the Scots have been revealed to them divested of their imperialist, military and ultra-Calvinist livery and as people thinking and acting like underdogs - an increasingly vulnerable minority in a state fuelled by an aggressively competitive culture that threatens to rob them not only of their national identity but their material prospects.³⁴

This has been the orthodox view in recent years: until some point in the 1980s the Catholic relationship with the SNP, with constitutional change, and with Scottish identity, was an uneasy one. Such an orthodoxy fits well the notion that religious divisions were, until relatively recently, of considerable significance in Scottish politics. There is, however, a problem: this orthodoxy is challenged at every point by the Scottish Election Surveys.

CATHOLICS AND THE SNP: A REVISION

The orthodox view of Scottish Catholic difficulties with constitutional change and Scottishness is largely based upon evidence (not disputed here) that Catholics were, and to some extent still are, less likely to vote for the SNP. For Hickman “Many [Scottish Catholics] would fear an SNP victory as it could give expression to the anti-Catholicism and anti-Irishness with which Scottish nationalism has long been associated”³⁵. From such a view, non-SNP voting amongst Catholics is only to be expected. However, many commentators offer little evidence for a Catholic fear of constitutional change beyond lack of support for the SNP. The indisputable evidence of one phenomenon (low Catholic SNP-voting) is assumed to be a consequence of, and evidence for, other phenomena. Brand *et al*, convincingly demonstrating that being Catholic (other things remaining equal) was an influential variable in predicting a Labour rather than SNP vote in 1992, continued: “This finding supports commentators’ claims regarding the traditional support of the Catholic community for the Labour Party and the ‘fear’ of the Nationalists among Catholics”³⁶.

The vote, however, is only one measure of political sympathies: under a majoritarian system with evidence of tactical voting it may in fact be a poor one. What is striking

³⁴ Gallagher (1991:38-9)

³⁵ Hickman (1995:218)

³⁶ Brand *et al* (1993:154)

about the evidence of the Election Studies is that on a whole range of attitudinal questions in the period 1974-99, Scottish Catholics have *not* shown any marked antipathy towards the SNP.

In 1974, 24% of Labour voters said they had “thought of [voting for] another party” during the election campaign, and most of these (18%) had considered the SNP. There was no statistically significant variation across religion. Catholic Labour voters were just as (un)likely to have considered supporting the SNP in 1974 as non-Catholic Labour voters. Amongst Catholic Labour voters, 48% in 1992, and 53% in 1997, named the SNP as their second choice party. Catholics as a whole are more likely to name the SNP as their second choice party, in part a reflection of the high levels of ‘first choice’ loyalty to Labour³⁷. Given respondents were free to answer that they had *no* second choice party, it seems remarkable that a religious group which has been characterised as antipathetic towards the Nationalists should be so likely to name them as their second choice party. There is further evidence that Catholic antipathy has been grossly inflated.

The surveys have asked whether respondents are in favour or against the parties. Again the received wisdom is clearly undermined. Whilst the optional answers differ somewhat, it is clear that Catholics were *not* markedly hostile to the SNP in either 1979 or 1999:

FEELINGS ABOUT THE SNP, 1979 & 1999:

% by column	1979				1999		
	CoS	Cath	NR		CoS	Cath	NR
Strongly in favour	13	8	15	Strongly in favour	11	9	16
Mildly in favour	28	32	35	In favour	25	31	30
				Neither	26	30	26
Mildly against	25	25	19	Against	24	19	17
Strongly against	34	35	31	Strongly Against	14	10	11
				Don't Know/n.a	2	2	1
<i>Base</i>	<i>300</i>	<i>84</i>	<i>196</i>	<i>Base</i>	<i>521</i>	<i>201</i>	<i>594</i>

³⁷ Amongst Catholics as a whole (including non-voters), 32% named the SNP as their second-choice in 1997, compared to 27% of the sample overall. In 1992 the proportions were 28% compared to 22% overall.

There is little here to commend the thesis that Catholics were particularly opposed to the SNP prior to the election of Margaret Thatcher in 1979. To gauge the influence of underlying variables such as gender and age, a logistic regression analysis was used on the 1999 data to discern which variables proved significant in predicting a response of ‘against’ or ‘strongly against’ the SNP. Age proved a significant predictor of opposing the SNP, as did being in a non-manual occupation or regarding oneself as middle-class. Religion, on the other hand, had no significant value. Catholics, as Catholics, are no more or less likely to oppose the SNP than other religious groups³⁸.

In 1979 (before, as the received wisdom would have it, Catholic antipathy and suspicion began to dissipate) respondents were asked whether they *trusted* the political parties in several policy areas³⁹. There were statistically significant religious variations on all three questions with regard to the Conservatives, but *none* regarding either Labour or the SNP – Catholics were just as likely to trust, or distrust, the Nationalists as non-Catholics in 1979. Crucially, the survey also asked whether respondents felt that they could trust a Nationalist government in an independent Scotland: 16% felt that in such a scenario the Nationalists could “usually” be trusted; 41% “some of the time”; and 43% “rarely”. Whilst this question does reveal a reservoir of mistrust there were no significant differences between religious groups - Catholics were no more or less suspicious of an SNP government than non-Catholics. Likewise, there were no significant religious differences over the question of whether or not the SNP had “been good for Scotland”⁴⁰. Once again the evidence would suggest that Catholics in the 1970s were no more or less likely to mistrust the Nationalists than their fellow Scots.

How, then, are we to explain the persistent belief that Catholics were, and to some extent still are, antipathetic towards the SNP? Much of it can be ascribed to sensitivity towards the ‘Scottish equation’, described in Chapter One, reading ‘Protestant = Scottish, Catholic = alien’. If one accepts that the Scottish equation

³⁸ See Appendix 2.

³⁹ These were: the economy; Scottish affairs; the preservation of democracy.

holds force, or at least did so until fairly recently, then one might easily assume that Catholics would not be drawn towards Scottish Nationalism. Less contentiously, if one assumes that Protestantism is a key variable in the construction of Scottish identity, and that the SNP are a politicised expression of that identity, then one might conclude that Catholics would find the SNP less attractive than non-Catholics. Such conclusions are supported, superficially at least, by the relatively low SNP vote amongst Catholics. They are also supported by research amongst Celtic supporters, amongst whom there seems to be a perception that the SNP are a 'Protestant' entity⁴¹. There is much here that can be criticised, not least that national identity is more malleable than such positions imply, and that national identities and political behaviour do not so neatly intersect. These points will be returned to. Before doing so, it is worthwhile noting that another party, to whom Catholics were, and are, undeniably hostile, received little electoral support from Scotland's Catholics.

ANTI-CONSERVATISM IN CONTEMPORARY SCOTLAND

The evidence revealing the lack of Catholic hostility toward the SNP also illustrates the growth of anti-Conservative feeling over the last 25 years. In 1974 respondents were asked whether they trusted the two main parties - whilst Presbyterian trust was invested equally in Labour and Conservative, Catholics and the non-religious were rather more trusting of Labour, and less so of the Conservatives:

POLITICAL TRUST, 1974:

<i>% by column</i>	Trust Conservatives?			Trust Labour?		
	CoS	Cath	NR	CoS	Cath	NR
Usually	18	12	11	18	33	20
Some of the time	57	46	56	59	53	56
Rarely	22	34	30	20	8	20
Don't know/n.a	3	8	3	3	6	3
<i>Base</i>	<i>530</i>	<i>137</i>	<i>304</i>	<i>530</i>	<i>137</i>	<i>304</i>

The position in 1974 should not be overstated: only a third of Catholics and the non-religious claimed that they "rarely" trusted the Conservatives. It is noticeable, however, that the same proportion of Catholics "usually" trusted Labour as "rarely"

⁴⁰ 55% said the SNP had been good for Scotland, 45% that they had not.

⁴¹ E.g.: Boyle (1994 & 1995).

trusted the Conservatives. These results might be compared to a more specific 1999 question on whether the political parties could be trusted to “work in Scotland’s interests”:

TRUST TO WORK IN SCOTLAND’S INTERESTS?, 1999:

<i>% by column</i>	Trust Conservatives	Trust Labour	Trust SNP	Trust Liberal Democrats
Just about always	3	8	24	5
Most of the time	15	43	33	33
Only some of the time	37	38	24	43
Almost never	42	8	14	11
Don’t know/n.a	3	3	5	9
<i>Base</i>	<i>1482</i>	<i>1482</i>	<i>1482</i>	<i>1482</i>

Quite clearly the Conservatives were widely mistrusted on Scottish issues in late-1990s Scotland. How did this play amongst the different religious groups? Firstly it is clear that even amongst the Church of Scotland sample - that constituency described by Bradley as “perceptibly unionist”⁴² - less than one-quarter trust the Conservatives to work in Scotland’s interests ‘always’ or ‘most of the time’. There are very high levels of mistrust across all three religious groups, but it is particularly strong (89%) amongst Catholics:

TRUST CONSERVATIVES TO WORK IN SCOTLAND’S INTERESTS?, 1999:

<i>% by column</i>	Church of Scotland	Catholic	No religion
Just about always	3	1	2
Most of the time	19	8	11
Only some of the time	36	31	38
Almost never	39	58	45
Don’t know/n.a	4	2	4
<i>Base</i>	<i>521</i>	<i>201</i>	<i>594</i>

Attitudes towards the Conservatives cannot be properly judged without examination of the trust invested in the other parties⁴³. As far as Labour is concerned, opinion within the Presbyterian and non-religious groups is fairly evenly balanced between those who trust them to work in Scotland’s interests always or most of time, and those who only trust them some of the time or almost never. Catholics, on the other

⁴² Bradley (1995e:124)

hand, are much more likely to invest their political trust in Labour, with 60% trusting them always or most of the time. In terms of the SNP, both Catholics and Presbyterians are fairly evenly balanced, whilst the non-religious are just as likely to invest trust in the Nationalists (64% trusting them always or most of the time) as Catholics are in Labour. It might be noted, however, that marginally more Catholics “just about always” trust the SNP on Scottish issues (18%) than invest a similar degree of trust in Labour (15%):

TRUST LABOUR AND SNP TO WORK IN SCOTLAND’S INTERESTS?, 1999:

% by column	Trust Labour?			Trust SNP?		
	Church of Scotland	Catholic	No religion	Church of Scotland	Catholic	No religion
Just about always	9	15	5	23	18	27
Most of the time	41	50	43	30	31	37
Only some of the time	37	31	41	25	31	21
Almost never	10	3	8	16	13	12
Don't know/n.a	3	1	3	5	7	3
Base	521	201	594	521	201	594

Conservative electoral decline can be mapped onto growing levels of mistrust in terms of Scotland’s interests. In terms of second choice party the Conservatives fare poorly. In 1997 only 3% of Catholics and 4% of the non-religious named the Conservatives as their second favoured party. Even amongst the Church of Scotland group, only 7% named the Conservatives as their second choice. There is clear evidence across all religious groups - including, contrary to the received wisdom, Catholics - of a close association between SNP and Labour sympathies. In 1997, a majority of Labour voters (56%) named the Nationalists as their second choice party; and a majority of Nationalist voters (61%) named Labour as their second choice. Amongst Conservative voters, 50% name the Liberal Democrats as their second choice, but this is not reciprocated - only 18% of Liberal Democrats regard the Conservatives as their second choice.

We can more directly measure the depth of anti-Conservative sentiment amongst Scotland’s religious groups. In 1997 respondents were asked to what extent they

⁴³ There were no significant religious variations with regard to the Liberal Democrats.

liked or disliked the major political parties in terms of a 0-10 scale ranging from 'strongly dislike' to 'strongly like'. The following table notes those who scored each of the three main parties at the extremes of this range, revealing the large proportion of Scots who chose the strongest indicator of dislike of the Conservatives. The table also shows the mean score on this scale for each party amongst the three religious groups, indicating the overall strength of like or dislike shown to each party - lower scores indicate high levels of dislike for a party, higher scores indicate warmth:

HOW THE MAJOR PARTIES ARE VIEWED, 1997:

	Strongly dislike	Strongly like	Base	Mean score
Conservatives:				
All sample	34	3	722	2.85
Church of Scotland	29	6	301	3.48
Catholic	46	1	95	2.08
No religion	41	2	231	2.23
Labour:				
All sample	3	18	723	6.45
Church of Scotland	3	20	301	6.28
Catholic	1	26	95	7.34
No religion	4	13	231	6.39
SNP:				
All sample	9	13	700	5.51
Church of Scotland	11	13	289	5.27
Catholic	5	14	92	5.65
No religion	7	15	226	6.08

It is striking that one third of all Scots regard the Conservatives with the strongest possible degree of dislike. There are interesting religious variations, with the strongest dislike accounting for almost half of the Catholic sample, and more than two-fifths of the non-religious. Dislike of the Conservatives is less evident amongst Presbyterians, but even here a significant minority chose the strongest indicator of dislike. There is no symmetry between strongly disliking the Conservatives and strongly liking the other parties: what unites Scots, regardless of religion, is antipathy towards the Conservatives rather than attraction towards one of its rivals. In the table above the mean scores highlight the depths of this dislike. Taking '5' as a neutral

point, then the Conservatives fall considerably below that point across all religious groups. The SNP score higher than 5 in all groups, although less markedly so than Labour. On this measure it is clear that Labour are Scotland's best liked party, with the SNP a little behind, and the Conservatives, simply, have accrued to themselves a deep reservoir of dislike. Scots are not divided in this regard on the grounds of religion. Whilst differences exist between religious groups, they are differences of degree rather than of direction.

To summarise the evidence presented in terms of the Scottish political parties, it can be seen that whilst religion does play a significant role in mediating the ways people behave in the polling booth, it has a less significant role in terms of attitudes towards the parties. The crucial point is that religion does not divide the Scots in party political terms. The rise of the SNP and the decline of the Conservatives has occurred across the boundaries of religious affiliation. Whilst the over-representation of Catholics amongst Labour voters, the non religious amongst SNP voters, and Presbyterians amongst Conservative voters is still apparent, it is difficult to sustain the argument that these are, in any way, religious (or, in the case of the SNP, irreligious) parties. When the focus moves beyond electoral behaviour we find nothing to undermine such a view. That religion continues to matter in Scottish party politics does not set Scotland apart: evidence of its role in English and North American elections was noted above. Once more, comparison with Northern Ireland is instructive. In that country, religious affiliation maps closely onto political affiliation, and the defining political question (the constitution) is clearly expressed as divided between Protestant Unionist and Catholic Nationalist. In Scotland, a constitutional question has also been a defining political issue: how does religion play here?

RELIGION AND CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE IN THE 1970s

As noted earlier, the orthodox view has been that Catholic mistrust of the SNP was evident in the 1970s, began to crumble over the 1980s, and had been largely overcome by the 1990s. That orthodoxy has been shown to be wrong in terms of party support, it will now be challenged on the constitutional question. Many

accounts have claimed that Scotland's Catholics are suspicious of constitutional change because they have worried that a self-governing Scotland might have unsavoury parallels with Northern Ireland. Other accounts have stressed the links between Protestantism and Scottishness and Britishness, arguing that Protestantism informs both support for, and opposition, to constitutional change.

In 1974 respondents were asked for their preference in terms of the 'governing of Scotland' and were offered options ranging between 'Scotland should completely run its own affairs' to 'keep much as it has been'. Two thirds chose either that Scotland should run its own affairs or that more decisions about Scotland should be made in Scotland. There were only small differences between Catholics and Presbyterians, with the non-religious most likely to favour the greatest degree of devolved powers. The received wisdom about Catholic fears over constitutional change ring rather hollow for 1974:

PREFERENCE ON CONSTITUTION, 1974⁴⁴:

<i>% by column</i>	All sample	Church of Scotland	Catholic	No religion
Completely run own affairs	21	19	20	35
More decisions in Scotland	44	49	42	35
Scotland should be better understood	26	24	27	28
Keep much as it has been	8	7	9	6
Don't know	1	*	2	2
<i>Base</i>	961	438	111	242

Respondents were also asked for their view of a devolved Scottish Assembly. A large majority in all three religious groups, including 79% of Catholics, were either 'very much' or 'somewhat' in favour. That two-fifths of Catholics 'very much' favoured an Assembly runs wholly against any notion that Catholics were more cautious on - never mind opposed to - constitutional change⁴⁵:

⁴⁴ The options offered read as: 'Scotland should completely run its own affairs'; 'Allow more decisions to be made in Scotland'; 'Make sure the needs of Scotland are better understood by the Government in London'; 'Keep the governing of Scotland much as it has been'.

⁴⁵ The high incidence of missing data in the 1974 sample made a logistic regression analysis on this question impractical.

VIEW ON SCOTTISH ASSEMBLY, 1974:

<i>% by column</i>	Church of Scotland	Catholic	No religion
Favour very much	39	41	35
Favour somewhat	41	38	43
Against somewhat	11	9	11
Against very much	4	5	5
Don't know	5	8	6
<i>Base</i>	<i>436</i>	<i>111</i>	<i>242</i>

We can go one step further. It will be recalled that central to the orthodoxy was the relatively low electoral support amongst Catholics for the SNP. Respondents were asked for their party preference on the question of Scottish Government. Whilst Catholic affection for Labour is quite evident, a quarter of Catholics preferred the SNP, twice the proportion who said they had voted for the party:

PARTY PREFERENCE ON SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT, 1974:

<i>% by column</i>	All sample	Church of Scotland	Catholic	No religion
Conservative	15	18	6	9
Labour	21	19	45	20
Liberal	7	8	3	7
SNP	30	31	25	32
Don't Know	27	24	23	32
<i>Base</i>	<i>946</i>	<i>428</i>	<i>110</i>	<i>241</i>

It might be objected that these figures mask an underlying difference in how different religious groups viewed the *importance* of this question. Might not Catholics, because of their ambivalent feelings towards constitutional change, have seen this issue as largely irrelevant? There are two problems with such a supposition. Firstly, it would undermine the contention that Catholic mistrust of the SNP was, at least partly, based on a fear of a 'Scottish Stormont' (a fear that would make the question of Scottish government very relevant to Catholics). Secondly, although Catholics were less likely to regard the constitutional question as the most important issue in the 1974 election, they were no more likely than non-Catholics to regard it as unimportant:

IMPORTANCE OF SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT, 1974:

<i>% by column</i>	All sample	Church of Scotland	Catholic	No religion
Most important thing	15	15	9	19
Fairly important	45	45	49	39
Not very important	38	39	38	39
Don't know	3	2	5	3
<i>Base</i>	956	436	111	241

As early as 1974 Catholics were no more opposed to the SNP or to constitutional change than non-Catholics. Indeed, Budge & Urwin found no evidence of religious difference on Scottish Home Rule in their 1964 study in Glasgow's Craigton⁴⁶. The question remains, however, as to whether those Catholics opposed to constitutional change were motivated by the same concerns as non-Catholic opponents. Might Catholic opposition have been centred on fear of the religious impact of an Assembly whilst non-Catholics were concerned about more secular disadvantages? Whilst this would hardly rescue the orthodox view, it might help to explain it. The 1974 survey asked respondents to name some potential disadvantages of an Assembly and, although the low response rate on this particular question makes detailed analysis difficult⁴⁷, there is little evidence that Catholics had a different set of concerns than non-Catholics. Two concerns stood out clearly: the complexity and cost of the Assembly (50% of those who answered this question cited these as the main disadvantage of an Assembly), and the risk that devolution would lead to the break up of the United Kingdom (cited by 27%). Only one respondent - a non-Catholic - believed an Assembly might foster "religious trouble"⁴⁸.

It has been argued that Catholic suspicion of devolution "was one factor in the substantial 'No' vote" in the 1979 referendum⁴⁹. However, the 1979 survey does not support this. Catholics seem to have been more favourable to the proposed Assembly than Presbyterians: 49% of Catholics said they had voted or favoured 'Yes'

⁴⁶ Budge & Urwin (1966:127-129). Although their sample size was small (n=186) it does suggest that the Catholic view of Constitutional change has been wrongly taken for granted for some considerable time.

⁴⁷ Only 40% of all respondents, and 31% of Catholic respondents, answered this question. Very few respondents (2%) named more than one disadvantage.

⁴⁸ It might be noted that this was named as a 'second disadvantage', not as the primary one.

⁴⁹ G. Walker (2000:127). See also Gallagher (1987a:327-8)

compared to 41% of Presbyterians. However, there is also evidence that Catholics were less likely to vote in the 1979 referendum - 25% of the sample overall had not voted in the poll, a proportion which rose to 36% amongst Catholics:

DEVOLUTION REFERENDUM, 1979:

<i>% by column</i>	All sample	Church of Scotland	Catholic	No religion
Voted 'Yes'	37	36	37	47
Did not vote, favoured 'Yes'	6	5	12	5
<i>All favouring Assembly</i>	43	41	49	52
Voted 'No'	37	43	28	22
Did not vote, favoured 'No'	13	11	15	20
<i>All opposing Assembly</i>	50	54	43	42
Did not vote, no preference	6	5	9	7
<i>Base</i>	645	307	87	155

In considering the 1979 referendum, Gallagher notes: "It is impossible to ascertain to what extent working-class Catholics with reservations about devolution turned out to vote 'No' or merely stayed at home"⁵⁰. Whilst the relatively small sample sizes in the 1979 survey make analysis by class difficult, we can view the extent of Catholic abstention as a whole. Amongst those who favoured the Assembly, the rate of Catholic abstention (24%) was twice that of Presbyterians (12%) and the non-religious (10%). Amongst those who opposed the Assembly, on the other hand, the Catholic abstention rate (35%) was higher than amongst Presbyterians (20%) but far lower than amongst the non-religious (48%). In other words, what really needs to be explained is why Catholics - regardless of their opinion - did not vote. To some extent this can be explained by the confused political message on the question from both Labour and SNP. In contrast to the divided 'Yes' camp, the 'No' campaign had a simpler message, better funding, and the impetus of an Opposition galvanised by a weak and faltering Labour Government. 'No' campaigners insisted that the issue was not the principle of devolution, but of the proposal at hand: the Conservatives promised a more *substantial* Assembly should they take power⁵¹.

⁵⁰ Gallagher (1987a:328)

There are good reasons, therefore, for a high rate of abstention in the 1979 referendum. Amongst abstaining Catholics a factor may have been Labour's deep divisions. Given Catholic loyalty to Labour, it does not seem surprising that Catholic abstention was particularly high. The Catholic community received mixed messages on how they should vote. Gallagher argues that the 'Labour Vote No' campaign was "capitalising on [the] residual and atavistic fears about devolution in 1978-79" that Catholics might suffer in a devolved Scotland⁵². That the Orange Order backed a 'Yes' vote in 1979 gave superficial credence to such claims⁵³. A quite different message emanated from the Catholic Church itself, Motherwell's Bishop Joseph Devine urging a Catholic 'Yes': "As a Catholic, I belong to an international church, but internationalism flourishes best when rooted in a keen sense of one's nation, culture and identity"⁵⁴.

It must be emphasised that despite scare stories about the nature of a future Assembly (and Orange support for devolution) most Catholics favoured reform. The 1979 survey - conducted after the devolution debacle - asked respondents for their preferred constitutional option. Three-quarters of Catholics and the non religious supported some form of Assembly or Independence compared to two thirds of Presbyterians, suggesting that the 1979 referendum was *not* a judgement on the principle of constitutional change, but of one particular proposal:

⁵¹ See J.Mitchell (1996:163-4)

⁵² See Gallagher (1987a:327). A key figure in 'Labour Vote No' was Tam Dalyell who, two months before the 1997 Referendum expressed "concerns" that the proposed Parliament could undermine the legal position of State-funded Catholic schools "without reference to Westminster". *Scotsman* 18/07/97

⁵³ The Order's motivation was the desire to have devolutionary powers returned to Stormont, and Orange enthusiasm for Scottish devolution rapidly evaporated (it supported a 'No' vote in 1997). "The issue of Ulster and of making gains for the [Ulster] Unionists out of the given political situation was [their] primary objective" G.Walker (1995:157)

⁵⁴ *Scottish Catholic Observer*, 19/01/79, quoted Gallagher (1987a:328)

PREFERRED CONSTITUTIONAL OPTION, 1979⁵⁵:

<i>% by column</i>	All sample	Church of Scotland	Catholic	No religion
Independent Scotland	8	6	8	15
Scottish Parliament	30	28	31	36
Scottish Assembly	32	32	35	25
House of Commons Committees	17	18	17	13
No devolution	13	16	10	11
<i>Base</i>	<i>630</i>	<i>300</i>	<i>84</i>	<i>150</i>

The constitutional issue remained important to the Scottish public: 22% viewed the issue as 'extremely important'; 37% as 'fairly important'; and a sizeable minority of 41% as 'not very important'. There were no significant variations in the importance attached to this issue across religious affiliation.

A further question in 1979 asked for views on Scottish independence and again the received wisdom is seriously undermined. Belief that independence was a 'very bad' proposal was, relatively speaking, very low amongst Catholics, while Catholics were just as likely as other groups to view it as 'very good':

VIEW OF AN INDEPENDENT SCOTLAND, 1979⁵⁶:

<i>% by column</i>	All sample	Church of Scotland	Catholic	No religion
Very good thing	9	8	10	13
Good thing	25	22	35	31
Make no difference	2	2	3	1
Bad thing	40	40	38	32
Very bad thing	25	29	15	23
<i>Base</i>	<i>630</i>	<i>300</i>	<i>84</i>	<i>150</i>

Respondents were also asked why they held their particular view: amongst those who viewed independence as a 'very bad' or 'bad' prospect, the most popular reasons were that Scotland "lacked capability" (15%), or was "too small" (14%). Only 5% of

⁵⁵ The offered options were: 'A completely independent Scotland with a Scottish Parliament'; 'A Scottish Parliament which would handle most Scottish affairs, including economic affairs, leaving ... Westminster ... responsible only for defence, foreign policy and international economic policy'; 'An elected Scottish Assembly which would handle some Scottish affairs and would be responsible to ... Westminster'; 'Have Scottish Committees of the House of Commons come up to Scotland for their meetings'; 'No devolution or Scottish Assembly of any sort'.

⁵⁶ The question read: 'If Scotland did become independent some time in the future, do you think that this would be a very bad thing, a bad thing, a good thing, or a very good thing?'

those viewing independence negatively were concerned that Scotland might “get like Ulster”, most of whom were Protestants⁵⁷.

The argument that Scottish Catholics in the 1970s were particularly opposed to constitutional change is not sustained, but is contradicted, by the election surveys. The supposed reticence of Catholics towards a Scottish identity remains to be examined. Before doing so, however, the issue of constitutional change in the 1990s, and the prospects for the evolution of the debate, merit exploration.

THE 1990s AND BEYOND

Scottish politics in the late 1980s and 1990s was characterised by the return to centre stage of constitutional change, motivated in great part by the fact that Scotland felt ill-served by Conservative governments rejected by Scottish electors. By the late 1990s a substantial majority of Scots were in favour of some form of constitutional change, largely due to a feeling that Scottish interests were not being adequately represented under the existing system. In the Scottish Referendum Survey of September 1997 (conducted some months after the Labour election victory) respondents were asked the extent to which a UK Government and a Scottish Government could be trusted to act in Scotland’s interests. Mistrust of UK Government was evident, even with a popular Labour administration in power: 71% said they would trust a Scottish Government ‘just about always’ or ‘most’ of time compared to 35% who placed the same degree of trust in Westminster.

How did constitutional change play across the religious groups during the 1990s? The short answer is that support for change accounted for a substantial majority across religion in 1992:

⁵⁷ This includes those who saw it as a secondary reason. Overall only 20 respondents gave this as a first or second reason (3 of whom were Catholic and 3 non-religious), representing 3% of all those who answered the question on independence.

CONSTITUTIONAL PREFERENCE, 1992:

<i>% by column</i>	All sample	Church of Scotland	Catholic	No religion
Independent, outwith European Union	6	6	6	6
Independent, within European Union	17	14	22	24
Devolution within United Kingdom	50	50	50	47
No Change	24	28	18	20
Other/Don't know	3	3	4	3
<i>Base</i>	957	442	148	235

The most important point about this table is the striking similarity across religious group: in all three around half were in favour of a devolved body. The differences, whilst secondary to this consensus for change, are also interesting. Presbyterians were most supportive of continued direct administration from Westminster (that is, they are most likely to be 'unionists') but this view accounts for only around one-quarter of the Church of Scotland sample. Amongst Catholics and the non-religious, only one fifth favoured the then status quo with around 30% favouring some form of independence. Thus, in 1992 as in 1974, a broad consensus for change embraced all three religious groups. What was problematic about this consensus was that it was characterised more by what it opposed - the then status quo - rather than what it endorsed. By 1997, and the very real prospect of a Labour Government committed to devolution, some interesting religious variations had emerged. Catholic support for independence seems to have weakened and support for devolution strengthened between 1992-97. By contrast, amongst the non-religious support for independence appears to have grown:

CONSTITUTIONAL PREFERENCE, 1997:

<i>% by column</i>	All sample	Church of Scotland	Catholic	No religion
Independent, outwith EU	8	7	5	11
Independent, within EU	18	12	15	26
<i>All Independent</i>	26	19	20	37
Parliament, with tax powers	42	43	49	41
Parliament, no tax powers	9	9	12	6
<i>All Devolution</i>	51	52	61	47
No Elected Body	18	25	10	12
Don't know	5	5	9	4
<i>Base</i>	871	365	126	270

The fluidity of opinion on this question - in terms of the nature of constitutional change, rather than on whether change should occur - can be seen in the Referendum Study conducted four months later. In that study support for no change remained at the same low level, but support for independence had grown across all three groups (to 29% of Presbyterians; 35% of Catholics; and 46% of the non-religious) and support for devolution had slipped.

The result of the subsequent referendum, and the nature of the campaign preceding it, was as decisive as 1979 had been confused. With the 'No' campaign largely limited to the discredited Conservatives 74% supported the establishment of a Parliament, and 63% tax-varying powers for that body. The Referendum Study found that 72% of Scots cared "a good deal" about the outcome of the referendum, and that support for the proposed Parliament was substantial across all religious groups. In the sample overall, 24% said they had not voted but there was no significant variation by religion in the rate of abstention. Whilst Catholics were more likely to abstain in 1979 this was not the case in 1997. Further, Catholics seem to have been *particularly* favourable to the proposed Parliament and the granting of tax-varying powers to it:

DEVOLUTION REFERENDUM, 1997:

<i>% by column</i>	All sample	Church of Scotland	Catholic	No religion
Scottish Parliament:				
Voted 'Yes'	76	70	90	80
Voted 'No'	24	30	10	20
Tax-varying powers:				
Voted 'Yes'	65	59	83	68
Voted 'No'	35	41	17	32
<i>Base</i>	<i>493</i>	<i>224</i>	<i>80</i>	<i>140</i>

The setting up of the Scottish Parliament in 1999 has not put an end to the Scottish Question. That the SNP, whose key political goal is an independent Scotland, is now the official Opposition at Holyrood signals that the Question has not been answered, but changed. In the Referendum Study a majority felt that an independent Scotland

within twenty years was either 'very' or 'quite likely'. Two years later, the Parliamentary Study found that this perception had faded a little, but that 12% felt an independent Scotland by c.2020 was 'very likely' and 39% as 'quite likely'. Neither study found significant differences on this question across religion. In the Referendum Study 37% of Catholics said that they *supported* independence compared to 31% of Presbyterians and 47% of the non-religious. In 1999 the Parliamentary survey asked respondents which policy they felt offered the best constitutional future for Scotland. Around half in all three religious groups supported the present system (a Parliament with some taxation powers), but amongst Catholics and the non-religious around one-third favoured some form of independence, compared to one fifth of Presbyterians. Support for the *status quo ante* - direct administration from Westminster - accounted for only around 10%:

CONSTITUTIONAL PREFERENCE, 1999:

<i>% by column</i>	All sample	Church of Scotland	Catholic	No religion
Independent, outwith EU	10	7	12	10
Independent, within EU	18	14	22	21
Parliament, with tax powers	50	53	50	48
Parliament, no tax powers	9	11	3	8
No Elected Body	10	10	8	9
Don't know	5	5	6	5
<i>Base</i>	1477	521	201	594

There is much scope left in the Scottish Question and it is clear that this Question has been fought across, and not between, religion. The orthodox view that Scotland's Catholics were particularly hostile to constitutional change has been disproved, and it seems clear, that in the battles over Scotland's future, Catholics will be well represented amongst those supporting more radical reform. Catholics have been committed to change in the way that Scotland is governed for *at least 25 years*, and they are now at the forefront of belief in further change. Where does this leave the last aspect of the received wisdom, that of Catholics and Scottishness?

RELIGION AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

The final aspect of the orthodoxy about Catholic political preferences lies in their relationship with Scottish identity. According to Gallagher, as “the Catholic Irish in Scotland” became less immediately ‘Irish’, they faced an identity crisis:

As Ireland became an emotional heirloom rather than a place that most in the community had direct experience of, it was not quite clear where they belonged. But the corporate identity of Scotland which singled out as achievements religious and historical events that the Catholic Irish regarded as defeats, sometimes of a catastrophic kind, was not readily appealing.⁵⁸

Additionally, Gallagher argues that in the 1930s, and for “a long time afterward” Catholics were unsympathetic to Scottish claims to self-government, in great part because:

Working-class Catholics in particular found it difficult to relate to the symbols of Scottish nationhood (and many still do). The custodians of Scottish national identity have tended to be bourgeois institutions like the law, the Presbyterian religion, and the higher reaches of education which are uncomfortable entities to many working-class Catholics.⁵⁹

In a footnoted comment to this latter passage Gallagher argues that “it should not be surprising” that Brand’s analysis of the 1974 election found “it was Catholics who ... showed the greatest resistance towards voting Nationalist”⁶⁰. We have already seen that if, indeed, Catholics showed “resistance” to Nationalism in the 1970s, it was only in their lesser propensity to *vote* SNP, and not in their attitudes towards the party or to constitutional change. What though of Catholic attitudes towards Scottish national identity? Before examining the evidence of the election surveys it is important to stress the limitations of a view of identity founded essentially upon “corporate identity”, “historical achievements”, and institutional “custodians”. We might reasonably expect that working-class atheists would find the so-called “custodians of Scottish national identity” as alien to their lives as working-class Catholics. As to a “corporate” Scottish identity based on key historical events, one can construct a Scottish past which does not celebrate Catholic Irish defeats. In place

⁵⁸ Gallagher (1991:34)

⁵⁹ Gallagher (1991:32)

⁶⁰ Gallagher (1991:42)

of Presbyterian partner-in-Empire, we have the Scotland of 'Red Clydeside', of the Highlands, or of progressive social democracy. The 'custodianship' of Scottish identity has long been contested and to focus on its dominant, bourgeois claimants is to obscure those progressive, radical movements drawing on other popular versions of 'Scotland'⁶¹. Nevertheless, the wide currency of notions of Scotland as 'British' and 'Protestant' in the past are undeniable. The inter-war Presbyterian churches attempted to fuse Scottishness with a reactionary and anti-Catholic Protestantism, whilst some Nationalists were also peddling anti-Catholicism (although others were anti-Protestant). For many Catholics during this period:

there was not much encouragement for them to feel Scottish while at the same time preserving their religion and their pride in their Irish heritage. For [some] Presbyterian clergymen ... religious and cultural pluralism was an evil, and to be Scottish was to be Protestant.⁶²

This aspect of anti-Catholic history, taken together with the relatively low SNP vote amongst Scotland's Catholics, has formed the justification of the orthodoxy about Catholic suspicion of 'Scotland'. Two pillars of that orthodoxy have already been shown to be hollow: what of the third?

The 1974 survey contained an optional question on which nationality respondents felt best described them. Unfortunately less than half the sample answered and the small sample sizes should be emphasised. Two thirds described themselves as Scottish, under a third as British, and only small numbers gave another answer. There are two interesting differences in the 1974 data. Firstly, Catholics are only slightly less likely than the sample overall to describe themselves as Scottish, although if the small proportion (6%) describing themselves as Irish are omitted the figures are remarkably similar. More striking, however, is the response amongst the 'Other religion' sample, who are less likely to describe themselves as Scottish and more likely to see themselves as British:

⁶¹ Again M.Mitchell (1998 & 1999) is instructive as to radical Scottish movements in 19th Century Scotland and their relationship with Catholic Irish immigrants.

⁶² S.J.Brown (1991:42)

NATIONALITY, 1974:

<i>% by column</i>	All sample	Church of Scotland	Catholic	Other religion	No religion
Scottish	65	67	61	51	69
British	31	29	31	43	26
Scottish & British	1	1	-	-	1
English	2	1	2	3	2
Irish	1	-	6	-	-
Irish & British	*	-	-	2	-
Other	1	2	-	2	2
<i>Base</i>	588	227	49	67	94

The same question in 1979 garnered virtually the same result. Again Catholics were only marginally less likely to describe their nationality as Scottish, and again if the small minority (9%) who described themselves as Irish are omitted the figures are remarkably similar. In 1979 the differences between the 'Other religion' group and the rest of the sample were not repeated. It is noticeable that the balance between British and Scottish identity shifted in favour of the former - this may plausibly have been a function of a heightened sense of Scottishness in 1974, given the rise to prominence of the SNP. If this were the case then it can be seen that Catholics shared in the fluctuations in Scottish and British sentiment:

NATIONALITY, 1979:

<i>% by column</i>	All sample	Church of Scotland	Catholic	Other religion	No religion
Scottish	56	58	50	55	57
British	38	39	39	35	39
Scottish & British	2	2	-	1	2
English	2	*	2	7	1
Irish	1	-	9	-	-
Other	1	1	-	2	1
<i>Base</i>	658	318	88	99	153

During the 1970s, therefore, there was little difference in the ways in which Catholics and non-Catholics described their nationality. Catholics appear to have shared in a slight decline in Scottishness and rise in Britishness over the latter 1970s, as support for the SNP ebbed, and as devolution became mired in confusion. By 1992, however, there was a considerable rise in the proportion viewing themselves as Scottish, and a fall in British. Again Catholics shared equally in this process:

NATIONALITY, 1992:

<i>% by column</i>	All sample	Church of Scotland	Catholic	Other religion	No religion
Scottish	72	74	71	58	76
British	25	25	21	36	22
English	1	*	-	3	1
Irish	1	*	5	2	-
Other	2	1	3	1	*
<i>Base</i>	957	442	148	127	235

In 1992 the 'Other religion' group again showed a relatively low level of Scottishness, and a relatively high level of Britishness. This is due to the heterogeneity of this composite group. Much of this sample is made up of those describing themselves as 'Christian - no denomination' (numbering 49) and as 'Episcopalian/Anglican' (35). In the former, the pattern of nationality matches that of the sample as a whole, whereas a majority of the latter (57%) describe themselves as British. Many of these British Episcopalians may, in fact, be English born, and from a Church of England background, perhaps going some way in explaining the different patterns of nationality.

National identity has been the focus of increased academic attention and led to the application in Scotland of a more subtle approach by Luis Moreno⁶³. The so-called Moreno question is designed to measure national identity in 'stateless nations' by offering options balancing identity between that of nation (e.g. Scotland) and that of state (e.g. Britain). How does the Moreno question play in Scotland?:

THE MORENO QUESTION, 1992 & 1999:

<i>% by column</i>	1992				1999			
	All	CoS	Cath	NR	All	CoS	Cath	NR
Scottish not British	19	17	26	23	32	31	34	37
More Scottish than British	40	41	37	45	35	40	41	31
Equally Scottish & British	33	37	30	28	22	24	18	19
More British than Scottish	3	2	1	2	3	3	*	4
British not Scottish	3	2	1	2	4	1	2	5
Other/Don't Know	1	*	5	-	4	2	5	5
<i>Base</i>	957	442	148	235	1482	521	201	594

⁶³ See Moreno (1988)

Catholics, if anything, are *more* likely than Presbyterians to prioritise their Scottishness (i.e. to claim to be ‘Scottish not British’, or ‘more Scottish than British’). Although the differences are small in 1999, a slightly larger difference is found in 1997. A greater difference, with 40% of Catholics claiming to be ‘Scottish not British’ compared to 31% of Presbyterians and 33% of the non-religious, is found in the 1997 Referendum Study. Far from displaying any residual ambivalence towards a Scottish identity, Catholics in the 1990s seem to have been at the forefront of a strongly Scottish identity.

Where does ‘Irishness’ or, indeed, ‘Britishness’ fit with this strong sense of Scottishness? National identities are not absolutes: a majority of Scots (76% in 1992; 60% in 1999) have, at least, a plurality of national identities in that they feel, to different degrees, both Scottish and British. Feeling Scottish does not require that an individual surrenders their Britishness, Englishness, Irishness, or anything else. The multiple nature of national identity is revealed in a set of questions asked in the Election and Referendum Studies of 1997. Respondents were presented with a range of national identities and asked ‘Do you see yourself as X’. A very large majority claimed to be Scottish, and a narrow majority as British. The following table notes the responses on this question in the election survey. A number of categories proved to have no significant variation by religion, and are denoted ‘n.s.’ in the relevant columns:

CLAIMED NATIONAL IDENTITIES, 1997:

<i>% by column</i>	All sample	Church of Scotland	Catholic	Other religion	No religion
Scottish	82	89	81	67	81
British	52	n.s	n.s	n.s	n.s
English	4	3	3	9	5
Irish	1	-	3	1	*
Northern Irish	1	-	2	3	-
European	9	5	10	7	16
Other	4	n.s	n.s	n.s	n.s
None	*	n.s	n.s	n.s	n.s
<i>Base</i>	882	365	126	110	270

The presence of Englishness (and a lower degree of Scottishness) is apparent in the 'Other religion' group, probably a function of the presence of a number of Episcopalians of an English background. Catholics and the non-religious are less likely than Presbyterians in this sample to say that they feel Scottish. In a separate question in this survey, respondents were asked to name that nationality which *best* described them: 74% of Catholics chose 'Scottish' compared to 79% of Presbyterians. This is a small difference (5%) and much of it can be accounted for in a fairly unexpected way: slightly more Catholics in 1997 (21%) chose 'British' as the nationality that best described them than Presbyterians (18%).

When respondents in the 1997 Referendum Survey were faced with the above range of identities an overwhelming majority of Presbyterians (95%), Catholics (92%) and the non-religious (95%) said that they felt Scottish, although this was an identity claimed by only 71% of the 'Other religion' group. To some extent this may be explained by the relatively large presence in this group of those who feel English (22% compared to 4% overall) and who may feel that Englishness and Scottishness are not easily compatible. Of central importance is that Catholics are just as likely as other religious groups (and, indeed, more likely than some) to feel Scottish. It is likely that the circumstances of the Referendum Survey – conducted at a time when Scotland was at the heart of public debate – accentuated feelings of Scottishness, and Catholics undoubtedly shared in this feeling. These circumstances may also have led many Scots to reflect closely upon their own identity: some 16% of Catholics in this survey answered that they felt Irish, although it is quite apparent that this is compatible with also feeling Scottish.

In the 1999 Parliamentary Survey – again conducted against a specifically Scottish event – a different approach was taken to the measurement of national identity. Respondents were offered a range of possible identities and asked to choose those with which they felt an affinity in order of their importance. In practice a majority (60%) chose only one identity (mostly Scottish) and only a very small minority (7%) chose a third or subsequent identity. The following table shows the proportion of

each of the main religious groups choosing a first and subsequent (second, third etc., denoted in the table as '*plus*') identity:

CLAIMED NATIONAL IDENTITIES, 1999:

% by column	Church of Scotland		Catholic		No religion	
	First choice	<i>Plus</i>	First choice	<i>Plus</i>	First choice	<i>Plus</i>
Scottish	71	19	78	7	71	11
British	27	24	14	18	23	24
English	*	1	1	1	3	2
Irish	-	*	3	6	1	1
Northern Irish	*	1	1	-	-	-
European	1	6	2	9	1	7
Other	*	*	*	1	1	1
<i>Base</i>	521	521	201	201	594	594

Catholics proved most likely to place Scottishness as their first choice national identity and were least likely to invest such importance in Britishness. Further, whilst around half of both the Presbyterian and non-religious groups chose Britishness as their first or subsequent identity, only one third (32%) of Catholics chose 'British' at all. What is also interesting is that only 10% of Catholics chose 'Irish' or 'Northern Irish' as an identity, about the same number as chose 'European'. Identification with Ireland is certainly apparent in the surveys, although it has, over different measures of identity, fluctuated between 5% of Catholics in the 1992 and 1997 Election Studies and 16% in the 1997 Referendum Study⁶⁴. What is of crucial importance is that an Irish identity amongst Scotland's Catholics co-exists with a very strong sense of Scottishness. Again, though, the influence of religious affiliation and other demographic factors need to be disentangled. To do so, two regression models were constructed from the 1999 data on the question posed to respondents "What nationality best describes you?" In terms of choosing 'British' on this question the only significant religious predictor was being Catholic. Being Catholic, other factors being equal, was a significant negative predictor. In other words, there is evidence that Catholics are ambivalent towards Britishness *as Catholics*, that is, when other

⁶⁴ This fluctuation is not simply due to the different measures used: precisely the same measure was used in the two 1997 studies which threw up Catholic Irishness at 5% and 16%.

things are held constant. When the model was repeated in terms of choosing Scottish as a 'best nationality', religion proved not to be significant: no religious group was any more or less likely to describe themselves as Scottish. Those small differences in the levels of Scottishness between Presbyterians, Catholics and the non-religious noted above are thus explained by the demographic, rather than religious, differences between the samples⁶⁵.

Another question offering a glimpse into the dynamics of Scottish identity is that of class and national loyalties. Respondents were asked whether they had more in common with a Scottish person of a different class, or with an English person of the same class. In 1979, 1992, and 1997 there was no significant variation over this question by religion. Whilst in 1999 Catholics and the non-religious appeared to be more likely to show a 'class' preference than Presbyterians, logistic regression analysis on the 1999 data shows that religion was not a significant predictor of either a class or national preference⁶⁶. Two things are of interest here. Firstly there appears to have been a marked reduction of 'class' and a much smaller increase of 'national' preference since 1979. Secondly, all religious groups have shared equally in this process:

MORE IN COMMON WITH CLASS OR NATION, 1979-99⁶⁷:

<i>% by column</i>	1979	1992	1997	1999
English person of same class	40	27	24	24
Scottish person of opposite class	35	45	45	43
No preference	16	12	13	15
Depends on the individual	-	5	11	15
Don't know/n.a.	10	11	8	4
<i>Base</i>	<i>534</i>	<i>957</i>	<i>882</i>	<i>1418</i>

“A LANDSCAPE OF THE MIND”

We can conclude that on all three counts – nationality, the SNP, constitutional change – the received wisdom about Scottish Catholics seems strangely misplaced.

⁶⁵ See Appendix 2.

⁶⁶ See Appendix 2.

⁶⁷ 'Do you feel you have more in common with an English person of your own class or a Scottish person of a different class?'

How can we explain its persistence despite the contrasting view of 25 years' worth of survey evidence? To a great extent it is founded upon two misconceptions. It is the Irish-identity of many Scottish Catholics that forms the basis of both the Scottish equation and the misconception it encapsulates. Such a view treats Irishness and Scottishness as mutually exclusive – one is one or other, never both. We have seen that Scots hold a variety of identities contemporaneously. Such identities are *not* mutually exclusive, although they may be mobilised in different ways and at different times. Research into Celtic fans, for example, finds a high degree of sympathy for the Republic of Ireland national side, leading to claims of “ambivalence” towards the Scottish national side amongst “a majority of Celtic fans”⁶⁸. Bradley’s research has utilised reactions to some “identifying symbols” of Scottishness and Irishness. Few Celtic fans, it was reported, felt “attraction” towards bagpipes, the thistle, the (long defunct) Scottish folk-band The Corries, Robert Bruce, or Robert Burns. By contrast the harp, shamrock, Padraic Pearse, Irish folk-band The Wolfetones, and St. Patrick were symbols “Celtic fans positively identified with”⁶⁹. Two things are thus done to national identity: the nation becomes reducible to stereotypical images, and ‘identity’ is predicated on how one ‘relates’ to these images. In place of Norman Tebbit’s infamous ‘cricket test’ by which the loyalties of Britain’s (i.e. England’s) ethnic minorities were judged by which international side they favoured, cultural identity in Scotland is almost reduced by Bradley to a folk-music test.

A reductive view of national identity was demonstrated by philosopher H.J.Paton in the late 1960s. Paton noted of “the Irish invader – the Orange and the Green”:

Few reasonable men, and certainly few reasonable Scotsman, will regard it as an unmixed blessing that an unusually homogenous nation should be split up into two nations. Yet if the native stock is doomed to decline, Scotland may yet be considered fortunate in so far as the Irish invaders belong to a race not

⁶⁸ Bradley (1995a:448). ‘Ambivalence’ is based upon claimed attendance at Scotland’s matches: if Bradley’s figures were representative, one wonders why Hampden Park is frequently half empty. Boyle (1994) also notes Celtic fans affections for the Republic’s side, but is rather more circumspect.

⁶⁹ Bradley (1995a:449-50). The choice of symbols seem more revealing than the findings. One wonders whether other “identifying symbols” were considered unsuitable: the tricolour, Red Hand, leprechauns (Ireland); the saltire, St Margaret, haggis (Scotland).

wholly alien to her own. Provided their numbers were not too great, there would be some hope of their becoming assimilated in the course of time – there are already signs of their being affected by some of the traditional Scottish ideals. Some of them have shown themselves men of ability, and they have strengthened Scotland in the field of sport.⁷⁰

Leaving aside notions of ‘stock’, ‘race’, and sporting abilities it seems quite clear that Paton viewed nationality as an absolute – one could be either ‘Irish’ or ‘Scottish’, or, at best, on the way from being one to being assimilated in the other. National identity, however, is a much more complex phenomenon. Scottish familial connections with Ireland go far beyond the Catholic community. The 1979 Election Survey asked whether respondents had “any family connections with Ireland”. Whilst 60% of Catholics answered positively, so too did 14% of Presbyterians, 14% of those of Other religions and 11% of the non-religious. Although highlighting the strong Irish heritage of many Scottish Catholics, this question also reveals its limitations: many Catholics (40%) have no family connections with Ireland. Crucially, of all those with such connections, a majority (60%) were *non-Catholic*.

For Benedict Anderson⁷¹, the nation is an ‘imagined community’, an ideological construct, which can be, and is, *re-imagined* and *re-constructed*. We can conclude this review of national identity by asking *why* people say they feel Scottish. For the vast majority in the 1992 survey (88%) the first reason they gave was simply that they were ‘Born in Scotland’. Respondents were given the opportunity to give as many reasons as they wished, although only 17% gave more than three, and none more than five. There was no variation across religion in the reasons respondents gave for feeling Scottish. The following table notes the proportions giving reasons as a first or subsequent choice (thus the columns do not add up to 100):

⁷⁰ Paton (1968:178-79). The patronising sporting reference relates to Celtic’s 1967 European Cup win.

⁷¹ Anderson (1991)

REASON RESPONDENT FEELS SCOTTISH, 1992:

Reasons given	% choosing as first or subsequent reason
Born in Scotland	88
Live in Scotland	47
Just love Scotland	39
Scottish culture	28
Dislike English	6
Parents/Family Scottish	1
Something else	1
<i>Base</i>	<i>690</i>

The practicality of Scottishness is striking – it predominantly relates to coming from Scotland, being born there. Only around a quarter gave ‘Scottish culture’ as a reason for feeling Scottish, and this accounted for only 2% of the first reasons given. This lends credence to McCrone’s argument that Scottish nationalism (here understood as a sociological rather than political process): “Has developed without the encumbrance of a heavy cultural baggage. It is as if, having looked to see what was on offer, the Scots have decided to travel light”⁷².

In other words, Protestantism and Empire may have been decisive to the shaping of modern Scottish history, but they are not widely regarded as defining and essential components in the ways that contemporary Scots view their Scottishness. On the contrary, an important element in late twentieth century Scottishness seems to be “that a feeling of ‘Scottishness’ goes along with left-wing values”:

The deliberate linking of nationalist and left-wing values by both the SNP and the Labour Party in Scotland have led to a linkage of these two dimensions in the political ethos of the society. This leads to a situation in which to say one is Scottish is also to say one has left-wing views, and conversely to say that one is British, rather than Scottish, is to assert right-wing views. No such link between these dimensions is visible in the rest of Great Britain and it is this linkage which explains Scottish distinctiveness.⁷³

In place of a Scottishness predicated upon Gallagher’s “corporate identity” or Bradley’s “identifying symbols”, McCrone offers up a “landscape of the mind ...

⁷² McCrone (1992:196)

⁷³ A.Brown *et al* (1999: 83, 90-1)

notions of the essential Scotland are what people want it to be”⁷⁴. If contemporary Scottishness is understood as a landscape of social justice, of welfare provision, and of collective responsibility for the weak, then is it really any surprise that Catholics, Protestants and the non-religious are united in a sense of themselves as Scottish?

CONCLUSION: A PUZZLE

The last three chapters have illustrated some of the major problems in applying the ‘sectarian myth’ to a Scottish social and political reality. If Scotland is really divided along ethno-religious lines then why are religious divisions marginal in the life of institutional religion, in terms of social structure, religious practices, and in political attitudes and behaviour? In other words, why does the myth persist? To a large extent its persistence can be explained using Bruce’s ‘iceberg’ metaphor: concern about ‘sectarianism’ exists because the Scottish *past* is seen, in many respects, as a ‘sectarian’ one. Indeed, it is notable that the literary landmarks in this area are thoroughly historical. Handley’s histories were joined four decades later by Bruce’s *No Pope of Rome*, predominantly concerned with Scotland before c.1950, and Gallagher’s two volumes, the first largely concerned with the period 1819-1914, the second with 1930s Edinburgh⁷⁵. Subsequent commentaries have all accepted the premise that ‘things were much worse’ in the past, although not all have shown a willingness to contextualise that past. It is frequently said that the past is another country, yet many accounts of ‘sectarianism’ in Scotland do not take this into account. To find that religion and politics mixed much more in the past is not the same thing as finding sectarianism, nor prejudice or bigotry. The following section of this thesis will thus offer a view of the Scottish past that shows that religion and politics mixed in Scotland without those connotations that late twentieth century (and secular) values might seek to impose on them. The period chosen was the inter-war decades, primarily because many commentators in the field view this period as witnessing particularly severe ‘sectarian’ friction.

⁷⁴ McCrone (1992:17)

⁷⁵ Handley (1943 & 1947); Bruce (1985a); Gallagher (1987a & 1987b)

**CHAPTER FOUR:
"THE RISING TIDE OF PAGANISM"**

The initial chapters of this study have demonstrated that contemporary Scotland is not, at least when we use the term with care, a 'sectarian' society. But what of the Scotland of the past - can it justifiably be described as 'sectarian'? There is a broad consensus that the two decades between the world wars represent perhaps the sharpest period of conflict between Scotland's Protestants and Catholics. The orthodox view, following Handley, has been that a conjunction of economic slump with the concession, in 1918, of state-funded Catholic education, and with heightened tension in Ireland, destroyed the religious *détente* characterising the period c.1878-1916:

The benign rays of the prosperous Edwardian era warmed native Scot and descendant of immigrant alike, and the old racial and religious differences slumbered in its genial glow ... But the industrial depression that followed the first world war awakened old discords.¹

Some revision has been undertaken in regard to the discords of old, suggesting that during the nineteenth century the Catholic Irish in Scotland "may not have been liked but for the most part were regarded with indifference". Many studies have focused on the inter-war period, suggesting that this was a defining epoch in Catholic-Protestant relations². My purpose here is not to debate this point, but rather to demonstrate that, even in a period of intense dislocation, religious rivalries provided a very limited means by which to mobilise opinion and action in Scotland. In other words, the Scotland of the 1920s and 1930s was not a 'sectarian' society.

THE 'ACRID FOG OF ANXIETY'

Mass unemployment "stamped the years between the wars indelibly with the mark of bitterness and poverty". The effects of poverty and uncertainty were immeasurable: "[The] acrid fog of anxiety was the atmosphere which men and women breathed during a generation. Its effect cannot be statistically measured, but, equally, it cannot

¹ Handley (1947:302)

be left out of any account of these years"³. In Scotland economic crises bit deeply - unemployment in west central Scotland in the 1930s averaged 25% - and there was widespread concern over a "Southward Drift" of economic development. Economic crisis fuelled fears of the 'End of Scotland' as a distinct nation, offering a particular twist to the mood of anxiety⁴. Some Scottish Unionists were, by the early 1930s, "turning towards a nationalist interpretation of the economic crisis", John Buchan noting pessimistically: "We do not want to see Scotland become merely a Northern Province of England. We do not want to become like the Jews a race without a Jerusalem. We must save our national identity while there is still time"⁵.

Such fears manifested themselves with the 1933 emergence of the Scottish National Party as an amalgamation of various nationalist organisations, indicating increasing concern about the future of Scotland⁶. Some were unconvinced that Scotland's ills could be best characterised as a 'national' problem: Edwin Muir, for example, insisted that "the fundamental cause of [Scotland's] many ills, including even the de-nationalisation of its people, was economic and not national". Nevertheless, Muir advocated Scottish independence:

What makes the existence of the mass of the people in Scotland so unsatisfactory, apart from their economic plight (which is the only urgent question ...), is not the feeling that they are being subjected to English influence, but rather the knowledge that there is no Scottish influence left to direct them. They are not English, and they are ceasing to be Scottish for lack of encouragement.⁷

One aspect of Scotland's situation, mass emigration, "was seen as proof positive that the Scottish nation was in the process of terminal decline"⁸. Scotland's net loss to emigration peaked in the 1920s - almost 400,000 leaving - and produced the first

² Tom Devine, *Herald*, 18/07/98 and *Scotsman*, 17/11/97; M.Mitchell (1998 & 1999); McFarland (1999)

³ Hobsbawm (1968:207-9).

⁴ T.Fitzpatrick (1999:136); R.J.Finlay (1994b); Thomson (1935); E.Muir (1935)

⁵ R.J.Finlay (1994b:247) quoting *GH* 27/11/31

⁶ The SNP arose from a series of often uneasy mergers between the "left-leaning" National Party of Scotland (*f.*1928); the "celtic romanticism" of the Scots National League (*f.*1920); and the Tory tinged Scottish Party (*f.*1930) [A.Brown *et al* (1998:144-6)]. For a detailed study see R.J.Finlay (1994a)

⁷ E.Muir (1935:248, 27-28)

⁸ R.J.Finlay (1994b:251)

recorded drop in the Scottish population. Estimated out-migration between 1901-51 was more than double that between 1861-1901. Unsurprisingly, "in a Europe which was becoming increasingly race conscious", this process was viewed with alarm, and many "concluded that emigration was both the symptom and the cause of national decline"⁹.

Scotland was not the only area of the UK suffering and it did not always suffer most. Between 1927 and 1939 Scottish unemployment exceeded the overall UK rate, but between 1927-32 the Scottish rate was lower than that of North East England. After 1932, however, unemployment in North East England fell to around the UK rate, whilst the Scottish rate fell more slowly and remained substantially above UK levels¹⁰. In 1939 the Clydesdale Bank 'Business Index' provided "a reasonably reliable indicator of general fluctuations". It can be quickly grasped that Scotland's position after 1930 was particularly acute:

INDEX OF SCOTTISH BUSINESS ACTIVITY, 1924-38¹¹:

	Index for Scotland	Index for G.Britain		Index for Scotland	Index for G.Britain
1924	100.0	100.0	1932	81.0	96.0
1925	97.0	101.5	1933	83.5	101.0
1926	--	91.5	1934	91.0	109.5
1927	103.0	108.5	1935	94.5	113.5
1928	102.0	107.5	1936	102.0	120.0
1929	104.0	112.0	1937	109.5	126.0
1930	97.0	106.5	1938	106.5	118.5
1931	85.5	98.5			

POLITICAL FLUX

Before turning to the specific concurrence of religious and political concerns, it is necessary to sketch the pattern of Scottish politics during the inter-war period. Between 1910 and 1945, there was a complete transition from the Conservative-Liberal party system in place since 1832, to a Conservative-Labour dualism

⁹ R.J.Finlay (1994b:251)

¹⁰ Smout (1986:114)

¹¹ *Clydesdale Bank*, 1939

unchallenged until the late 1960s. This process had particular consequences for Scottish politics because of the long-standing Liberal dominance north of the border. This had ensured for Scotland an influential position at the heart of British Liberalism when Liberalism was very much a party of Government. Liberalism was built upon a "painfully contrived coalition" of disparate socio-political interests, and in Scotland, to some degree, sectarian differences were blunted by - and subsumed within - the fact of Liberal dominance¹². Whilst a substantial minority of Liberals moved towards the Conservatives over Irish Home Rule from 1885, it is significant that the Unionist gains of 1886-1900 were swept away in Scotland in 1906 and 1910. The crumbling of the Liberal monolith, therefore, might well have removed an informal mechanism for bridging the religious divide in the sphere of party politics, and for containing the potential for political conflict¹³.

SCOTTISH PARLIAMENTARY SEATS & SHARE OF THE VOTE, 1918-1945:

	UNIONIST		NATIONAL-LIBERAL		LIBERAL		LABOUR		OTHER	
	<i>Vote</i>	<i>Seats</i>	<i>Vote</i>	<i>Seats</i>	<i>Vote</i>	<i>Seats</i>	<i>Vote</i>	<i>Seats</i>	<i>Vote</i>	<i>Seats</i>
1918	32.8	30	19.1	25	15.0	8	24.2	7	8.9	1
1922	25.1	13	17.7	12	21.5	15	32.2	29	3.5	2
1923	31.6	14	-	-	28.4	22	35.9	34	4.1	1
1924	40.8	36	-	-	16.5	8	41.1	26	1.6	1
1929	35.9	20	-	-	18.1	13	42.4	36	3.6	2
1931	49.5	48	4.8	8	8.6	7	32.6	7	4.5	1
1935	42.0	35	6.7	7	6.7	3	41.8	24	2.8	2
1945	37.4	24	3.7	3	5.0	-	49.4	40	4.5	4

Adding to the flux in Scottish national politics was a new element after 1918: women. The introduction of womanhood suffrage in 1918 (equalised with male suffrage a decade later) had obvious organisational implications for the political parties. The Unionists "enthusiastically developed" women's organisations, and laid: "Great emphasis .. on displaying visibly the place of women in the party" and in the 1920s and 1930s their "record in this respect was superior to its competitors"¹⁴. Labour's record in Scotland was poor, in relation not only to the Unionists, but to the

¹² Vincent (1976:47). See also Smith (1980)

¹³ R.J.Finlay (1996:70-71) notes that Unionist appeals over Irish Home Rule in December 1910 failed "to pay electoral dividends" in Scotland.

¹⁴ Hutchinson (1998:76-77)

English left: "Scottish Labour did not, unlike the English Labour Party, reach out to woman voters. It organised very few women's sections, and did not encourage them to affiliate to local parties"¹⁵. Unionist figures certainly respected the potential of the newly enfranchised: John Buchan's *The Three Hostages* contains a prescient prediction for the mid-1920s:

There is a mighty Tory revival in sight, and it will want leading. The newly enfranchised classes, especially the women, will bring it about. The suffragists didn't know what a tremendous force of conservatism they were releasing when they won the vote for their sex.¹⁶

RELIGION IN INTER-WAR EUROPE: CRISIS AND CONFIDENCE

The inter-war period was one of profound religious anxiety and realignment. Two senior Protestant figures, from the USA and Germany, warned in 1927 of a crisis in Protestant Europe:

Europe has become impoverished with many losses consequent upon the World War ... But political, economic, social and aesthetic maladies do not complete the diagnosis of Europe's sickness. In fourteen countries, due to an accumulation of calamities, the Protestant church is fighting for its life ... [It] suffers acutely in the general malaise which rests upon Europe ... In large and fair sections of Europe it lives in an atmosphere of defeat, of hatred, of greed, and of fear - the four outstanding characteristics of the post-war turmoil in every belligerent country.¹⁷

This was not the view of reactionary conservatives, but of liberal, progressive theologians who saw "the serious impairment of the spiritual side of either Protestantism or Catholicism ... as a major disaster [for] all who love European culture". The crisis resulted from an intensified "class struggle" and the continuing "high pitch" of "national pride". Economic downturn had struck particularly hard, they bemoaned, at the Protestant Churches of Europe (many were disestablished after the toppling of Central European monarchies in 1918-19), while "the Vatican [grew] ever richer". Catholic expansion (in terms of infrastructure and - crucially - in terms of confidence) came as Protestantism was contracting:

¹⁵ Hollis (1997:39)

¹⁶ Buchan (1924:704)

¹⁷ Keller & Stewart (1927:19)

Across the dinner tables of Europe one often hears the statement that from a military point of view France won the war; from the political, England; from the economic, America; from the cultural, the Jew; from the racial, the Slav; from the religious, the Roman Catholic Church. In common with nearly all such generalisations, exceptions could be made to these claims, but there is enough truth in them to cause the serious student of European culture to reflect.¹⁸

It must be stressed, however, that the authors viewed Catholicism as a potential *ally*, not as a 'Romanising' menace to liberty. It was argued that Europe "must choose between Christianity and chaos", between the spiritual and the wholly material. To fend off the "the deadly embrace of materialism" a common Christian understanding was essential: "Bigotry now, on the part of either Protestants or Catholics, in the midst of appalling spiritual need, is falseness to Christianity. There is ample room for the best efforts of both"¹⁹.

The sense of struggle between material and spiritual interests was hardly new, but it was felt keenly by clergy and laity of all denominations and outlooks. These changes can be seen as an intensification - or acceleration - of processes of secularisation with roots further back in the modernisation of Europe, but to contemporaries of these changes the emptying churches and the seeming loss of religion's moral authority was bewildering. Coinciding as they did with the rise of material answers to the crises of the industrial world (most dramatically Socialism and Fascism), it is little surprise that the period saw many Churches on the defensive, and seeking a spiritual reawakening.

Pius XI's first Encyclical, in 1922, bemoaned "the dense fog of mutual hatreds and grievances" enveloping Europe. Class conflict offended the Vatican as "a chronic and mortal disease of present day society, which like a cancer is eating away the vital forces of the social fabric". Pius lamented "the morbid restlessness which has spread

¹⁸ Keller & Stewart (1927: 19-22, 26-28, 157)

¹⁹ Keller & Stewart (1927:47,50,28)

among people of every age and condition in life [and] the general spirit of insubordination"²⁰:

... there remains only the most terrible uncertainty, and ... fears for the future. instead of regular daily work there is idleness and unemployment ... [and] the restless spirit of revolt reigns ... In the face of our much praised progress, we behold with sorrow society lapsing back slowly but surely into a state of barbarism.

Pius insisted that as the 'true Faith', Catholicism represented the *only* remedy to barbarism:

Because the [Catholic] Church is by divine institution the sole depository and interpreter of the ideals and teachings of Christ, she alone possesses in any complete and true sense the power effectively to combat that materialistic philosophy which has already done, and still threatens, such tremendous harm to the home and to the state. The Church alone can introduce into society and maintain therein the prestige of a true, sound spiritualism ...

In 1925 Pius insisted that the contemporary world suffered the "deplorable consequences" arising from "the rebellion of individuals and states against the authority of Christ", resulting in "society, in a word, shaken to its foundations and on the way to ruin"²¹.

For many conservative Protestants, far from offering a Christian alternative to atheistic materialism, Rome was a major contributor to Europe's woes. Likewise, many conservative Catholics looked on Protestantism - heir to the 'rebellion against Christ' - as part of the problem. Whilst traditional Protestants clung to notions of the Pope as Antichrist, traditional Catholics had only to look to the 1914 revision of the Church's Catechism: "Protestantism - or the reformed religion, as it was called haughtily by its founders, is the corollary of all heresies which have been before, after, or shall come to corrupt the soul"²².

In any consideration of the inter-war period certain points must remain fixed. It was a period of great economic and social uncertainty for all classes. A massive political

²⁰ Pius XI (1922:9,12,14)

²¹ Pius XI (1922:15,42)(1925:24)

reorientation was occurring, with an increasingly politically confident (though economically anxious) left faced by a wary and defensive right. It was a time of economic misery for the poor, of acute uncertainty for the employed, and of fearful apprehension for the privileged. Economically it was an age where the orthodoxy perished. It was a time when the authority of religion was felt to be under serious pressure from secular ('materialist') forces antagonistic (or oblivious) to the spiritual needs of European civilisation. To many the period seemed to be one of religious decline, but many - especially the Catholic Church - saw in the advance of materialism a challenge with which to re-energise the faithful. Whilst many Christians felt that inter-faith co-operation was crucial in the face of 'barbarism', many still preferred, and retreated into, the familiar comforts of historic enmity.

RELIGION IN SCOTLAND BETWEEN THE WARS

At this point it is instructive to examine some of the empirical evidence with which we can begin to gauge to what extent Scotland shared in the 'crisis' of Protestant Europe, and the revitalisation of Catholicism. It is useful to examine the evidence available to the Churches themselves between the wars, as it helps to explain the Presbyterian pessimism and Catholic optimism of the period²³. Turning first to church membership, the dominance of the Church of Scotland and United Free Church is striking, accounting for about 60% of the table below (which does not include non-Christians, the smaller Christian organisations, and - of course - the unchurched):

²² Paragraph III, 129 - quoted in Keller & Stewart (1929:175)

²³ On such statistics, see Chapter 2.

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP, 1900-1950²⁴:

	1900	1910	1920	1930 ²⁵	1940	1950
Church of Scotland	662,000	714,000	739,000	1,271,000	1,278,000	1,271,000
United Free Church	493,000	507,000	530,000	16,600	23,600	24,600
Other Presbyterian	22,500	36,900	38,700	32,700	28,000	28,500
Episcopalian	116,000	142,000	144,000	124,000	124,000	109,000
Other Protestant	55,100	66,700	68,300	72,100	76,300	68,700
Catholic	469,000	529,000	603,000	607,000	615,000	745,000
<i>Table total (m)</i>	<i>1.82</i>	<i>1.99</i>	<i>2.12</i>	<i>2.12</i>	<i>2.14</i>	<i>2.25</i>
SCOTTISH POPULATION (m)	4.47	4.76	4.88	4.84	-	5.10

The apparent growth of Scotland's Catholic community is also noticeable, in absolute terms and relative to other denominations²⁶. Whilst Presbyterian²⁷ communion rolls rose by 10% between 1900-20, the estimated Catholic population rose by almost 30%. Increases over 1900-50 are even more marked, with a 12% Presbyterian increase compared to a Catholic increase of almost 60%. Whilst Catholics comprised an estimated 10.5% of the Scottish population in 1900, by 1930 they accounted for 12.5%, and 14.6% by 1950. Presbyterian membership, meanwhile, remained fairly constant: 25.8% of the total population in 1900 and 25.4% in 1950. The Church of Scotland's Sunday School roll fell from 458,000 in 1900 to 290,000 in 1950, a 37% decline, suggesting an ageing Presbyterian age structure and a failure to recruit children²⁸. To some degree this failure to maintain the momentum of religious connection amongst Scottish children helps to explain the considerable decline in Kirk membership which set in from c.1960.

Church attendance data offer a somewhat more sensitive picture:

CHURCH ATTENDANCE, 1900-1950²⁹:

	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950
CoS/UFC	968,000	1,021,000	1,040,000	860,000	835,000	863,000
Episcopalian	46,000	53,000	57,000	60,000	62,000	56,000
Catholic	341,700	371,500	407,700	386,600	369,400	420,100

²⁴ All figures rounded. Adapted from Brierley (1989 & 1999)

²⁵ CoS and UFC united in 1929.

²⁶ Catholic figures reflect an aggregate of 'best estimates' by parochial clergy.

²⁷ Limited here to CoS and UFC (accounting for 98% of Presbyterian membership in 1900)

²⁸ Brierley (1999:2.15)

²⁹ Adapted from Brierley (1989 & 1999)

It is these data which most graphically highlight the relative decline of the Church of Scotland during this period: Presbyterian reunion in 1929 coincided with a fall in the number and proportion of actual Kirk communicants. It seems fair to assume that average weekly attendance would be considerably lower than the total number of Communicants. The most illuminating aspect of the attendance figures, however, is that it fits with a contemporary sense of Presbyterian decay. Whilst attendance at Catholic and Episcopalian services was increasing, Presbyterian attendance was declining. Between 1900-1950 the number of communicating Presbyterians fell by 11%, despite a growing Communion roll. Catholic attendance, on the other hand, increased by 23% over 1900-50, although this increase was outstripped by the substantial growth of the Catholic population.

There were further reasons for Presbyterian concern during the 1930s, not least that the Catholic Church improved and expanded their infrastructure at a time when Presbyterianism was undergoing drastic rationalisation. Put bluntly, as Presbyterian congregations were amalgamated, buildings sold and ministers pensioned off, the Catholic Church extended its physical presence:

NUMBER OF CHURCHES, 1900-50³⁰:

	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950
CoS/UFC	3,458	3,188	3,186	2,920	2,483	2,340
Episcopalian	354	404	416	415	404	397
Catholic	279	322	352	397	453	506

The period 1900-50 saw the number of Presbyterian churches fall by almost a third, whilst the number of Catholic churches increased by over 80%. The Catholic increase was at its most rapid during the 1930s, with as many churches built during that decade as in the previous thirty years. Noticeably, the 1930s also saw as large a net decline in Presbyterian churches as had occurred between 1900-30. Whilst there had been more than twelve Presbyterian churches in Scotland to every Catholic one in 1900, by 1940 it was less than six, and by 1950 less than five.

³⁰ Adapted from Brierley (1989 & 1999)

Alongside the decline in the number of Presbyterian churches came a sharp decline in the number of ministers. Compared to 1900, there were 21% fewer ministers in 1930, and by 1950 the decline since the beginning of the century totalled 35%. In comparison, the number of Catholic priests in Scotland doubled between 1900 and 1940, and by 1950 the increase on 1900 totalled 132%. While there had been eight Presbyterian ministers to each Catholic priest in 1900, the ratio had halved by 1930, and virtually quartered by 1950³¹. Presbyterian contraction was not so much the result of decline, but rather of reunion. Unions in 1900 and 1929 brought the vast bulk of the three nineteenth century Presbyterian denominations together: rationalisation after *c.*1930 should come as little surprise. Nevertheless, the mechanics of church closure and parish amalgamation tempered the joy of reunion and brought to sharp relief Catholic expansion. Catholic expansion was by no means a solely Scottish phenomenon: Mass attendance in England increased by 21% between 1900-30, and by 35% between 1900-50, more than in Scotland. The increase of English Catholic churches and clergy over 1900-50 was remarkably similar to that in Scotland: Catholic clergy increased by 132% in England, 133% in Wales, and 132% in Scotland³². One Catholic writer noted: "No other religious denomination ... could even contemplate such steady expansion anywhere in England & Wales. Most of them were facing a continuous and demoralising decline in their numbers"³³.

This expansion reflects the historic grounding of much of modern British Catholicism within poor immigrant - and, in particular, Irish - communities. By the early twentieth century the Church found itself in a position where it could meet the infrastructural demands of its community. Catholic expansion also reflects the improving socio-economic profile of British Catholics, and the removal of the educational burden Catholics had faced until the Education Acts of 1902 and 1918. It is important to note, however, that the expansion of Catholicism was not prominent amongst Presbyterian concerns until the long-awaited Presbyterian reunion was

³¹ Adapted from Brierley (1999)

³² Numbers in Northern Ireland, on the other hand, remained constant. Brierley (1999:8.6)

³³ Gwynn (1950b:432)

under way. The disappointments of Presbyterian reunion - not least its failure to reinvigorate the Kirk - requires careful scrutiny.

SCOTTISH PRESBYTERIANISM BETWEEN THE WARS

Discussing Scotland's Protestants brings the problems of definition outlined in the first section of this thesis into sharp relief. Defining a Catholic, then or now, is of course problematic, but within Catholicism there is one institutional Church to deal with. In contrast, it might be argued that a Protestant need have no attachment to a religious institution of any kind. The differences - in theology, liturgy, culture - between Protestant Churches are outwith the scope of this study but some understanding of the internal differences in Scottish Protestantism is absolutely crucial in understanding (and contextualising) relations between Catholic and Protestant. It is worthwhile to reflect that the greatest challenge to Presbyterianism (the dominant form of Scottish Protestantism) between c.1750 and c.1930 came not from Catholicism but Protestantism's "inherent fissiparous" nature. "Scottish Protestants spent most of the nineteenth century arguing with each other, rather than with Catholics, and produced a *de facto* pluralism which hastened secularisation"³⁴.

It is relatively easy, then, to understand why 'No Popery' campaigning was fairly far down the list of Presbyterian priorities. A concerted front against Rome was quite impossible whilst Presbyterians were immersed in complex and bitter wrangles over buildings and legacies. We must be wary, therefore, of pursuing a simplistic Protestant-Catholic dichotomy, in which the Protestant population effectively consists of non-Catholics. Even during the 1930s (with the greatest Presbyterian fissure reconciled) bitterness lingered between Protestant denominations. It will be appreciated, therefore, that the following analysis can by no stretch of the imagination be considered a comprehensive account. However, it does offer a broad picture alongside the crucial caveat that the Protestant experience, institutionally and politically, is far more varied than has generally been allowed for.

³⁴ Bruce (1988:157,160). For a sense of Protestantism's complicated Scottish family tree, see McFarland (1990:116)

The central issue for Presbyterians at the turn of the century was reunion, an aspiration significantly advanced with the formation of the United Free Church in 1900. The key stumbling block to further reunion was the state connections of the Church of Scotland. These were gradually severed - and the Kirk effectively disestablished - and reunion was secured in 1929. Reunion was motivated by ecclesiastical concern over secularism and with the unchurched. The first initiative after union was the 'Forward Movement' to 'bring back' 'the Churchless Million'. Running from 1930-33 it "failed to catch the national interest, and ... did little to instigate real enthusiasm"³⁵. Indeed, as early as 1931 optimism seems to have waned, one *Scotsman* correspondent arguing that: "To try and win back to empty pews the generation of the Great War is probably whipping a fog. The churches on average Sundays ... look as if a ruthless epidemic had laid the folk in the churchyard"³⁶. Rev. John White conceded that the Forward Movement had, at the very least, been ill-timed: "cradled in prayer but ... started before the country had been properly prepared for it"³⁷.

There were broader reasons why the period was tinged with Presbyterian disappointment, with the dismantling of what had been - between c.1870-c.1920 - a significant role for the Churches in local administration. As Callum Brown has noted, "the 1920s proved to be cathartic for democratic religious administration"³⁸, with education and welfare passing into the hands of County and Burgh Councils. The abolition of *ad hoc* bodies in 1929 followed the abject failure of the long anticipated local veto polls to deliver alcohol Prohibition³⁹. In essence, the 1920s witnessed a decisive breakthrough in Scottish administration and social policy for the secular state:

Not only was direct church influence in local democracy diminishing, but evangelical social policy was in retreat as the state took greater control of public life. The decline in religious control over social policy by the early

³⁵ C.G.Brown (1997:141)

³⁶ Letter in *Scotsman*, 20/05/31

³⁷ Quoted in A.Muir (1958:337). White was a key architect of union and minister at Glasgow Barony CoS.

³⁸ C.G.Brown (1992:66)

³⁹ The polls were held in 1920 after decades of campaigning.

1930s had a great bearing on public perception of the role of religion. The churches - predominantly the Presbyterian churches - no longer held the answers to social questions, no longer provided the ideology of social improvement. Social salvation was being divorced from religious salvation in an unprecedented way ... The old certainties of religious influence, which had survived industrialisation and urbanisation in the nineteenth century, were in the twentieth being swept away.⁴⁰

The 1920s also brought an abrupt halt to warming relations between the major Churches and the labour movement. The development of Christian socialism helped to produce, by the 1900s, "a convergence [between the Churches and the labour movement] in much of the social-policy agenda (though not all of it) and in joint work in social investigations and schemes to ameliorate social problems"⁴¹. War, Red Clydeside and the Russian Revolution, however, had by c.1918 "created a climate of hostility for Christian socialist ideas":

Turning their backs on social reconstruction, the United Free Church and the Church of Scotland joined forces in December 1918 in calling a 'National Mission of Rededication'. It was a flop, regarded suspiciously by politicians and ignored even by church members. The people seemed unresponsive to a national church revivalism, and the churches seemed unresponsive to the new political inclinations of the Scottish working classes.⁴²

This was by no means a specifically Scottish phenomenon. Protestant Churches throughout the modern world turned towards issues of individual morality:

the trend among conservatives to deal with moral questions rather than broader social concerns was a feature of the times. There was in Britain, just as there was in the United States, what has been called 'the great reversal': a repudiation by Evangelicals of their earlier engagement with social issues.⁴³

Politically, the mood of the Presbyterian Churches mirrored that of the Coalition government which, facing economic slump in 1920-21, returned to the familiar fold of *laissez faire* capitalism. The Presbyterian Churches reneged upon wartime pledges of social reconstruction, as the progressive social vision crumbled in the face of economic crises. Rather than adjust to the material circumstances of the 1920s, the Presbyterian Churches retreated from them:

⁴⁰ C.G.Brown (1992:66-7)

⁴¹ C.G.Brown (1997:138). See also Knox (1999:171-3)

⁴² C.G.Brown (1997:140)

For the Churches to remain behind their wartime pledges to reconstruction would now [c.1920-21] be to set themselves against the Government, and possibly to alienate middle-class church members who were taking the anti-socialist cause to heart. In the face of growing social division, it seemed that the best course for the Church would be to withdraw from any involvement in social reform. It should proclaim itself neutral on social issues and restrict itself to spiritual work.⁴⁴

In practice, however, there was a distinct political shift of the Churches to the right, and by c.1925 Presbyterianism was led by Churchmen of a resolutely Conservative hue. One consequence of this shift was that the Kirk "ceased attributing poverty and inequality to injustices in the social and industrial system" and instead emphasised "the individual moral failings of the poor themselves":

As the Church and Nation Committee of the Church of Scotland ceased its call for reconstruction, it gave increased attention to individual vice. The Church and Nation reports after 1921 were devoted largely to condemning gambling, intemperance, sexual promiscuity and failure to observe the Sabbath, and to calling for censorship of the cinema. By 1923 ... the United Free Church were taking a similar position ... The solution to mass deprivation was not to reform the social environment, but to transform the individual characters of the labouring poor.⁴⁵

Salvation in this world became, once again, an individual responsibility - the Kirk emphasised thrift, self-help, and self-restraint over collective efforts to ameliorate economic hardship. As British politics became increasingly dominated by the schism between Socialist and anti-Socialist, such a position clearly aligned the Presbyterian Churches with the right. Indeed the Moderator of the UFC declared the defeat of the 1926 General Strike "a victory for God"⁴⁶. This rightward lurch swung Presbyterianism towards "a new agenda of social conservatism, anti-labourism and racism". Racism was directed towards Scotland's Catholics, and - as we shall see - contributed to what amounted to an official Presbyterian campaign against Irish Catholic immigration between c.1922-c.1938⁴⁷. As we shall also see, however, Presbyterianism was a powerful formative force for the Scottish left - "The leading

⁴³ Bebbington (1989:214)

⁴⁴ S.J.Brown (1992:89)

⁴⁵ S.J.Brown (1992:90)

⁴⁶ Rev. James Harvey, quoted in S.J.Brown (1992:91)

⁴⁷ C.G.Brown (1997:140). See also Chapter 5.

Clydesiders were true heirs of the Covenanters: teetotal, Nationalist and Presbyterian"⁴⁸. To argue that the leading figures of Presbyterianism were Conservatives during the inter-war period, it must be stressed, is not to argue that Presbyterians, as a whole, tended towards the right.

The joy of Presbyterian union was swiftly followed by the social realities of an economy on the brink of collapse. At the Union Assembly in October 1929 John White, the union Moderator, addressed a rally of 12,000:

The first task that faces us is that which was a main motive in the reunion movement - the moral, social, and the religious well-being of the people of Scotland. The Churchless million is a first challenge ... In these late years, it has grown complex and intensive - a sphinx-like problem. It touches the slum and the suburb; woe-land and wealth-land. There must be a girding up of the loins. Great things must be done ...⁴⁹

Such great things were overwhelmed by economic crisis and by unemployment. The Kirk was ill-prepared, finding itself: "hitched to a socially-conservative, racist, anti-labour manifesto whilst the leaders of the Church washed their hands of the really big issue of the 1930s – unemployment"⁵⁰.

Whilst efforts to attract the 'Churchless million' into the Kirk did little to alleviate the material suffering of many working class families, and material suffering thinned Presbyterian attendance:

During the slump of the early 1930s, working class congregations of the Church of Scotland reported church attendance and recruitment of men fell sharply because those on the dole would not appear in church without suitable clothes and money for collection; in addition, seat-renting continued and the poor were often made to apply for suspension of payments or for use of free seats ... Though the unemployed and the poor of the inter-war years kept their names on the communicants' roll of the Church of Scotland ... the stigma of the free seat drove many to the evangelistic missions.⁵¹

⁴⁸ Iain McLean, *Sunday Herald*, 30/01/00

⁴⁹ Quoted in A.Muir (1958:266)

⁵⁰ C.G.Brown (1997:141) To Edwin Muir (1935:100): "The Scottish pulpits are as full As a drove of fatted stirks/The unemployed are empty as/The Sunday sermons and the kirks".

⁵¹ C.G.Brown (1997:152)

Such missions provided "an open and effectual door to those suffering through unemployment and poverty". Further, they demanded little from attenders "who could ... adopt an irregular connection"⁵². It might be speculated that this increased popularity of independent missions heightened the profile of anti-Catholicism in some parts of urban Scotland. Bruce notes the "previously unremarked observation that militant Protestant leaders in modern Britain are drawn predominantly from the fringes of British Protestantism"⁵³. A religious milieu stressing traditional aspects of Protestantism - including 'No Popery' - was reinvigorated as economic anxiety created space for radical political ideas. As we shall see, municipal sectarianism in 1930s Edinburgh and Glasgow was closely connected to independent evangelical missions.

Several points about inter-war Presbyterianism must be emphasised. The first is that its political meaning was a contested one, the symbolism of the Kirk used not only by social Conservatives, but also by the emerging left. Simplistic equations of Presbyterian with Conservative must be avoided. Secondly, and crucially, Presbyterians felt keenly their declining influence. The period saw Presbyterianism lose its position at the heart of Scottish society, and the exhaustion of its key excuse. This had been that Presbyterianism *divided* could not deliver the 'Godly Commonwealth' - disappointment came with the realisation that neither could Presbyterianism reunite. The following chapters outline a number of Presbyterian setbacks: failure to obtain statutory religious instruction in public schools (won by Catholics and Episcopalians in 1918); the apathy of the Education elections of 1919 (and, to a lesser extent, 1925 and 1928) despite that failure; the resounding defeat of Prohibition; and, not least, the dismantling of the *ad hoc* local bodies in 1929. Attempts to revitalise Scottish Presbyterianism - such as the National Mission (1919-20) or the Forward Movement (1930-33) - failed to arouse interest. Reunion, so long awaited, itself counted in some respects as a disappointment. Union provoked little enthusiasm outside clerical circles, and the ecclesiastical hopes invested in the 'National' Church disappeared under the gloom of world slump.

⁵² C.G.Brown (1997:152)

⁵³ Bruce (1986:809)

SCOTTISH CATHOLICISM BETWEEN THE WARS

Whilst the inter-war years represented a period of unrealised aspirations for Presbyterianism, for Catholicism the period was largely characterised by infrastructural advance and a growing mood of confidence. The Catholic community, of course, remained overwhelmingly working class and vulnerable to economic downturn, but two aspects of its structure allowed it to cope with the economic anxiety of the inter-war decades. Firstly, the Education (Scotland) Act of 1918 placed full financial responsibility for Catholic schools on the shoulders of the state. This not only removed a heavy financial burden from the Catholic community, but increased the social mobility of many Catholics through an improved and extended system of Catholic education. Secondly, the nature of Scottish Catholicism made it less vulnerable to economic dislocation:

Arguably, the Catholic Church was the best-equipped denomination in tackling the adverse effects of economic depression, and does not seem to have suffered serious losses arising from recessionary periods. The Catholic faith is often seen as being invigorated by the combined effects of poverty and discrimination; priests tended to be drawn from the working classes and to relate well to economic hardship amongst their parishioners. Though Catholics moved increasingly during this period into skilled and white-collar jobs, the Catholic community retained a homogeneity which prevented a major social divide emerging between a practising Catholic bourgeoisie and a lapsed proletariat.⁵⁴

At the same time, the relatively weak economic position of many individual Catholics (perhaps a majority of economically active Catholics could be found amongst the low- and unskilled) made them particularly (though not uniquely) vulnerable to discrimination. This was probably most acute where employment was short-term and casual, and where ties of kinship, locality, church or Lodge, played a key role in securing work⁵⁵. The Church reacted to the Depression by forming the Catholic Union Advisory Bureaux, offering legal assistance and advice on employment and welfare. Without Presbyterian parallel, the Bureaux (open to

⁵⁴ C.G.Brown (1997:152-3)

⁵⁵ "Patronage was not an important avenue for unskilled working men in Glasgow until after the First World War, and those firms that discriminated against Catholics were a minority" - Smith (1980:153)

Catholic and non-Catholic alike) were set up in 1931 in response to the National Unemployed Workers Movement (NUWM), which the Church saw as dangerously influenced by the Communist Party. In time: "The idea of advisory bureaux was to flower to become one of the most significant forms of mass Catholic social action in the whole of the United Kingdom", becoming "the central focus of Catholic Action in the Archdiocese of Glasgow"⁵⁶. Services such as the CUAB, in conjunction with charities such as the St Vincent de Paul Society, formed an additional bond between working class Catholics and their Church.

Although the Scottish Catholic community lay at the northernmost fringes of European Catholicism, it was shared in a resurgence of Catholic spirituality and confidence:

the years between the two world wars can be seen in retrospect as the apogee of a particular model of Catholicism forged in the pre-1914 era and which - in comparison to the much more divided structures of the Protestant faith - constituted a creative and remarkably effective response to the challenges presented by the more urbanised, educated and pluralistic character of European society.⁵⁷

In England, this new mood had crystallised around the 1908 International Eucharistic Congress in London, an event which proved a triumph, a massive public demonstration of Catholic Faith⁵⁸. The Congress climax was to have been the public carrying of the Host "as a test of Catholic piety, English law, and public toleration"⁵⁹. The Liberal Government dismissed ultra-Protestant protests that the planned procession was illegal, but with growing legal uncertainty made private representations to the Church. The legal point was never decided as, at the last

⁵⁶ Williamson (1998:32-33)

⁵⁷ Conway (1997:2)

⁵⁸ The Church described the Congress as "the greatest religious triumph of its generation", the "flower and fruit" of "the tears and blood of persecution". *Catholic Encyclopaedia* (1913): 'Eucharistic Congresses'. Its aim was to help "to bring back Protestant England to the Worship of the Eucharist ... the first stage of the triumph of the Holy Church in the great English nation". [Congress official quoted in Bohstedt (1992:178)]

⁵⁹ Bohstedt (1992:178)

moment, the Church reluctantly agreed to a procession which offered no legal controversy - this, even without its sacred elements, proved a triumph⁶⁰.

At the heart of this self-confident model of Catholicism - owing as much to the anti-modernism of Pius X as to the social Catholicism of Leo XIII - "were its hierarchy, its uncompromising doctrinal stance and its activist and associational structure". At the head of the model - between 1922-39 - was Pius XI, under whom Papal authority "acquired an unprecedented centrality in Catholic life". "Pius XI was determined to liberate the Church from the defensive priorities of the nineteenth century and to transform it into an apostolic organisation committed to the rechristianisation of modern society"⁶¹.

One of the most visible outcomes was the Catholic Action movement which "aped the structures of modern mass politics and consciously sought to reassert the public prominence of the Catholic faith"⁶². The view that Scottish Catholicism has "Historically ... encouraged a low profile in all spheres of political and social life"⁶³ fits rather uneasily against the backdrop of the era of Catholic Action. In Scotland this manifested itself in a number of ways. Organisations such as the Catholic Truth Society (CTS), and the Catholic Evidence Guild (CEG) were well established in Scotland by the mid-1920s⁶⁴. Activists were bolstered by the belief that "In the present crisis in the world's affairs, the Catholic Faith becomes ever more clearly the one hope of the human race". Catholic Action offered a means to combat Scotland's "grotesque ignorance" of Catholic doctrine and represented "a great force for the return of Scotland to the Faith"⁶⁵. This 'return', in many Catholic circles, was felt to be within the reach of the Church. Protestantism, to many, had had its day. In 1929

⁶⁰ The legal issue was whether certain provisions of the 1829 Catholic Emancipation Act were still in force. See Machin (1983).

⁶¹ Conway (1997:2,40)

⁶² Conway (1997:41)

⁶³ Bradley (1995a:452). Also MacMillan (2000a)

⁶⁴ The CTS was founded in London in 1868 and re-established in 1884. [see Ralls (1993)] The CEG was founded in 1919/20. Whilst the CTS published Catholic apologetics, the CEG trained lay activists for street corner preaching.

⁶⁵ *Catholic Truth Society of Scotland, St Andrews & Edinburgh Diocesan Branch, Reports* (hereafter *CTSS/StAE Reports*), 1930-31, 1931-32

Rev. Ronald Knox, a high-profile convert from Anglicanism, insisted that the English CTS should target its propaganda at:

the normal member of the Church of England, who ... was drifting into secularism ... It must be proved to them that the Catholic Church was the only refuge in these times of a sane philosophy and a consistent morality; and they must have drummed into them a sense of duty.

The previous day, another priest assured Catholics that: "As people realise that Protestantism is dying they must instinctively turn to the ever growing Catholic Church. The Church of England was fast becoming a farce ... [it] will soon change to a sect and even possibly to an insect"⁶⁶.

Such abrasive disdain towards Protestantism was felt, and expressed, by many Catholics during this period. One Scottish priest claimed in 1931 that "The Reformation reformed nothing. It deformed everything"⁶⁷. Another spoke in 1922 of the Devil's amusement at the state of the world:

and of all the things over which he chuckled ... one must be Protestantism, for of all the unmitigated hoaxes that were ever foisted on a credulous world Protestantism was about the 'hoaxiest'. (Applause.) People called themselves Protestants, and if they were asked what they were protesting against they had not the remotest idea.⁶⁸

At the Scottish Emancipation Centenary held in Edinburgh in 1929 one speaker noted opportunities for proselytism amongst Protestants: "They realised their own Churches were losing their grip. They saw on the other hand the Catholic Church, constant and unchanging ... but yearly growing in strength and power"⁶⁹. The Church was thus burdened with the gravest of responsibilities. The CTS warned: "All other religious allegiance is dwindling, and if Scotland is not to fall into utter paganism, this can only be through the Catholic faith"⁷⁰. It should be emphasised,

⁶⁶ The Centenary was a triumphant statement of Catholic advance in England, achieving that which had been denied in 1908: amongst a march of 30,000 Catholic men "was the largest public assembly of priests in their religious dress which has ever been seen in London's streets" - *Times* 16/09/29; 17/09/29; *Scotsman* 16/09/29

⁶⁷ *Kinning Park Catholic Monthly*, February 1931.

⁶⁸ Fr. Hugh Pope, *GH* 24/04/22

⁶⁹ Dr Patrick McGlynn, *Scotsman* 16/10/29

⁷⁰ *CTSS/StAE Report* 1932-33

however, that many Scottish Catholics insisted on the necessity of Christian co-operation rather than competition:

To stem the rising tide of paganism in Scotland the day is not far off, if it has not already dawned, when Catholics and Protestants must forget their old enmities and stand side by side ... to save their nation from the common enemy of indifference and unbelief.⁷¹

To some Catholics the 'decline of Scotland' in both national and religious terms offered both grave danger, and the opportunity to advance the Catholic faith. By the inter-war period, with the numbers of Irish-born in Scotland rapidly diminishing "the Catholic community was increasingly a *Scottish* community"⁷². Rivalries between Catholics of Irish and Scottish ancestries had virtually disappeared, and in 1934 one priest noted that whilst Presbyterianism represented a difficult obstacle to "the restoration of the Catholic faith in Scotland", Scottish patriotism offered a means to surmount it:

the Scots were a people of a very patriotic nature, and ... if they could get them to realise that Presbyterianism was, after all, imported from abroad, if they could make them realise that the Catholic Church was the Church international and super-national, yet in each country national, then they might prepare them for the reception of the true faith ... They wanted to save the Scottish race ... They wanted a Scotland not only peopled by Catholics, but peopled by Catholics who were Scotsmen and Scotswomen. If they did not hurry up about it, it would be too late, because there was such a thing as race suicide.⁷³

Such conjunction of 'race', religion and patriotism bear unexpected parallels with the Presbyterian campaign against the Scoto-Irish discussed in Chapter Five. It is clear that elements in the Catholic Church were as concerned about the state of Scotland's national identity as many Presbyterians, although the emphasis laid on the causes of Scotland's ills, and the means to remedy them, clearly differed.

⁷¹ Anson (1937:216): "It is mainly ignorance and prejudice which still keep alive the old enmity ... and until these can be broken down the enmity will exist. And it is for Catholics to make the first advances."

⁷² Aspinwall (1991:100)

⁷³ Fr. Giles Black, addressing the Caledonian Catholic Association (CCA). *EN* 30/11/34. On CCA see Scottish Catholic Archives, DE171/20

SECTARIAN VIOLENCE AND THE POLITICS OF THE STREET

The 1918 Education Act brought Catholicism firmly into the mainstream of Scottish society and freed up Catholic finances and energies. Some of this energy was expended on the creation of two national pilgrimages, at Dunfermline and at Carfin Grotto in Lanarkshire. Both attracted large numbers - in 1934 10,000 pledged themselves at Dunfermline "to the great work of the conversion of their land": and 60,000 witnessed the dedication of a statue of St. Patrick at Carfin in 1930. Both also proved controversial. Presbyterian bodies were deeply upset in 1930 when a Catholic service was held - without permission - in the nave of Dunfermline Abbey⁷⁴. Carfin was a storm centre for sectarian rivalries: the unveiling of St. Patrick's statue was followed by a Conventicle of 4,000 Protestants. Although gathering "without molestation" it closed with "riotous scenes" and four arrests⁷⁵. On several other occasions, Carfin was to witness street battles during the Marching Season. In May 1931 "Wild Scenes" followed an Orange parade, ill-feeling continuing for several weeks. A Catholic procession in nearby Mossend-Bellshill descended into "mob fighting, the tension being at fever pitch". Another Conventicle, attracting 20,000, produced a "wild scramble" and nine arrests, despite calls from the platform "to live as Christians at all times" and the urging of the local priest that his congregation should "refrain from unseemly conduct". The Catholic community viewed Conventicles and Orange marches in Carfin as highly provocative. Likewise many Protestants viewed Catholic ceremonies at Carfin, Dunfermline and elsewhere as insensitive⁷⁶.

Similar disturbances occurred with depressing regularity during the Marching Season, "the level and scale of the violence exhibited between 1931 and 1935 ... of a much more serious and concerted nature" than of any period since the reintroduction of Orange parades in the 1870s⁷⁷. In particular, violence was common upon the return of Glasgow Lodges from gatherings outside the city. In 1928 there was "considerable skirmishing between ... opposing factions" as Orangemen returned to

⁷⁴ EN 11/06/34; Scotsman 25/08/30; EN 12/12/30; Scotsman 06/07/31

⁷⁵ Scotsman 01/09/30

⁷⁶ Scotsman 09/09/29; 11/05/31; 25/05/31; 01/06/31; EN 18/05/31

Glasgow, around 20 arrests being made. The following month eleven arrests followed a procession of the Royal Black Institution in Springburn. In 1929 police were attacked by a "rowdy crowd" as an Orange band returned from Larkhall, and in 1931 "wild scenes ... followed the return of Glasgow Orangemen from Kilwinning" with stones and bottles exchanged. Similar scenes in 1934 saw sixteen arrested⁷⁸. It was not simply Orange parades which formed the focus of sectarian violence: "considerable excitement prevailed" after an Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH) procession in Glasgow in 1929, and a 1931 St. Vincent de Paul Society procession was "deemed inadvisable" after Orange demonstrators gathered around Bridgeton Cross. As police attempted "to disperse the mob" there were "numerous free fights and minor disturbances" and "riotous scenes"⁷⁹. Rivalry between Glasgow's largest football clubs - 'Protestant' Rangers and 'Catholic' Celtic – also spilled over to increased violence between fans during the 1930s⁸⁰. The most common flashpoints were, however, the return of Orangemen to their home districts after Twelfth celebrations. Processionists were welcomed by both supporters and opponents with acute tension in areas with large Catholic populations⁸¹.

To some degree the routes chosen by Orangemen were deliberately provocative, designed to emphasise the right of 'Loyal citizens' to demonstrate peacefully on the public thoroughfares. The violence that such tests of liberty could provoke long taxed conservative Orange leaders. Grand Master A.D. MacInnes Shaw warned in 1933:

We want to maintain the dignity of our Order. The only way we can do that is by showing an example to other people. If we ... allow our feelings to run

⁷⁷ Marshall (1996:147). Local authorities imposed a blanket ban on 'sectarian' processions in the late 1850s after serious disturbances – see McFarland (1990:62)

⁷⁸ *Scotsman* 09/07/28; 10/07/28; 13/08/28; 14/08/28; 08/07/29; 13/07/31; 14/07/31; *EN* 13/07/31; 09/07/34

⁷⁹ *EN* 06/09/29; *Scotsman* 01/06/31

⁸⁰ *Times* 05/03/34. B.Murray (1984)

⁸¹ In 1931, the 'True Blue Band' returned through Gallowgate: "A number of householders in the vicinity of Charlotte Street leaned from their windows waving green flags and handkerchiefs. A bottle was thrown, and this was the signal for a deluge of stones". *Scotsman* 13 07. 31

away with us, it gives the opposition a chance to point the finger and say that is the behaviour of the Orange Order.⁸²

Many individual Lodges, however, not to mention the awaiting hangers on, often had more localised, agendas to pursue. Ignoring the cautionary words of their leadership, many Orangeman revelled in the provocation of their Catholic neighbours. Likewise, many of these neighbours - heedless of priestly appeals for moderation - revelled in returning the provocations.

Inter-war violence peaked in 1935, with forty arrested, and five constables injured, in disturbances in Glasgow. Several weeks later “a series of running fights” followed a Scottish Protestant League meeting at Bellahouston Park, whilst “bottles, chairs... knuckle-dusters and other weapons” were employed in a disturbance outside Hamilton’s AOH hall⁸³. Glasgow was hardly unique in experiencing a high degree of sectarian friction as rising tensions in Edinburgh and Belfast caused considerable concern. Belfast’s rioting was on a scale far beyond that on the British mainland - with 10 dead, 83 seriously injured and 166 prosecutions - although Glasgow Orangemen were enthusiastically involved in disturbances in all three cities⁸⁴. The poisonous atmosphere of 1935 prompted “informal conferences” between the “civic leaders and police authorities” of the affected areas, and it was felt “that it would be in accord with public opinion if sectarian processions of a provocative character were prohibited”. Glasgow Council, facing annual policing costs of £2,000 for such events, seriously considered the banning of all “religious and pseudo-religious processions”⁸⁵. There was no blanket ban, but tight restrictions were introduced and the only serious incident in the 1936 Marching Season occurred where Loyalists paraded without a permit in Parkhead⁸⁶. Tensions had peaked, and 1935 “was the last year that the level of violence exceeded the norm”⁸⁷.

⁸² *GH* 10/07/33. Such concerns were long-standing: in 1877 Twelfth Celebrants furlled their banners upon leaving Glasgow Green “so in no way to offer provocation to their opponents”. McFarland (1990:151)

⁸³ *Scotsman* 08/07/35; *EN* 19/08/35

⁸⁴ The Edinburgh disturbances are discussed in Chapter 7. The Belfast riots are documented in Hepburn (1990)

⁸⁵ *EN* 20/07/35

⁸⁶ *EN* 14/09/36

⁸⁷ Marshall (1996:148)

Whilst these events reveal that violent sectarian clashes were serious during the inter-war period (in particular during the 1931-36 slump) it is important to contextualise such events within a broader understanding of the nature of street violence, politics and protest during the 1930s. Sectarian disturbances in and around Glasgow tended to involve larger numbers, and more fearsome weapons, than disturbances elsewhere in Scotland. Clashes in Liverpool rivalled Glasgow in their bitterness and violence, and both were eclipsed by events in Northern Ireland. Put bluntly, each locality had a different repertoire of violence. The Edinburgh disturbances of 1935-36, although rowdy and aggressive, were quite different in character to the ritual confrontations of Glasgow's Orange and Green factions. The rise in sectarian violence did not occur within a social vacuum: the latter 1920s and 1930s also saw a rapid escalation in gang-related violence in many British cities, as well as a sharp increase in political violence.

Inter-war Glasgow was a breeding ground for violent gangs, and it is perhaps an indication of the relative seriousness of sectarian and gang related disorder that the courts punished the latter more severely. This is not to say that the courts treated sectarian violence lightly - the evidence suggests the contrary⁸⁸ - but, rather, that there was a conscious recognition that gang violence was an evil meriting particularly severe punishment. Two points relating to gang violence require mention. Firstly, unlike sectarian disorders, gang confrontations were not largely confined to particular periods of the year. Its regularity brought gang violence to prominence: the authorities may sometimes have chosen to ride out violent Marching Seasons. The second point relates to whether the gangs themselves were organised on sectarian lines. Walker, for example, notes the fierce rivalry between Bridgeton's ultra-Protestant 'Billy Boys' and "Catholic gangs in the East end"⁸⁹. Whilst there can be no doubt that religion played some role in the demarcation of gang membership, its influence should not be overstated. The resurgent gangs of 1960s Glasgow "were

⁸⁸ In May 1931 eight men were fined a total of £35 after a Carfin fracas and warned "if these disturbances are repeated, very severe measures will be taken for their suppression." Several weeks later two men were gaoled for 30 days each after further trouble erupted. *Scotsman* 25/05/31; 16.06/31

⁸⁹ G.Walker (1990:143)

formed on a territorial rather than a religious basis"⁹⁰ and it might be presumed that territorial rivalries equalled, perhaps outweighed, religious divisions within Glasgow gangland⁹¹. Gang violence frequently extended beyond the authorities ability to contain them. In 1929, for example, 500 youths "marched from the Bridgeton district to Anderston" to revenge a stabbing: police struggled to maintain order and made five arrests. In 1931 four young men received gaol sentences with hard labour after a clash involving "a knobkerry, hatchet, cutlass, Indian knife, poker, file, police baton, 'dead' bomb, and bars of iron and lead". The intensification of violence reached even the London press, the *Times* noting in 1934 that "A renewal on a large scale of 'gang warfare' ... has caused the [Glasgow] police grave concern"⁹².

Street clashes were not solely the preserve of sectarian mobs and violent gangs. Growing tension between the left and the Glasgow authorities, and splits within the left itself could, on occasion, manifest themselves in violent form. Most urban areas of Scotland had seen considerable disorder during the General Strike of 1926 and the extent of this violence in Scotland far surpassed that of the ritualistic confrontations of the Marching Season⁹³. The fall of the Labour government in August 1931 split the Labour movement and led to bitter confrontations between Labour and ILP factions. Further to the left, the Communists, and the Unemployed Worker organisations became increasingly active. The differences between the factions of (or evolving out of) the Glasgow left sparked violently in September 1931. A meeting of the abortive New Party on Glasgow Green saw organised Communist heckling amongst the 15,000 crowd and a razor attack on Oswald Mosley⁹⁴. The key political cleavage in Glasgow, however, remained between the left and the authorities. Meetings of unemployed workers were broken up and activists arrested. After the Chairman of the Moderate Group made dismissive remarks about Glasgow's

⁹⁰ Gallagher (1987a:248)

⁹¹ In their voyeuristic *No Mean City* McArthur & Long made few connections between the 'razor gangs' and sectarianism.

⁹² *Scotsman* 03/06/29; 08/07/31; 09/07/31; *Times* 05/03/34

⁹³ There was "considerable disorder" in Edinburgh with five policemen hurt, mounted police charges and shops looted. The level of violence and the incidence of looting was much higher in Glasgow. 200 arrests were made in the Bridgeton area alone where: "The struggle was of the wildest description, pots and pans, iron bars, pick heads and hammers were used as missiles". *Times* 10 05 26

⁹⁴ *GH* 22/09/31; 03/10/31. Skidelsky (1990:271) attributes Mosley's decision to become openly fascist to the rough reception he received in Glasgow.

unemployed, more than 20,000 demonstrators burned his effigy in St. Enoch Square. Defying warnings that no further demonstrations would be tolerated, 50,000 gathered the following evening at Glasgow Green. A sortie by mounted police caused panic, and three days of rioting ensued. On the first night 100,000 windows were broken during running battles and a dozen arrests were made - including Shettleston MP John McGovern. The following night rioting - and looting - spread across central Glasgow with Gallowgate and Bridgeton the worst affected areas. The police, better prepared, made 51 arrests⁹⁵.

The increase in sectarian violence over the latter 1920s and the 1930s should come as little surprise. A time of acute economic anxiety coincided with political flux on the left, and a confrontation between that left and the authorities in many parts of Britain. The inter-war period, put simply, was characterised by intensely violent periods in urban affairs. Whilst much of the literature on political violence during this period has focused upon the conflict between fascist and anti-fascist, it is clear that there was a general upsurge in violence - political and criminal - and that sectarian violence occupied only part of the violent space of Scottish urban life. Focusing on the more violent manifestations of Protestant-Catholic division during this period is, however, to miss much of the broader picture. Far removed from the politics of the street were a number of issues - theological and political - which sharpened the divisions between faiths. One such issue - that of 'mixed' religious marriages - involved and nurtured considerable reservoirs of suspicion and intolerance on both sides of the ecclesiastical divide.

THE *NE TEMERE* CONTROVERSY

An important part of the resurgence of twentieth century Catholicism was the extension of Tridentine Law across the entire Catholic world - in many 'Protestant' areas the decrees of Trent had never been fully implemented - in a unified Codex of Canon Law. Whilst this Codex was formally enforced in 1918, Tridentine Law on

⁹⁵ GH 28/09/31 McShane & Smith (1978:175-6); *Scotsman* 02/10/31; 03/10/31

mixed marriages was extended in 1907 by the *Decree Ne Temere*⁹⁶. The 1905 *Catholic Directory for Scotland* noted that the Church allowed no mixed marriage without a Dispensation. This was granted only "for a sufficiently grave reason" and under three conditions: that any children be baptised and raised as Catholics; that the Catholic party have "full liberty" in the practice of their Faith; and, "that no religious marriage ceremony shall take place elsewhere than before the Catholic Priest". After *Ne Temere* these terms were more forcefully emphasised and an additional clause required: "That the Catholic party shall endeavour to effect the conversion of the non-Catholic party to the true faith of Christ"⁹⁷.

For ultra-Protestants the *Decree* was an act of aggression in the domestic sphere, and a challenge to Civil Law. *Ne Temere* noted that "Non-Catholics ... if they marry among themselves, are in no way bound to observe the Catholic form of betrothal or marriage"⁹⁸ - but insisted that Catholics married outside of the Church - *ecclesiastically speaking* - were not married at all, living in sin, their children illegitimate. Mixed marriages under "grave" conditions were tolerated only on sufferance: "For Mixed Marriages [the Church] has no blessing"⁹⁹. Bishop Henry Graham was deeply concerned about the extent and effect of mixed marriages, and his views are worthy of examination. Graham was no ordinary Bishop: only the second Scottish Presbyterian Minister to convert to Catholicism since the Reformation (the first being his close friend John Charleson), Graham was the first ex-Presbyterian appointed to the Scottish Catholic Hierarchy. As Auxiliary Bishop of St. Andrews & Edinburgh in the 1920s Graham was a high-profile figure and - often exhibiting the zeal and abrasiveness of a convert - highly controversial¹⁰⁰.

In 1918, Graham described mixed marriages as "rampant" in Scotland; "a grave evil in our midst"; with some parishes "positively plagued by them":

⁹⁶ The Decree was issued from Rome in August 1907 and came into force in Scotland the following September. It remained in place until 1970.

⁹⁷ *Catholic Directory for the Clergy and Laity in Scotland*, (1905:37);(1915:42)

⁹⁸ Pius X (1907:XI-4)

⁹⁹ Graham (1921:2)

¹⁰⁰ Charleson converted in 1901, Graham in 1903. Graham served as Auxiliary Bishop between 1917-29. McEwan (1973) offers a highly sympathetic biography.

the evil is here: we all know it and see it; and it is a great grief ... to see numbers of the flock thus led astray with disastrous consequences to the faith. I have found Mixed Marriages, taken as a whole, to be a source of untold evil to all parties concerned. I beg of you all, therefore, to co-operate with me in putting them down.¹⁰¹

Graham outlined the Church’s “disapproval and disgust” to those mixed marriages it accepted on sufferance, refusing all but “the bare necessities” of ceremony:

[the Church] does all she can to make [the couple] realise that she is standing gloomily aloof, her eyes turned away as if she would not look at them; her arms folded instead of raised in benediction; not blessing nor favouring the marriage but frowning upon it; tolerating it and no more; putting as many difficulties as possible in the way of it; only grieving in her Motherly heart that any of her children should be so perverse as to wring out of her, as it were, with tears, permission for a thing that she detests.¹⁰²

Graham voiced concern over the spiritual welfare of the three Catholic parties in a mixed marriage: the Catholic spouse, the Catholic children, and the Catholic parish. For the spouse there was the eruption of religious quarrels “especially when there is drink in the house and the hatred of Catholicity, which is always there, vents itself”:

What effect has all this on the Catholic party - the wife, I am supposing? Can she keep up the fight for long? The chances are she will not fight for the Faith at all. The fact of her choosing a Protestant husband was in itself a sign of slackness and of weakness ... Almighty God and His Holy Religion are banished from the home and the devil reigns instead, and she calls it ‘peace’. But what of her soul’s salvation, living in what she knows, all the time, is mortal sin?¹⁰³

Conversely, the more the non-Catholic was a ‘good’ husband and father “so much greater is the danger” to the children, who “wonder whether they should follow father or mother”. In such cases: “almost to a certainty some of them will end by marrying Protestants, as their mother did ... In this way hundreds of thousands are lost to the Church: Scotland is full of them”¹⁰⁴.

¹⁰¹ Graham (1918:2)

¹⁰² Graham (1918:4). Pre-nuptial conversion meant the full ceremonial blessing of the Church.

¹⁰³ Graham (1918:6,7)

¹⁰⁴ Graham (1918:7-8)

To Graham, mixed marriages arose through the "culpable negligence" of parents who, when "company keeping with a Protestant" was discovered, "criminally cooperate in it by silence or consent - perhaps pleased enough to find a son-in-law of any kind and at any price". "What a fearful thing to see a bright young life that might have formed a happy and contented home with a devoted Catholic husband, brought instead to ruin and desolation owing to the callous neglect of her parents"¹⁰⁵.

Graham's Letter represents a careful re-tracing and buttressing of religious boundaries: an ecclesiastical patrolling of the *inside* of the ghetto walls. His comments highlight the gulf in ideas and expressions separating 1918 from the ecumenical (and increasingly secular) Scotland of today. Quite simply, religious debate in the past was often conducted using terms and allusions that many - religious or otherwise - would now feel uncomfortable with. This, however, often represented *separatism* rather than conflict: Graham insisted that Presbyterians possessed "splendid characters and many natural virtues ... Yet I say, their Religion is not our Religion, and it is Religion that counts, first and foremost, with any Catholic worthy of the name"¹⁰⁶.

A resonant theme here is that of women acting as gatekeepers to the faith of the Mother Church. Graham's dire scenarios focus upon the threatened Catholicity of wife/daughter, and the ambivalent (or hostile) Protestant husband/son-in-law. Catholic parents are urged to protect "their poor, thoughtless inexperienced girl - or boy as the case may be" from becoming "snared in undesirable intimacies" and "dishonour"¹⁰⁷. Beyond the implied need to protect Catholic girlhood from predatory Protestant immorality lies the recognition that, in an era where domesticity was the almost inevitable lot of most women, the responsibility for day-to-day inculcation of religious beliefs in children - quite literally the raising of good Catholics - fell upon women. Hence, Catholic women in particular needed to be shielded from the 'grave

¹⁰⁵ Graham (1918:9)

¹⁰⁶ He also claimed that Scottish Protestants were little better than the "heathen Chinese" - B.Murray (1984:128) quoting *Daily Record*, 27/06/23. Kirk historian Rev. J.R.Fleming (1933:147), however, regarded him as "a man of high character and sincere conviction".

¹⁰⁷ Graham (1918:9)

evil' of mixed marriage¹⁰⁸. Feminine domesticity also spelled danger where it was a Protestant wife and mother charged with the care of Catholic children, in such cases "the evils mentioned are equally great, if not greater; especially as regards the children"¹⁰⁹.

Sexual overtones are also evident in the ultra-Protestant reaction both to mixed marriages as a whole, and to *Ne Temere* in particular. Some Protestants feared that priests encouraged Catholic men to seduce Protestant women "to betray the faith of their fathers and [to] betray their country"¹¹⁰. Rev. Frederick E. Watson (CoS - Bellshill West) warned of "the terrible tragedy" of mixed marriages and argued that *Ne Temere* had introduced:

a state of priestly interference and insolence that cannot be tolerated in Protestant Scotland. These priests are purveyors of social misery who must be brought to book if Scotland still retains her soul. Homes are being wrecked, husbands and wives separated, and children denied the care of parents, as the result of the sheer inhumanity of the Decree.¹¹¹

For Watson, however, the key issue was the "solemn and sinister significance" of the alleged challenge to Scottish Civil Law:

We are not seeking to interfere with the Roman Catholic Church in the discipline of her own members; she may prohibit her members marrying Protestants, but if they do so, she has no right to declare that such marriages lawfully made are invalid, and the children of such marriages are illegitimate. Yet this is what she does ... it offers a challenge of far-reaching consequence to any free and democratic state, which must be met and defeated if the paramountcy of the Civil Law is to be maintained. This is the crux of the problem. If the Civil law in Scotland is to reign supreme, then the Decree *Ne Temere* must be withdrawn by the Roman Church.

Watson proposed Parliamentary legislation to bolster civil law against the challenge of Rome. This was not an entirely fantastic proposal: both New Zealand (in 1920)

¹⁰⁸ McCrone (1998:122-3) notes of national identity that women are often seen "as keepers of history; men [as makers]of the future": women act "as reproducers of the boundaries of national groups through restrictions on sexual relations".

¹⁰⁹ Graham (1918:8)

¹¹⁰ Rev. Duncan Cameron (CoS - Kilsyth) quoted in S.J.Brown (1991:20)

¹¹¹ Watson (1934:3,12). Watson (1884-1954), formerly a Methodist minister in England, and ministered CoS Bellshill West (1931-37) and St Andrew's Galashiels (1937-54).

and New South Wales (1925) passed such legislation¹¹². Watson conceded that Scotland had offered "only sporadic opposition" but warned:

It is unbelievable that Scotsmen will be content to lie supine and watch the priest flout the Civil law of the land, as he is doing while enforcing the *Decree Ne Temere*. The action of Rome in our midst strikes at the very foundation of civil liberty. The issue raised is not so much a matter of religious belief as an affair of civil freedom. It is an arrogant claim by Rome to control the home.¹¹³

Whilst the issue in Britain aroused nothing like the interest it had (briefly) enjoyed in Australasia, there is evidence that the hardened Catholic position caused concern to some influential Protestant clerics. Watson - despite claims that his "strong views" expressed opinions that "a large number of ministers and their congregations ... shared, if in a somewhat modified form"¹¹⁴ - was a peripheral figure in Scottish Church politics. In 1930-31, however, the issue provoked a remarkable public controversy between leading Churchmen in Liverpool.

In late 1930, Dr. Albert David, Anglican Bishop of Liverpool, asked of the city's Catholic Archbishop, Dr. Richard Downey: "whether it was by his authority that Roman priests continually asserted that partners in mixed marriages who were unwilling to submit to Roman ... conditions were not married, and that their children were illegitimate?". David alleged that "Roman priests brought relentless pressure upon non-Roman partners in mixed marriages" and complained of "attacks" made on the Church of England by the Catholic Evidence Guild. David claimed that pressure was especially exerted on "the unlearned and the poor":

It is upon the industrial population in the Roman Catholic dioceses of Liverpool, Lancaster and Glasgow that the Roman Catholics are concentrating these methods of force and fear, so alien to the mind and spirit of Christ, with a pitiless vigour ...¹¹⁵

The claims came at a moment of high religious tension in Liverpool. A few weeks earlier, the Liverpool Protestant Party had put forward six municipal candidates,

¹¹² Watson (1934:14,13). On New Zealand's 'Marriage Amendment Act' see Sweetman (1989).

¹¹³ Watson (1934:4)

¹¹⁴ Gallagher (1987a:138-39)

¹¹⁵ *Times* 03/12/30

winning one working class ward. Liverpool was very much a city in which "sectarian differences had been re-animated"¹¹⁶.

Downey retorted that: "Since [David] admits that priests have every right to declare a marriage invalid in Church law, why cite five cases of it?":

His Lordship has wasted a great deal of time proving what is already admitted. What he has to prove is that the Catholic Church denies the validity of mixed marriages in civil law. It is regrettable that ... His Lordship did not make himself better acquainted with the law of the Catholic Church with regard to mixed marriages before launching his reckless attack.

Downey dismissed the "flimsy and unsubstantial" allegations, based, he claimed, upon "hearsay evidence [which] would not be entertained in any court". On the issue of the CEG, Downey noted that David tolerated anti-Catholic lecturers in a city where Protestants "throw stones at defenceless nuns and the children under their charge"¹¹⁷. Rather weakly, David warned Downey that any further "public attacks" by the CEG, or interference in "mixed marriages, contracted or contemplated" would result in the publication of full details in his Diocesan magazine. Downey called his bluff: six weeks later David announced that the situation had "distinctly improved" and that "the priests have, at any rate for the time being, abandoned this method of persuasion". He warned, however, that his clergy would "continue their watchfulness"¹¹⁸.

The Liverpool controversy highlights a number of important points, not least that senior 'mainstream' Protestants were as concerned with mixed marriages as peripheral firebrands like Watson. But it also showed that the core of the issue was a semantic one: priests *were* telling Catholics that they were - in terms of Canon Law - living in sin, their children illegitimate. It is this caveat, 'in terms of Canon Law', which formed the point of contention. The subtle distinctions between illegitimacy in the eyes of the Church and in civil law (and, far more importantly, of friends, family and neighbours) were probably unclear to great many Catholics, and, indeed,

¹¹⁶ Waller (1981:324-6)

¹¹⁷ *Times* 04/12/30; 14/01/31; 15/01/31; 16/01/31

¹¹⁸ *Times* 04/03/31

non-Catholics¹¹⁹. The Church itself did not always make the distinction clear, as shown in one Glasgow parish magazine in 1933:

It is a *very serious* sin for a Catholic to attempt marriage before a non-Catholic minister or a Registry Office. Even if only one of the parties is a Catholic, *neither ceremony is a marriage at all*. The parties are bound to put their marriage right, as it remains null and void in the sight of God until set right by a priest.¹²⁰

Evidence that lay Catholics misunderstood or misinterpreted the Church’s position can be found in a curious civil case in the Court of Session in 1930. Witnesses to an irregular marriage were sworn to secrecy because the Catholic groom feared religious difficulties with his family over the marriage. Upon his death, the family contested the non-Catholic wife’s claim upon the estate. Once the marriage had been irrefutably proven, they insisted that there could have been no consent, on the basis that as a devout Catholic the husband could not in good conscience have contracted such a union. Lord Pitman dismissed their claim:

His Lordship was unable to accept the suggestion that although [the husband] went through the ceremony he was not to be bound by it. If the defenders were to succeed in the case, it came to this, that a Roman Catholic who went through a ceremony and used words which were recognised by the law of Scotland as sufficient to constitute marriage ... was still entitled to say that in his heart he had given no consent at all just because his religion did not recognise such a marriage.¹²¹

There is little to back Watson’s assertion that this case represented part of a broader campaign of the Catholic Church to “govern the social life of the nation”¹²², but it does suggest that the issue of mixed marriages was a source of misunderstanding - and antagonism - even amongst and between Catholics.

The impact of *Ne Temere* in Scotland bore little relation to that in the Irish Free State, where the written promises required had force of law. A recent discussion in

¹¹⁹ See, for example, the case concerning a County Down mixed marriage at the height of the Liverpool controversy, *Scotsman* 07/01/31

¹²⁰ *Kinning Park Catholic Monthly*, February 1933. Emphasis in the original. The article concluded: “All this, of course, does not apply when both the parties are non-Catholics.”

¹²¹ *Scotsman* 19/06/30

¹²² Watson (1934:4)

Ireland produced public apologies from Catholic Bishops who saw the Decree as "contrary to the spirit of Christian generosity and love"¹²³. Nevertheless, the issue was contentious enough to warrant the investigation of the Church of Scotland in 1937-38. They found it was "not a major interest except in some few localities, the great number of replies giving no indication to its effects"¹²⁴. Crucially, there was no particular pattern of apostasy: "It is true that changes of denomination are almost entirely due to mixed marriages but the Church of Scotland seems to gain as much as it loses by such changes"¹²⁵. Handley, approvingly noted the report's finding that *Ne Temere* was not an issue of widespread concern, could not accept its conclusions, insisting that mixed marriages resulted "in almost all instances to a diminution of Catholic faith that becomes a total loss in succeeding generations"¹²⁶.

CONCLUSION

A number of factors were in place by the late 1920s which made Scotland fertile ground for acrimony between Protestants and Catholics. The dislocating effects of political flux and economic crises, allied to conflict in Ireland from c.1916, and widespread fears over the 'End of Scotland', produced conditions within which suspicion and resentment could flourish. Scotland, of course, was hardly alone in this experience: social and political conflicts over issues of resources, social authority, national identity, and - indeed - religion, were endemic during the period. The period was, in Hobsbawm's phrase, "the age of catastrophe"¹²⁷. The controversies over *Ne Temere* offer us a useful way of understanding the general picture of religious politics in inter-war Scotland. Behind the careful patrolling of denominational boundaries undertaken by clerics on all sides, there is the bare fact that the 'ghetto walls' were, in fact, rather more permeable than those clerics liked to admit. Concern over mixed marriages reflected - whilst, paradoxically, obscuring - the fact that Catholics and Protestants were ignoring the 'ghetto' in the selection of their partners¹²⁸. As religious boundaries in the private realm were dissolving, so too were

¹²³ See *Irish Times* 09/05/97; 10/05/97; *Irish Independent* 01/06/98

¹²⁴ Handley (1947:324)

¹²⁵ Quoted in Handley (1947:324)

¹²⁶ Handley (1947:324)

¹²⁷ Hobsbawm (1994)

¹²⁸ See Aspinwall (2000b)

they in the public realm. The next chapter shows the inability of the Catholic Church to dislodge the Labour loyalties of the Catholic electorate over birth control or Catholic schools. Movements of Catholic Action, whilst imbuing much of the Scottish Catholic community with a new found self-confidence, had little political impact beyond the specifically Catholic milieu. As the following chapters will demonstrate, this had less to do with a majority Protestantism vigorously containing the 'Roman menace', than with broader processes of secularisation in which religion's position in the public sphere was diminishing.

CHAPTER FIVE:

"DUMB DOGS" AND "BONNETED CHIEFTAINS"

The questions addressed by this chapter are complex, and to some degree can only be approached obliquely. Principally this chapter investigates the extent to which religious issues, or religious identities, impacted on Scottish politics in the inter-war period. It requires to be re-emphasised here that British politics typifies what Whyte has called an 'open' religio-political system. Religious separatism in Britain, therefore, has tended to be more social and cultural, and has had to accommodate itself to an open party political system. The problems of such an accommodation, and the limitations of religion's role in Scottish politics, is the primary concern of this chapter. The chapter will also illuminate the crucial difference between religious separatism and religious bigotry. Separatism refers to the belief that the faithful should refrain from undue contact with other faiths, or indeed with the secular world. In other words, the proper place for a Catholic is the Catholic Church and a Catholic marriage, their leisure time enjoyed with fellow Catholics in lay Catholic organisations, their children in a Catholic school. Separatism was less well defined for Protestants, but Church, youth and Temperance organisations did provide an institutional framework within which to lead a 'Protestant' life. It can readily be seen that separatism represents a diluted form of the pillarisation characterising a number of European societies between c.1879-1960. Such separation implied a value judgement upon the Other, of course: a Protestant life was encouraged in part because it was seen as superior - morally and culturally - to that of a Catholic or secular life. It is here that separatism and bigotry coincide: religious bigotry relates to an active opposition to another faith, to (attempted) interventions into, and denigration of, its activities. This lays stress on the qualities of the Other as dangerously immoral, untrustworthy, as Hell-destined heretics.

LABOUR AND THE 'CATHOLIC VOTE'

Key to the rise of the Labour Party in the inter-war period was their ability to attract the 'Catholic vote' after 1922. The significance of this section of the electorate - strongly represented amongst the urban poor - increased considerably after franchise

reform in 1918. Prior to c.1918 “the political habit of the Catholic vote was ... to regard itself as unaligned, ready to vote wherever it thought pressure could best be brought to bear to secure its aims”¹. In practice, this meant voting Liberal in what “proved to be an often tense marriage of convenience rather than a genuine partnership”². Initially at least, this was mirrored in the Catholic-Labour relationship. On some issues, notably Ireland, there was a historical congruence of Catholic and Labour interests. On others there was scope for misunderstanding and mistrust.

Catholicism, as an international institution, has long looked with some disdain on modern ideas in politics and culture, and in particular those of the left. Under Leo XIII the Church developed a distinctive voice on social and political issues, most notably through the 1891 encyclical *Rerum Novarum* which “chartered a precise middle course, a third way between the extremes of liberal *laissez-faire* capitalism and collectivist secular socialism”³. From the late nineteenth century the Vatican criticised the social conditions created by capitalism, but more forcefully attacked socialism as “proposing a remedy far worse than the evil itself”. Socialism was denounced as “a deadly plague”; “a wicked confederacy”; and “an alluring poison”⁴. ‘Christian socialism’ elicited no sympathy, Leo XIII believing it a particular danger:

although the socialists, stealing the very Gospel itself with a view to deceive more easily the unwary, have been accustomed to distort it so as to suit their own purposes, nevertheless so great is the difference between their depraved teachings and the most pure doctrine of Christ that none greater could exist: “for ... what fellowship hath light with darkness”⁵.

This was a view echoed by national Hierarchies. In 1883 Herbert Vaughan, Bishop of Salford, warned “that the doctrines of socialism were derived from the teachings of Satan”⁶.

¹ McCaffrey (1978:151)

² Gallagher (1991:25)

³ Gilley (1999:35)

⁴ Leo XIII (1878b:1), Pius XI (1931:10,55)

⁵ Leo XIII (1878b:5)

⁶ Riddell (1997:168)

In 1931, Pius XI addressed the pressing issue of whether the reformist tradition of moderate socialism was acceptable to the Church:

But what if Socialism has really been so tempered and modified as to the class struggle and private ownership that there is in it no longer anything to be censured on these points? ... This is the question that holds many minds in suspense ... We make this pronouncement: Socialism, if it remains truly Socialism, ... cannot be reconciled with the teachings of the Catholic Church because its concept of society itself is utterly foreign to Christian truth ... Religious socialism, Christian socialism, are contradictory terms; no one can be at the same time a good Catholic and a true socialist.⁷

Of course, such a declaration was open to considerable interpretation and, in practice, Catholicism could be reconciled to socialism where it was moderate and where anticlericalism was weak⁸. The dominance of social democracy in a Labour Party only loosely committed to socialism meant that problems between Catholic and Socialist interests were not to the forefront of British politics, as they were elsewhere. Reconciling the world views of Catholic and socialist was hardly straightforward, but prior to the Great War: "the [English] Catholic hierarchy was able to convince itself that the Labour party, despite the socialists within it, was not a socialist party of the type ... condemned by *Rerum Novarum*"⁹. Events such as the Bolshevik Revolution, wartime industrial unrest, and Labour's formal adoption of an ostensibly socialist constitution in 1918 put this interpretation under some pressure. However, the English hierarchy: "decided finally to continue to follow the line that, although the views expressed by some party members was abhorrent to the church, Labour was still not intrinsically socialist"¹⁰.

Good relations between Labour and the Catholic hierarchy were contingent on Labour remaining a moderate party which did not threaten Catholic interests: "the Catholic Church was prepared to be adaptable provided Labour was disposed to be reasonable"¹¹. By the 1920s, the Church happy to "secure Catholic influence within the Labour movement just so long as that movement did not attempt to train

⁷ Pius XI (1931:117,120)

⁸ See McCarthy (1998:251); Gilley (1989)

⁹ Riddell (1997:168)

¹⁰ Riddell (1997:170)

¹¹ W.M. Walker (1972:665)

Catholics in socialism"¹². The Church accepted that the material interests of its community would draw it towards Labour, and that its key concern should be to keep Labour moderate¹³. As the *Catholic Herald* editorialised prior to the 1923 general election:

The Tory Party is the party of privilege and monopoly. It is repulsive to every Catholic of democratic instincts. Liberalism is played out. The battle of the future will be between Labour and Toryism and unless Labour is revolutionary or anti-Catholic, it will command an overwhelming proportion of Catholic support.¹⁴

Of course, the term anti-Catholic here means the promotion of policies not to the Church's liking. This, rather than extremism, was to prove the key area of tension.

In Scotland key figures such as John Wheatley and Patrick Dollan acted as bridges between the worlds of Catholicism, Irish Nationalism and Labour, but their relationship with elements of the Catholic community was often bitter. Wheatley (1869-1930) eventually developed a fairly cordial relationship with the Catholic hierarchy, but not without difficulty. In 1912 Wheatley's effigy was burned by a Catholic mob, and he faced frequent accusations of atheism and anticlericalism¹⁵. By the mid-1920s, however, he epitomised the opportunities for political and social advancement offered by the Labour movement to Catholics. In this crucial period of the Labour-Catholic relationship Wheatley's impact was profound.

In the approach to the 1918 election it was widely felt that the 'Irish vote' would be highly significant in Scotland¹⁶. However, the election found "the Irish political machine in unprecedented disorder as a result of the war and the experience of the Easter Rising"¹⁷. The heart of the machine, the United Irish League (UIL), was torn between those Liberals who had remained sound on Ireland, and the realisation that, on Ireland, Labour possessed "the purest and most constant record". An awkward

¹² W.M. Walker (1972:666). See also Riddell (1997:172)

¹³ "the keynote became not the safe separation of Catholic[s] [from Labour] but the need for a Catholic presence acting within it as a purifying force". W.M. Walker (1972:665)

¹⁴ *London Catholic Herald*, 17/11/23, quoted Riddell (1997:169)

¹⁵ See Gilley (1989); Hannan (1988); I.S. Wood (1980 & 1990)

¹⁶ *Scotsman* 18/11/18; 09/12/18

¹⁷ McKinlay (1991:132)

compromise emerged whereby Labour was given "general support" except where "long and loyal service compelled [the UIL] to continue their adhesion" to Liberals. Sinn Fein, growing in influence, gave unreserved support to Labour and there was a clear "disposition among certain prominent [UIL] Nationalists" to do likewise¹⁸. In 1918 the 'Free' Liberals¹⁹ suffered "a rout and humiliation on a scale almost unparalleled in British politics" losing all five of their Glasgow MPs²⁰. If Catholics deserted the 'Free' Liberals, it is not clear that they had yet switched their allegiance to Labour. Gordon Brown has claimed that in 1918: "for the first time, the West of Scotland's Irish community swung decisively behind Labour, but that was not enough ... The decisive breakthrough in the industrial areas was still to come"²¹. However, Labour fared poorly even in areas with a high concentration of Catholics: the Coalition won two-thirds of the vote in Glasgow, notwithstanding the high number of Catholic voters in the city²².

By 1922 the British Catholic vote was definitely committed to Labour, and henceforth would constitute "one of the most consistently pro-Labour elements within the working class"²³. Labour's crucial breakthrough in 1922 depended upon several interlocking factors:

the recruitment of the unskilled to Labour as the divisive issues of wartime socialist politics faded into the background; the ending of the electorally damaging association between Labour and prohibition; and, far the most important, the swing of the Irish machine from Liberal to Labour in national elections, and its increasingly loyal commitment to Labour in local elections. Of course, the three overlap. Not all unskilled were Irish, but most of the Irish were unskilled ... [and] much of Glasgow Irish community life revolved around the public house ...²⁴

From the Catholic perspective we might add the committed support of the labour movement for Irish nationalism. Overtaken by events, the UIL agreed in 1920 that

¹⁸ Several UIL branches openly backed Labour.

¹⁹ 'Free' Liberals were that section of the Party opposing coalition.

²⁰ Cook (1975:6-7). Only four of Scotland's 19 'Free' Liberal MPs were returned.

²¹ G.Brown (1986:92)

²² The *Scotsman* (09/12/18) estimated Glasgow's 'Irish' vote at one-third of the electorate. On factors which "artificially depress[ed]" Labour voting, see McKinlay (1991:133)

²³ Fielding (1993:105)

²⁴ McLean (1983:181)

“it was in the best interests of the Irish to throw in their lot, wherever possible, with the Labour Party”²⁵.

The timing of this decision is curious, as Labour’s long-standing commitment to Temperance jarred against the importance of the Trade in Catholic community life. Tension on this issue came to a head in 1920, when a general municipal election in Glasgow coincided with a Veto Option poll²⁶. Labour reaped limited benefit from the keen interest in working class wards. The commitment to Prohibition had become “an albatross round the neck of the Labour leaders of Clydeside”²⁷ and Labour’s response was swift and simple: it dropped Temperance. Glasgow’s Irish Wets, opponents in 1920, were quickly absorbed²⁸ bringing immediate benefits. Whilst the left had limited campaigning resources:

By contrast the Catholics had all the advantages of a tightly-knit community bound together by the bar, the pulpit, and the ‘ethnic’ press. The socialists were uncomfortably aware of the power of the public house as a hostile committee-room in 1920, and it was a power that could be turned to advantage only by having Irish community leaders, who were publicans or shopkeepers, as Labour candidates.²⁹

Whilst accommodating the national inclinations and the socio-economic concerns of Scotland’s Catholics proved relatively easy for Labour in the 1920s, there were still issues which required very careful negotiation. The Church remained suspicious of the radical left of the party, and few priests were willing to publicly back the programme of Parliamentary Socialism. It fell to Melbourne’s Archbishop Mannix, visiting Dundee in 1921, to bestow “a blessing on the Labour Party, here now and in the future”³⁰, in British terms, “an utterance without precedent, and probably without echo or emulation”³¹. Concerns that contact with the far left had an eroding effect on the faith of Catholic workers were widespread, one writer noting in 1937:

²⁵ GH 10/08/20

²⁶ Knox [ed.] (1984:22-26)

²⁷ McLean (1983:181-2). On Prohibition and the left see Smyth (1991:37)

²⁸ Three ‘Irish & Publican’ candidates were elected to seats Labour might have expected to secure. In 1921 six Glasgow Labour candidates were connected to the UIL and ‘the Trade’.

²⁹ McLean (1983:185)

³⁰ Quoted in W.M.Walker (1979:470). On Mannix, see Santamaria (1978), Evatt (1942), McKernan (1976)

³¹ W.M.Walker (1979:470)

One of the greatest dangers to Scottish Catholics at the present time, at least to those in the industrial areas, is the rapid growth of Communism, where men are exposed on every side to infection from propaganda from Russia by close association with non-Catholics in the Labour world. It is not easy to combat such propaganda, and it can only be done by the intensive education of our own men in the principles of the Church's social policy.³²

Such education was being attempted in Scotland, through the Christian democrat oriented Catholic Social Guild, the various organisations of Catholic Action, and (on its margins) through the Distributist League and the Catholic Land Movement³³. Some British Catholic intellectuals regarded the corporatism of Italian fascism as fitting well with the teachings of *Rerum Novarum*, although this was "atypical of the Catholic Right [which] had distinctly British roots"³⁴.

British Catholicism was, however, mainly concerned with its ongoing relationship with the moderate left, and the Catholic press - dominated by the titles of Charles Diamond - tempered its support for Labour with an acute sensitivity to any leftward drift³⁵. This could be expressed in combative terms - in the mid-1920s the ILP was attacked as "practically a Communist Party" possessing an "affinity to Bolshevism"³⁶, and, following the 1931 encyclical, one English title declared "Socialism is the Devil"³⁷. The Church "remained convinced in the late 1920s that too many prominent Labour figures were in sympathy with ... Bolshevik [Russia]"³⁸. Catholic papers deprecated Labour's 1929 manifesto pledge to restore diplomatic relations with the Soviets, viewing the USSR as "a red-handed, anti-God state"³⁹. Neither was the Catholic press averse to recommending Conservative candidates where it deemed the Labour nominee unacceptable. Finding John McGovern unpalatable as Wheatley's successor, for example, Diamond backed Unionist William Templeton in the 1930 Shettleston by-election. Templeton - it duly emerged

³² Anson (1937:202)

³³ See Keating (1996); T.A. Fitzpatrick (1999); Scottish Catholic Archive HC 6/1-7, HC 6/11

³⁴ Webber (1986:64). See J.S.Barnes (1924a & 1924b)

³⁵ "[Diamond's] *Dundee Catholic Herald* supported .. Labour .. with reservations, and always provided Labour was prepared to be lectured." W.M.Walker (1979:472)

³⁶ *Glasgow Observer*, 10/10/25, 20/03/26 - quoted in Gallagher (1987a:190)

³⁷ *Preston Catholic News*, 18/07/31, quoted in Riddell (1997:188)

³⁸ Riddell (1997:177)

³⁹ *Tablet*, 04/05/29 - quoted in Riddell (1997:177)

- had strong Orange links. Shettleston Catholics who had taken Diamond's advice might have thought twice before doing so again⁴⁰.

Two issues which threatened the Labour-Catholic alliance were those of education and of birth control. Electoral losses in Glasgow in 1927 were attributed to Labour policy on contraception, with the *Glasgow Observer* warning that "the mere mention of birth control is enough to set the Catholic electorate on its hind legs"⁴¹. Labour leaders removed birth control from the policy agenda⁴², but the issue remained locally sensitive. Dundee's ILP were warned by the Catholic priest providing their hall that "blatant propaganda of such subjects as birth control, divorce, secular education, etc., would necessitate ... withdrawal of the ... premises"⁴³. Birth control deeply divided Catholic and non-Catholic elements within the British Labour movement, and during the 1920s "members and Catholics - both inside and outside the party - were coming to blows over the issue"⁴⁴. Battle lines were not easily drawn between Catholics and the left: Wheatley, as Minister of Health in 1924, dented lingering clerical suspicion by refusing to change existing policy. Wheatley's appointment may itself have been "partially a result of a deliberate strategy to block birth control legislation" by the Labour leadership⁴⁵. H.G. Wells felt that the Labour Government were pandering to the bigotry of celibates, "the unpleasant feelings and imaginations of priests and elderly lady spinsters"⁴⁶. The first Private Bill proposing public provision of birth control services revealed that the issue had "a larger and more varied base of support than had been recognised". Heavily defeated, it found more Labour opponents than supporters: Rev. James Barr (Labour - Motherwell) justified his opposition by claiming that "religious prejudices are just as sure a guide as science itself"⁴⁷. Whilst elements of the left opposed birth control, it was also clear that many individual Catholics supported it, if not by public pronouncement then

⁴⁰ Gallagher (1987a:194); Marshall (1996:129); *Scotsman*, 21/06/30

⁴¹ *Glasgow Observer*, 05/11/27 - Quoted in Gallagher (1987a:192)

⁴² See Soloway (1982:288-296)

⁴³ W.M. Walker (1979:208)

⁴⁴ Fielding (1993:119). See also Riddell (1997:182)

⁴⁵ Riddell (1997:180). See also Soloway (1982:283-84)

⁴⁶ Soloway (1982:287). Wells opened a wartime critique of Catholicism with the mischievous

question "Why Do We Not Bomb Rome?". Wells (1943)

⁴⁷ Labour MPs voted 46-28 against the measure, 75 abstaining. See Soloway (1982:290-291)

through private practice. A declining Catholic birth rate led to calls for a return to the teaching of the Church, with the *New Zealand Tablet* complaining in 1937: "The Catholic family is no longer, in a great many cases, what it used to be. We see one, two, and alas, worse still, none, where there used to be seven, nine and even more lusty scions of Catholic stock"⁴⁸.

Catholic practice followed the Church more faithfully in the realm of education. Whilst, as the next chapter demonstrates, the religious education question had been answered in Scotland by 1918, in England & Wales the issue remained politically volatile. Catholics were satisfied with Labour's commitment to the Scottish settlement, but the English question highlighted a secularist strain in Labour's attitude to education. Like Temperance, secular education was increasingly soft-pedalled by Scottish Labour⁴⁹. In England, however, the Catholic-Labour relationship was strained in the 1920s because of Church concerns over the education policy of future Labour Governments. Before the 1929 election Labour was unable (or unwilling) to give the Church the assurances it sought: Conservatives, traditional champions of Anglican schools, were well placed to do so. Remarks by Cardinal Bourne, Archbishop of Westminster, on Socialism's "false principles", were "judiciously and anonymously" circulated but with little discernible effect. Labour entered Government for the second time, with their Parliamentary representation almost doubled⁵⁰.

By the late 1920s a substantial number of Labour MPs felt personally (or electorally) committed to the protection of Catholic interests. Disagreements over schools peaked in January 1931 when 43 Labour MPs opposed the Education Bill. An Amendment - proposed by John Scurr - attempted to tie the raising of the school leaving age to financial concessions to Catholic schools⁵¹. The decision to call Scurr's bluff went badly wrong, despite Ramsay Macdonald's warning that "Under the cloak of what to

⁴⁸ Quoted in Van der Krogt (1998:322)

⁴⁹ In 1919's Glasgow Education campaign, two Labour candidates argued against "the denominational teaching that put schools at enmity" and were not elected. A third, silent on the issue, was comfortably returned on Catholic votes in the same ward. *GH* 26/03/19; 09/04/19

⁵⁰ Glasgow Unionists circulated the leaflet. *Scotsman*, 25/05/29

⁵¹ See Foot (1962:135); Gwynn (1950a:288)

me is a legitimate religious claim, the whole position of the Bill is going to be knocked into smithereens"⁵².

The *Scotsman* described the Government defeat as "the most decisive which they have yet suffered" noting:

the atmosphere was peculiar ... Behind all this was the fear of electoral consequences ... [Labour MPs] preferred not to commit themselves to speech, and onlookers had the unusual experience of seeing members who had derided Mr Scurr's argument go into the lobby [and vote] for his amendment.⁵³

Whilst Labour gained office despite Catholic misgivings, it found itself unable to secure educational reform without the goodwill (or the acquiescence) of its own MPs, a large minority of whom were not prepared to alienate Catholic voters. Some saw this as unprincipled: Jennie Lee (Labour - North Lanark) rejected Maxton's warning that: "You can't fight both the Labour machine and Catholic prejudice in West Scotland - make up your mind!" and voted against the Amendment⁵⁴. Lee was amongst 27 Scottish Labour MPs to do so (the remaining 11 abstained), and it has been claimed that months later: "Controversy over the Scurr amendment cost Labour many seats and was the decisive factor in North Lanark"⁵⁵.

Given the crisis which engulfed Labour in 1931, it is difficult to discern any effect of Catholics *as* Catholics in Labour's crushing election defeat. Lee alleged that Catholic prejudice intensified after Pius XI denounced socialism in May 1931, claiming: "Churches, chapels and press are out for blood"⁵⁶. There is certainly considerable evidence that the Catholic Church welcomed the idea of a National Government after the Labour split in 1931:

the concept of a national administration free from the party political and class tensions had obvious appeal to the Catholic Church. It was not surprising.

⁵² 239 *HC Deb.5s*:1526-27;1546 (29/05/30); 247 *HC Deb.5s*:253 (21/01/31)

⁵³ *Scotsman* 22/01/31. The Bill was defeated 282 votes to 249.

⁵⁴ The *Glasgow Observer* opposed Lee in the 1929 by-election on education and birth control. *Scotsman* 21/03/29. Hollis (1997:32,39)

⁵⁵ Foot (1962:149). Lee (1980:94) complained: "I was livid with contempt ... All they cared about was saving their seats. They succeeded. I went under."

⁵⁶ Quoted in Hollis (1997:58)

then, that ... the Catholic hierarchy grasped the notion of National Government with both hands. The extent to which Catholic voters followed this lead is impossible to quantify.⁵⁷

Riddell concludes there is “evidence to suggest that Labour may have experienced a disproportionate loss of its vote in the heavily Catholic areas of England and Wales”, this being of “considerable secondary importance” to the 1931 result. He also concludes that the 1918 settlement in Scotland, and the fact that Scottish Labour “had been more careful ... not to offend Catholic opinion” meant that this pattern was not repeated in Scotland⁵⁸.

We should be cautious, then, in accepting Lee’s analysis: of the eleven Scottish Labour MPs who abstained on the Scurr Amendment, seven subsequently lost their seats despite, presumably, a reservoir of Catholic gratitude⁵⁹. Labour held St. Rollox in a 1931 by-election despite Church advice that Catholics should not support their candidate whose “opinion and advocacy of ... birth control is in direct conflict with the moral teaching of the Catholic Church”⁶⁰. The *Scotsman* noted that “the disappearance of an element which [Labour] have hitherto regarded as mainly on their side is a disquieting indication of what may happen elsewhere”⁶¹. However, any anti-Labour Catholic factor operated only in specific and localised conditions. In Dumbarton, David Kirkwood represented a division with one of the highest concentrations of Catholic voters in the West of Scotland: despite voting against the Scurr Amendment and his (then) leftist politics, Kirkwood held on to his seat in October 1931⁶².

It is extremely difficult to gauge the extent to which the Scottish Catholic-Labour electoral alliance was under stress during such episodes. Certainly Lee saw herself betrayed by a reactionary Catholic caucus, although left wingers survived in seats

⁵⁷ Riddell (1997:193)

⁵⁸ Riddell (1997:191-192). See also Fielding (1993:122-24)

⁵⁹ Scurr also lost his seat.

⁶⁰ Mgr Daly, Glasgow’s Vicar General, quoted in *Scotsman*, 07/05/31

⁶¹ *Scotsman* 09/05/31

⁶² In the Division 30% of marriages in Clydebank during 1931 were Catholic (compared to 50% CoS); in Dumbarton more marriages were Catholic (43%) than were CoS (33%). *Annual Report of the Registrar General for Scotland* [hereafter *RGS*], 1931

with a greater Catholic presence. It is also interesting that Labour made a substantial recovery in Scotland in the later 1930s despite the explosive issue of Spain. Little work has been undertaken into the problems that Catholics had in reconciling electoral and religious loyalties on the Spanish Question, but it seems likely that many did so only with some difficulty. Similarly, pro-Republican elements found it difficult to maintain cordial relations with some sections of the Catholic community. John McGovern dismissing one priest as “an apostle of Christian terrorism”. The same year 70,000 Catholics gathered at a Carfin Mass “for the crimes committed against the church in Spain”⁶³. Although the relationship was maintained, it has been suggested that Spain had the potential to overwhelm the Catholic-Labour axis:

Undoubtedly, the Spanish Civil War engendered more heat and controversy in Glasgow than perhaps any other British city, but the political after-effects were remarkably few. If a general election had intervened between 1936 and 1939 or if the Labour Party and the Catholic Union had been under the direction of less pragmatic figures ... the outcome might have been different.⁶⁴

Against this view it can be noted that in the late 1930s the left - even accounting for Labour-ILP schism - consolidated its majority on Glasgow Council⁶⁵. Five Parliamentary by-elections were held in the West of Scotland during the period 1936-39, and their results do not suggest a reluctance to vote Labour. Indeed, Labour gained Dunbartonshire and Greenock as the Spanish Crisis unfolded in 1936⁶⁶. The Greenock victory followed a municipal election campaign in which the *Glasgow Observer* accused Labour, in their Spanish policy, of having “joined the war against Christ”⁶⁷. William Knox argues that “there is little evidence to show that the Labour Party was harmed by its stand over Spain ... Labour’s vote remained remarkably stable, in spite of the outpourings of the Catholic press”⁶⁸. The key target of the Catholic press was the ILP and Knox suggests that Catholic tactics may have “been

⁶³ Quoted in Gallagher (1987a:211,206)

⁶⁴ Gallagher (1987a: 213). In 1937 86% of Gallup respondents thought Franco’s Junta should not be recognised as the legal government of Spain. Polls in 1938 saw support for Franco at only 7-9%. Gallup (1976)

⁶⁵ Labour/ILP held 65 seats in 1934 and 66 in 1938.

⁶⁶ Of marriages celebrated between 1934-36, 27% in Greenock and 25.5% in Dunbartonshire were Catholic. RGS, 1934-36

⁶⁷ *Glasgow Observer* 03/10/36, quoted in Gallagher (1987a:207). see also Knox (1988:623)

⁶⁸ Knox (1988:623)

not to alienate Labour as a whole, but to target hostility on the ILP as a warning⁶⁹. Indeed the choice of A.D. McInnes Shaw, Scotland's leading Orangeman, as candidate in Springburn in 1937, suggests that Unionists held out little hope of a Catholic backlash over Spain.

Despite areas of potential tension, the electoral alliance held fairly well, Labour soft-peddalling sensitive issues in return for Catholic support. The conditional nature of this support was reflected in low rates of Catholic activism within the party⁷⁰. In Glasgow the religious distribution of Labour councillors matched the religious distribution of the city: elsewhere, and at a national level, Catholics were under-represented in positions of authority within the party. Bradley claims this stemmed from the "sensitivities of Protestants and secularists" in the party, and a recognition by "dominant figures" that "to have Catholic candidates would have been detrimental"⁷¹. Against such a view we might point to "dominant figures" who were Catholic, had Catholic backgrounds, or who had excellent relations with their Catholic constituents⁷². Secularism was soft-pedalled in most spheres of Labour politics, and - as we shall see - a Protestant influence was very strong on the Scottish left, and on good terms with the Catholic presence in the party⁷³. A fuller understanding of the lack of Catholic Labour activism might look to the energies expended in specifically *Catholic* activities. Further, one cannot escape the long-standing suspicion of the Catholic Church towards the left, and to its radical elements in particular. Clerical suspicion and fear of "anti-Christian" policies did not make simultaneous activism within the Catholic Church and the Labour Party particularly comfortable.

⁶⁹ The *Glasgow Observer* [31/10/36] claimed that "no Catholic can be a member of the ILP because it is an avowedly Socialist organisation and at present an ally of the Communist party". Quoted in Knox (1988:624)

⁷⁰ Over the inter-war period, less than 8 per cent of Scottish Labour officials, activists and MPs and slightly under one-fifth of Glasgow Labour councillors between 1922-40 were Catholic. Knox [ed.] (1984:29-30); McLean (1983:222)

⁷¹ Bradley (1995b:95)

⁷² E.g. Wheatley, Dollan, McGovern, Maxton, Buchanan, Johnston.

⁷³ Of 59 Labour officials, unofficial activists and MPs during the inter-war period whose affiliations were known, twice as many were 'Protestants' (35) than were 'secularists' (18). The remaining 6 were Catholic. Knox [ed.] (1984:29)

THE PROTESTANT LEFT

Unsurprisingly, in a country where Presbyterianism dominated religion, Scottish Labour was deeply influenced by the Reformed Faith. Not all Presbyterians shared the rightward shift of their Church leaders, some complained that "The Church [of Scotland] preached to the rich and at the poor: it was quick to direct its 'tirades' at working men while saying nothing about the profiteer or the exploiter of labour"⁷⁴. Neither was the left without influence at the heart of Presbyterianism. Rev. James Barr remained highly influential in the UFC, although his adherence to Church voluntarism saw him marginalised by the later 1920s⁷⁵. Labour Governments had no difficulty in finding a Lord High Commissioner for the Church of Scotland's General Assemblies - South Ayrshire MP James Brown, an active Kirk elder, was cordially received in 1924, 1930 and 1931. Whilst Christian socialism may have been marginal to the policy initiatives of the Presbyterian churches it remained highly influential on the Scottish left. The view of Edinburgh's Rev. John Glasse (CoS, Greyfriars) in the early twentieth century that "Socialism is ... really an attempt to apply Christian principles to practical life"⁷⁶ remained popular. To Camlachie MP Campbell Stephens, a former UFC minister, socialism was "the economic fulfilment of the Sermon on the Mount"⁷⁷. Church membership amongst the inter-war Scottish Labour leadership was common⁷⁸:

Few, if any, ... could accept Marx's materialist concept of history ... Man was more spirit to them than the product of changing material circumstances. Clinging to religious or quasi-religious views it was difficult for a class analysis of Scottish society to emerge among the labour elite. The struggle was between good and evil; of fairness and decency against rapaciousness and exploitation.⁷⁹

⁷⁴ Letter to Rev. John White quoted in S.J. Brown (1992:91)

⁷⁵ See Bogle (1983)

⁷⁶ Quoted in Knox (ed) (1984:27). On Glasse see McCabe (1998)

⁷⁷ Quoted in Knox [ed] (1984:32)

⁷⁸ Knox [ed] (1984:29-30). See also Riddell (1997:177)

⁷⁹ Knox [ed] (1984:33)

The same could be said for the Labour Party throughout Britain: Hobsbawm quotes, with unconcealed surprise, a survey of Labour MPs in 1929 which found that "only eight declared themselves to be agnostics or atheists"⁸⁰.

The Protestant commitment of Labour MPs surfaced clearly in the heated debates during 1927-28 on the proposed Revised Anglican Prayer Book. Scottish Labour Members played a key role in the Book's defeat⁸¹. Opposition, across all parties, was theologically grounded: Rosslyn Mitchell (Labour - Paisley) argued the House was: "dealing with a great principle that goes right down to the very roots of religious life":

In one generation, with [the proposed] Book, you can swing over all the children of England from the Protestant Reformed Faith to the Roman Catholic Faith ... I do not believe that the Church of England can permanently endure to be half-Reformist and half-Romanist. Either it will be the one thing or the other. Let the Church choose which it will be, and not throw the obligation on us. If they do, I for one, confirmed, convinced and determined in my Protestantism, thanking God from the heart that there were men who formed the Reformation which cleansed the Catholic Church as well as gave birth to the Protestant Church - I myself can do nothing but vote against this measure. I do not want to do it, but I can do no other, so help me God!⁸²

The interjection of Scottish MPs into English religion infuriated supporters of the Bill. Opposing a revised measure in July 1928, Rev. James Barr emphasised that *by definition* the State Church was accountable to all in Parliament: "We are told that Scotsmen should take no part in these discussions. One writer said that the rejection of December last was brought about by 'Jews, Welsh ranters, and Scottish infidels'. I am one of the Scottish infidels"⁸³.

A strong Protestant identity - and a belief in fundamental theological differences - could be, and was, reconciled with Parliamentary Socialism. Another observation is, perhaps, more important. Mitchell's views might suggest anti-Catholicism, yet

⁸⁰ Hobsbawm (1959:128,141). Hobsbawm's source is Franz Linden, (*Sozialismus und Religion*, Leipzig 1932) who also found that Anglicanism was under-represented.

⁸¹ A 'Protestant' critique can be found in Harris (1928). Thirty-six Scottish MPs opposed the measure) in December 1927 - including ten from the Labour benches - and only 6 (all Unionists) supported it.

⁸² 211 *HC Deb.* 5s:2566-67 (15/12/27)

nothing could be further from the truth. Mitchell and Barr were hardly being anti-Catholic - that was not the issue - they were defending a distinctive Protestant identity which they saw as under threat from 'ritualists' within the Church of England. They displayed a firm belief in religious separatism - that the proper place for Catholic practice was within the Catholic Church, Protestant in the Protestant - rather than a desire to stir religious conflict. This, indeed, was the religious orthodoxy of the times: the ecumenical movement had not yet reached beyond the broad confines of Protestantism.

THE CATHOLIC RELIEF ACT

Scotland's Labour MPs also played a prominent role in the passing of the Catholic Relief Act, 1926, removing most of the remaining Catholic disabilities from the statute book. The Act was the legacy of sectarian animosities around Carfin where a Corpus Christi procession had, since 1921, become a highlight in the Catholic calendar. In 1924 the Procession was removed to private grounds after Motherwell MP Hugh Ferguson brought the dubious technicalities which had arisen at the 1908 London Eucharistic Congress to the attention of the police. One English Conservative complained that arcane legislation could "be put into force at the instance of a common informer, a creature who is despised and loathed by everybody". Any feeling of ultra-Protestant success was short-lived as Parliamentary concern produced a Private Bill within six weeks⁸⁴. Ferguson defied his Labour critics:

There are some here, I know, who had a big majority in Scotland last time, but if they support this [Bill] they will not get back, and I will see to it that they do not get back. ... We in Scotland shall know exactly where they stand. That is what we want. We will fight this matter at the next Election, and they will realise it.

George Buchanan replied that he was prepared "tomorrow to go back to my Division [Gorbals] and fight him on this issue", and complained that Lanarkshire Police had

⁸³ 218 *HC Deb 5s*: 1272 (14/06/28)

⁸⁴ Francis Blundell (Con.- Ormskirk), 191 *HC Deb. 5s*:238 (03/02/26) See McGhee (1965). 176 *HC Deb. 5s*:2756 (05/08/24)

“given in to a lot of local bigots”⁸⁵. At the General Election three months later Labour lost 12 Scottish seats, but this had little to do with any religious issue. One Scottish constituency bucked the trend: Motherwell. Ferguson’s Parliamentary career was ended by Labour’s Rev. James Barr, an outspoken advocate of the Relief Bill - Ferguson’s challenge had been answered in full.

There was more to the issue than processions as the 1829 legislation meant that Catholic religious orders, technically illegal organisations, could not claim tax rebates available to charitable bodies. As one MP noted: “That takes the grievance from the academic sphere into the practical”. In 1926 a revised attempt was made to fully extend to Catholics “that charity and toleration upon which all civilised religions are based”⁸⁶. The Third Reading of the Bill demonstrated the marginal position of ultra-Protestant interests in Parliament, even when Parliamentary Unionism in Scotland was relatively strong⁸⁷.

Attempting to exclude Scotland from the Bill, Sir Alexander Sprot argued the measure would “encourage” religious processions and “a great deal of trouble would be occasioned”. In support, A.D. McInnes Shaw insisted that “rancour and ill-feeling ... may be engendered by passing this measure too quickly”. Barr, however, insisted that the Bill would add to Scotland’s “great pyramid of freedom”, founded in “the very blood” of the Covenanters:

I object strongly to the proposal made here that Scotland should be the last refuge of bigotry, injustice and inequality ... Is our Protestantism so weak in Scotland that we cannot stand to see those of another faith parading in the streets?

Buchanan ridiculed the suggestion that the Bill was controversial:

We have been told that there is a strong anti-Catholic feeling against the Bill ... My constituents number 41000, and I have received one penny postcard against the Bill. The fact of the matter is that in Scotland there is no feeling

⁸⁵ 176 *HC Deb. 5s*:2618, 2619, 2625 (04/08/24)

⁸⁶ 191 *HC Deb. 5s*:238 (03/02/26); 192 *HC Deb. 5s*:2305-2308 (10/03/26)

⁸⁷ The Unionists took 36 of 71 Scottish seats in 1924 with 41% of the votes.

whatsoever against this Bill. On the contrary, the general feeling is that the Bill ought to be passed without any discussion at all.⁸⁸

With the Amendment heavily defeated the Third Reading passed without further vote, Sprot's Amendment the only point upon which the Scottish implications of the Bill were tested. Sprot's supporters consisted of one Liberal and 23 Conservatives, of whom seven were Ulster Unionists; nine English Conservatives; and seven Scottish Unionists. Two of the Scottish Unionists were Orangemen and all were on the right of the party. These seven represented an ultra-Unionist rump - the bulk of Scottish Unionists abstained or absented themselves in the knowledge that English Conservative and Labour votes would defeat the Amendment⁸⁹:

SCOTTISH VOTES ON THE SPROT AMENDMENT:

	Supported	Opposed	Absent/ Abstained	Total
Unionist	7	5	24	36
Labour	-	19	7	26
Liberal	1	3	4	8
Other	-	-	1	1
Total	8	27	36	71

The episode is imbued with irony, not least that the lasting success of the anti-Catholic Ferguson was the removal of almost all the remaining Constitutional disabilities to Catholicism⁹⁰. It also revealed the weakness of anti-Catholicism in the Commons, and the marginality of ultra-Protestant issues to the broader concerns of Parliamentary Conservatism.

UNIONISM AND PROTESTANTISM

The weakness and marginality of anti-Catholicism at a time when the Unionists enjoyed a majority of Scottish Parliamentary seats illustrates the absence of symmetry across a religio-political divide. Whilst one can identify a Scottish Catholic vote which supported the moderate left, there was no identifiable Protestant

⁸⁸ 200 HC Deb.5s:1586-92,1587 (03/12/26). Sprot, MP for North Lanark, was not an Orangeman whilst Shaw was Scottish Grand Master.

⁸⁹ Five Scottish Unionists voted against the amendment, including the Solicitor General and the Scottish whip. Stanley Baldwin, then Prime Minister, was another notable opponent.

⁹⁰ On the remaining disabilities see Forsyth (1999)

(nor even Presbyterian) vote. let alone one which tended towards the right. Such asymmetry is hardly surprising, but worthy of exploration. The Catholic community had as its focus a single religious institution with a rigid hierarchy of authority: its own schools, press and lay organisations; strong ethnic: was geographically concentrated and overwhelmingly urban and working class. Scottish Protestantism, on the other hand, encompassed a myriad of denominations, classes and regions: had no press of note; nor (after 1872) did it have its own schools⁹¹. Crucially, the parochial role of the minister was quite distinct from that of the priest. Clerical authority was accepted by Catholics in ways that Protestants could not tolerate:

The most obvious feature of Irish Catholic parochial life was the power exercised by priests ... Veneration of the priesthood was of course traditional among the Irish, although ... obedience was not an unfailing reflex. No doubt the power of the priest reflected his superior education, his influence over the distribution of a little of the goods of this world, and his monopoly of the means of transport to the next.⁹²

Priestly power can be overstated, but it must be emphasised that all variants of Protestantism “share a common rejection of the Church as an institutional authority”⁹³. In political terms, the Catholic Church had a role in directing the vote of the faithful not enjoyed - nor sought - by Protestant Churches. Priests were within their authority in exhorting parishioners to vote in a Catholic way: ministers who did likewise would be ignored at best, and more likely seen as abusing their position. Protestant Churches did dabble in politics, but had neither authority nor inclination to organise and lead a Presbyterian, or a Baptist, or an Episcopalian *vote*.

It is clear, however, that prior to *c.*1914 there was in the industrial West of Scotland “a popular Toryism based on the fusion of religious and imperial ideals”⁹⁴. As Colley has argued, Protestantism, broadly defined, proved a crucial component in the forging of the British nation-state:

to the questions: Who were the British, and did they even exist? Protestantism could supply a potent and effective answer, perhaps the only

⁹¹ See Bruce (1985b:592)

⁹² W.M.Walker (1972:657)

⁹³ Bruce (1985b:598)

⁹⁴ Walker & Gallagher (1990b:87)

satisfactory answer possible ... Protestantism was the foundation that made the invention of Great Britain possible.⁹⁵

The removal of France as Britain's foremost rival and Catholic Emancipation in 1829 "unavoidably compromised Protestantism's value as a national cement" and "Britons could no longer posture so confidently as being exclusively and uniquely Protestant"⁹⁶. Though a linking of Britishness, Crown and Empire to Protestantism lingered, the meaning of Protestantism was increasingly contested. In Scotland, "the success of the Liberal Party in tapping the democratic and culturally distinctive strands of Presbyterian tradition" must be emphasised⁹⁷. Whilst most Tory-British-Imperialist segments of the Scottish population were Protestant, not all Protestants exhibited such inclinations. Presbyterianism was "ripe for plunder by Liberal and Labour political movements in search of historic, democratic and egalitarian credentials"⁹⁸.

There remains the question of how far - and indeed how often - political parties sought to explicitly draw upon anti-Catholicism to mobilise support. Writing in 1936, after intense conflict in Belfast and disturbances in Edinburgh, Compton Mackenzie complained that:

We know only too well that the savage, nay, the sub-human bigotry of Orangemen is beyond calculation, and we know with equal certainty that such ferocity would never have been tolerated but for the base interest one political party has in fostering it with the hope of political advantage. It is difficult to free the mind of the suspicion that the Protestant agitations both in Belfast and Edinburgh have been systematically fed by the secret elements of that same political party. Yet to divert into dark, foul channels the growing discontent of the Scottish people ... is a very dangerous method of drainage.⁹⁹

Yet the "political advantage" to be gained by the Unionists, or anyone else, in "systematically" promoting and "fostering" militant Protestantism in Scotland is highly unclear.

⁹⁵ Colley (1992:58)

⁹⁶ Colley (1992:382)

⁹⁷ Walker & Gallagher (1990b:87)

⁹⁸ Walker & Gallagher (1990b:87)

⁹⁹ Mackenzie (1936:177)

ORANGE-TORY CONNECTIONS

Some Tories had strong Orange connections in the inter-war period: Sir John Gilmour one of the most prominent Unionists of the period, became an Orangeman in the early 1920s and, as the Order's "most significant recruit", was appointed Honorary Deputy Grand Master (HDGM)¹⁰⁰. Six other inter-war MPs were Orangemen: Thomas Moore in Ayr (1924-64); McInnes Shaw in West Renfrewshire (1924-29); William Templeton in Banff (1924-29) and Coatbridge (1931-35); Hugh Ferguson in Motherwell (1923-24); Aylmer Hunter-Weston in North Ayrshire (1916-35); and John Baird in Ayr (1922-24)¹⁰¹. Another figure of note was Sir Charles Cleland, Glasgow Tory Chairman (1914-25) and Chairman of Glasgow Education Authority (1919-30), also HDGM. The existence of such connections must be tempered by the recognition that the Order did not always find its interests represented. While Moore and Shaw supported the Sprot Amendment, Gilmour, Hunter-Weston and Templeton abstained. As a Government Minister, Gilmour did little to further the curtailment of Catholic Irish immigration demanded by both the Order and influential elements of the Church of Scotland (see below). As a leading figure in educational politics, Cleland "took a far from anti-Catholic line"¹⁰². Orange-Unionists "could not always deliver to those of its supporters who believed that 'Protestant interests' had to be looked after"¹⁰³. It might also be noted that Moore, who *had* supported Sprot, took pains to cultivate his Catholic constituents:

Thus, in 1932, he found himself opening a Roman Catholic bazaar ... just hours before he ... was to address a gathering of 4,000 Orangemen. At the Catholic function he had declared that 'he was very happy to be associated with his friends in the Roman Catholic faith ... They were all common stock and they all had the same heavenly father'.¹⁰⁴

Frank Dorrian, Shaw's deputy and successor as Grand Master, resigned from the Unionists in 1939, bitter that "the Order no longer had any real voice at all in the

¹⁰⁰ Marshall (1996:127-28). Gilmour had the portfolios for Scotland (1924-29); Agriculture (1931-32); and was Home Secretary (1932-35)

¹⁰¹ The only reference found to Baird and Hunter-Weston as 'Orange' MPs is G.Walker (1992:187) so their connection should not be overstated. On Ferguson see Duncan (1991)

¹⁰² G.Walker (1995:76)

¹⁰³ G.Walker (1995:76)

¹⁰⁴ Quoted in Gallagher (1987a:148)

affairs of Scottish Unionism”¹⁰⁵. One might question the extent to which it ever had: Orange history is replete with complaints that Conservatives took its support for granted. In the 1890s, the Conservative Government was warned that: “Orangemen would only support a Conservative candidate where they supported Orange principles”:

Glasgow MPs could come to their Orange *soirees* and talk a lot of amiable nonsense but when Protestantism was at stake they sat like a lot of dumb dogs ... Unionists were smiling now on rebels and traitors ... while they insulted Orangemen and those who placed them in power ... Let them as Orangemen be neither Conservatives or Liberals in the future but Protestants first and foremost.¹⁰⁶

Tensions between Orange leaders and a ‘Protestantism before Politics’ faction amongst the membership were high during the 1920s, due to the Irish Treaty and Unionist support for the 1918 Education Act. Tension peaked in 1922 when Grand Lodge withdrew its representatives from the Scottish Unionist Association “as a protest against the treatment of Ulster [and] the Irish Peace Treaty”¹⁰⁷. This withdrew Grand Lodge from a Unionist conference which backed the Treaty “solely on the grounds that ... the alternatives were impossible”. Although Sprot protested “surrendering to the murder gang of Sinn Fein” he received little support, and the Treaty “was carried by an overwhelming majority”¹⁰⁸. SUA acceptance of the Treaty revealed the dominance of moderate, pragmatic, figures in Scottish Conservatism. Only three Scottish Unionist MPs signed the backbench ‘Die Hard’ manifesto of 1922. The manifesto demanded withdrawal from the Coalition, a return to traditional Conservative values, a more forthright stand against Socialism, and attacked the Irish Treaty¹⁰⁹. Amongst the bulk of Scottish Unionism pro-Coalition sentiment remained remarkably strong.

¹⁰⁵ Marshall (1996:153)

¹⁰⁶ Quoted in McFarland (1990:201)

¹⁰⁷ GH 12/01/22. This representation - two seats on the powerful Western Divisional Council’s executive committee - was won in 1913.

¹⁰⁸ GH 20/01/22

¹⁰⁹ The ‘Die Hards’ were “peripheral figures with ... little chance of success” Webber (1986:23)

THE ORANGE & PROTESTANT PARTY

Calls for a Protestant party were raised during the "episodic estrangements" between Orange and Unionist, and in 1922: "Dissent culminated in a characteristically half-hearted political adventure"¹¹⁰. Shortly after the SUA conference, the Order announced the formation of the Orange & Protestant Party (OPP) having: "unanimously decided that the time had now arrived when the Orange Order should make an independent stand in all spheres of political work in upholding and defending their Orange and Protestant principles"¹¹¹.

We should be cautious in reading too much into the OPP. For Marshall it was straightforward "damage limitation":

The formation of what appeared to be a separate political party probably did just enough to appease the resentment that many rank and file Orangemen felt for the Scottish Unionist Party at this time whilst enabling the Grand Lodge to channel that resentment in a more constructive direction than might otherwise have occurred had it done nothing at all.¹¹²

At no point did the OPP stand candidates against Unionists, and its first electoral foray proved disappointing. Standing two candidates in Motherwell during the 1922 education elections, the OPP discovered the limited scope, even at a very localised level, of the Orange vote. A disciplined turnout in an Orange stronghold was not enough to secure the return of Ephraim Connor, a high profile Orange activist¹¹³.

At their next opportunity, the 1922 General election, activity was again centred upon Motherwell. In 1918 local councillor, Hugh Ferguson, opposing the official Coalition-Unionist nominee, came fourth and last with 11% of the poll. In 1922 the Unionists withdrew their candidate from Motherwell in favour of a Liberal, and Ferguson, standing with OPP support (and Ephraim Connor as his election agent), came a good second. The winning candidate - Walton Newbold - was the first avowed Communist elected to Westminster. Ferguson's evident popularity, and his

¹¹⁰ McFarland (1990:213)

¹¹¹ GH 22/02/22

¹¹² Marshall (1996:117) see also G.Walker (1992:186)

¹¹³ GH 10/04/22. Connor was a regular columnist in the *Orange Standard* and a militant anti-socialist. G.Walker (1992:184); McIvor & Paterson (1992:137); McShane & Smith (1978:124-5)

determination in standing, persuaded the Unionists not to contest the seat in 1923. The *Times* noted: "Motherwell is an extraordinary constituency ... Nowhere outside Ulster is there more bitter enmity between Protestants and Roman Catholics":

As Unionist candidates go, Mr. Ferguson stands alone. He is the Kirkwood of the right. In the circumstances it is not surprising that his candidature has not received official [Unionist] recognition. Nevertheless, where Motherwell is concerned it would be unwise to leave him out of account.¹¹⁴

Ferguson captured Motherwell at his third attempt, benefiting from a focused anti-Labour vote:

MOTHERWELL & WISHAW 1922 & 1923:

1922		%	1923		%
Newbold (Labour)	8262	33	Ferguson (Ind.)	9793	42
Ferguson (Ind.)	7214	29	Newbold (Labour)	8712	37
Maxwell (Liberal)	5359	22	Maxwell (Liberal)	4799	21
Colville (Nat.Lib.)	3966	16	<i>Poll - 77%</i>		
<i>Poll - 81%</i>					

The 'Protestantism before politics' faction now had Parliamentary representation but this merely served to illustrate their marginality. Taking the Unionist whip, Ferguson proved a figure of ridicule¹¹⁵. Proposing that "another Oliver Cromwell arose" in Ireland, Ferguson received a number of rebukes from the Speaker¹¹⁶. His Parliamentary achievements were to provoke the Catholic Relief Act and the charge from his own benches that he was "loathed by everybody"¹¹⁷.

Ferguson was unseated in 1924, Labour helped by Liberal withdrawal. Rev. James Barr's candidature stamped Labour's campaign with a resolutely Protestant hue - undermining Ferguson's central platform. For the *Times*: "The *crux* of the issue is whether the natural desire of the Roman Catholics to defeat an Orange candidate will be strong enough to send them to the polls in support of a Protestant clergyman

¹¹⁴ *Times* 28/11/23. The comparison with Kirkwood was not intended as flattery. Ferguson's social background and fiery temperament (see *GH* 05/04/22) alienated 'respectable' Tories.

¹¹⁵ 171 *HC Debs* 5s: 551, 556 (19/03/24)

¹¹⁶ See 171 *HC Debs* 5s (19/03/24); (24/03/24); 172 *HC Debs* 5s (15/04/24). 174 *HC Debs* 5s (18/06/24); 175 *HC Debs* 5s (09/07/24)

¹¹⁷ 191 *HC Deb* 5s: 238 (03/02/26)

wearing Socialist colours"¹¹⁸. The straight fight assisted Ferguson's vote, but the larger rise in the Labour vote suggests that Motherwell Catholics were happy supporting a Socialist clergyman, and so too were erstwhile Liberals:

MOTHERWELL & WISHAW 1924:

		%
Barr (Labour)	12816	51
Ferguson (Unionist)	11776	49
<i>Poll - 82%</i>		

Motherwell bucked the 1924 trend as the *only* Scottish seat Labour took from the Unionists. Ferguson's political career switched to education, but he managed only a single term (1925-28) on Lanarkshire Education Authority. Ironically, the election which removed Ferguson from Parliament returned McInnes Shaw, "a man firmly entrenched in the Scottish Unionist establishment". Shaw's Grand Mastership "was almost certainly the death knell" for the OPP¹¹⁹.

THE 'ORANGE VOTE'

The limited success of the OPP in Parliamentary and educational politics highlights that an 'Orange vote' in inter-war Scotland "a highly questionable phenomenon". To a large degree this is because "the Order cannot easily regulate the political behaviour of its membership"¹²⁰:

The 'Orange vote' only existed in the sense that there were a number of constituencies in West Central Scotland which contained a sizeable Orange presence but this fact on its own could not guarantee the election of a Conservative candidate ... Therefore, great care must be taken when discussing the Orange vote; it was always episodic or particular in character and never a universal phenomenon.¹²¹

As a key Unionist concern between the wars was the absorption of middle-class Liberalism, appealing to Orange sentiment was potentially *damaging* to the Unionist cause:

¹¹⁸ *Times* 21/10/24

¹¹⁹ Shaw urged "those who would associate the Order with politics not to do so. By making the movement political, they would rob the Order of a great deal of its strength". Marshall (1996:124)

¹²⁰ Walker & Gallagher (1990b:92)

¹²¹ Marshall (1996:87)

The Tories, therefore ... became increasingly distant from the device of playing the Orange working-class card, which had been dabbled with in pre-war years. The party, of course, would not spurn such support, but as a general rule, it did not strive officiously to solicit it. In the later 1930s ... the Scottish Unionist Association carefully detached itself from involvement with a renewed Ulster loyalist agitation.¹²²

There was also a clear propensity in traditional Orange areas to consistently elect Labour candidates. ‘True Blue’ Bridgeton was a Labour stronghold never threatened by the Unionists, and where Shaw’s candidature in 1935 saw the Unionist vote *fall*. In the Orange heartlands of Ayrshire and Lanarkshire many lodges enjoyed “a kind of rapport” with the left¹²³. In 1923 the Order responded to the election of a Labour Government by insisting:

that any member, male or female of the Orange Institution who joins the ILP, Communist or other socialist political party or who allies themselves politically with those bodies is to be expelled from the Order. Disloyalty cannot be tolerated.¹²⁴

Grand Lodge “found it increasingly difficult, and indeed hopeless” to stem such ‘disloyalty’: “Their political message ... was often simply ignored, and its success in winning the Orange working class vote for the Unionists was... strictly limited”. Labour’s advance depended in great part in securing the support of Protestant workers: “some of this vote, it can be suggested, was also Orange-coloured”¹²⁵.

Some inter-war Unionists “still used the *language of loyalty*” to appeal to the Protestant working class¹²⁶, but many Protestants, including Orangemen, placed class interests over such appeals. There is evidence that some Unionists saw their commitment extending no further than talking an appropriately Protestant game. Orange readers of Buchan’s *Three Hostages* must have read ‘Sandy Arbuthnot’s’ political reminiscence with discomfort:

¹²² Hutchinson (1998:88)

¹²³ Walker & Gallagher (1990b:91)

¹²⁴ Quoted in G. Walker (1992:190)

¹²⁵ G. Walker (1992:194)

¹²⁶ G. Walker (1995:77) - emphasis in original.

The chief row was about Irish Home Rule, and I thought I'd better have a whack at the Pope. Has it ever struck you, Dick, that ecclesiastical language has a most sinister sound? I knew some of the words, though not their meaning, but I knew that my audience would be just as ignorant. So I had a magnificent peroration. "Will you men of Kilclavers," I asked, "endure to see a chasuble set up in your market-place? Will you have your daughters sold into simony? Will you have celibacy practised in the public streets?" Gad, I had them all on their feet bellowing "Never!"¹²⁷

"THE KIRK'S DISGRACE", c.1922-1938

There has been recent interest over what Stewart Brown describes as "the official Presbyterian campaign against the Scoto-Irish Roman Catholic community in Scotland", aptly described as "The Kirk's Disgrace"¹²⁸. This campaign needs to be placed within its social and political perspective. The central question is whether a defensive, conservative Presbyterianism managed to place anti-Catholicism at the heart of Scottish politics. It did not: there was no shift in state policy and the campaigners abjectly failed in reasserting the Kirk's social authority. The anti-Irish campaign was "a new departure" for the Churches: "aimed not so much at converting individual Roman Catholics, as at marginalising, and even eliminating an ethnic minority whose presence was regarded as an evil, polluting the purity of Scottish race and culture"¹²⁹. The language of race was emphasised, the grievance portrayed as national, not religious. The campaign:

sought to revive the Church's waning social authority by uniting the Scottish people against a religious and ethnic minority which they labelled as 'outside the covenant', and which they sought to make the scapegoat for Scotland's post-war social ills. In the campaign ... the Church of Scotland was not simply swept along by a popular nativist movement outside the Church ... Rather, certain Presbyterian Churchmen, with the enthusiastic support of successive General Assemblies, encouraged and used nativist sentiment for their own ecclesiastical purposes.¹³⁰

The campaign began with two overtures to the Church of Scotland's General Assembly of 1922. The first called for restrictions on Irish immigration and revision of the Education Act, complaining that Catholics had "most abominably abused the

¹²⁷ Buchan (1924:707)

¹²⁸ S.J.Brown (1991:20); STV, *Secret Scotland*, 10/11/98

¹²⁹ S.J.Brown (1991:21)

¹³⁰ S.J.Brown (1991:20)

privileges which the Scottish people had given them". The motion passed, in "a thin house", only on the Moderator's deciding vote¹³¹. The proposer, Rev. John Maclagan [Glasgow Merrylees], later conceded that it faced considerable opposition: "The feeling ... was that it was a very doubtful question for the Church to handle"¹³². The second overture, introduced by Rev. Duncan Cameron [Kilsyth], complained that:

Roman Catholics of Irish origin ... were not only alien to Scots in religion; they were also alien in race. They had come to Scotland to take jobs from Scottish workers, to exploit Scotland's welfare resources and to stir labour unrest ... Irish Catholic men were also seducing innocent Scottish girls into mixed marriages 'to betray the faith of their fathers'. The presence of the Irish Catholic aliens, he prophesied, would soon bring racial and sectarian warfare to Scotland.¹³³

Both Cameron and Maclagan were involved in anti-Catholic educational campaigns in early 1922: Cameron's overture was approved by Glasgow Presbytery in the immediate aftermath of the 1922 education elections¹³⁴. The resultant Assembly Committee reported in 1923 that the Irish Catholic community: "was alien in both race and creed, and could never be assimilated; its presence therefore had a 'very sinister meaning for the future of our race' ... the Roman Catholic Irish in Scotland were a 'menace'"¹³⁵. The Assembly established a Joint Committee of the Scottish Churches, bringing the CoS, the UFC, and the FCoS together in face of this 'menace'¹³⁶. Bruce suggests that committee creation may have been undertaken to blunt zealotry:

before making much of the Kirk's decision to set up a subcommittee to examine the Irish problem we might note that the Church of Scotland has a long history of establishing subcommittees as a device for side-tracking monomaniacs and their enthusiasms.¹³⁷

¹³¹ S.J.Brown (1991:19)

¹³² *Scotsman*, 27/07/28

¹³³ S.J.Brown (1991:20)

¹³⁴ GH 30/3/22. See GH 15/03/22 for a similar motion to the UFC's Glasgow Presbytery.

¹³⁵ S.J.Brown (1991:26). The Report was published under the title, *The Menace of the Irish Race to Our Scottish Nationality*.

¹³⁶ No criticism was levelled at the 'Orange' Irish as "they are of the same race as ourselves and of the same Faith". S.J.Brown (1991:26-27)

¹³⁷ Bruce (1998:109)

Bruce's suggestion contains some truth, but the 'monomaniacs' in question held senior positions within the Church and a 1928 deputation to the Home Office was led by highly regarded Churchmen¹³⁸. This hardly negates Bruce's claim, but it is clear that the campaign was led by Churchmen of the highest standing. By contrast, few Churchmen voiced dissent over the campaign - and those who did garnered little public support¹³⁹. As senior Kirk figures adopted the campaign, emphasis was put upon 'respectable' arguments surrounding race and national character. In 1927 Rev. John White assured his Church that:

They dealt with this very difficult, delicate, and important question entirely from the racial point of view. The religious factor did not enter the question at all ... Uncontrolled immigration was always a menace to a community, especially if it was to continue alongside the emigration of young and energetic native-born citizens.¹⁴⁰

The campaign followed hard on the heels of Irish Partition and we have already seen that the Treaty pushed to the fore a 'Protestantism before Politics' faction within the Orange Order. The coincidence of a 'Rome on the rates' campaign in educational politics; the formation of the OPP; and the launch of a bitter Kirk campaign against Catholics is suggestive. Anger over Ireland, economic anxiety, and suspicion of Labour-Catholic links created the circumstances for the campaign. Anti-Irish attitudes were made more respectable, in that it could now be argued that the (Catholic/Nationalist) Irish had forfeited their right to British citizenship. Although the Government continued to recognise citizens of the Irish Free State as British subjects, the events of 1916-22 and the fragile relationship between Dublin and London afterwards, gave credence to claims that the Catholic Irish were 'disloyal'. To this charge was added the insistence that separation should be rewarded with the redefinition of Irish immigrants as aliens, and a restriction of rights to entry and welfare. This was not solely the view of Protestants, nor indeed of the Conservative right, as we shall see.

¹³⁸ E.g.: Rev. James Harvey, UFC Moderator 1925-26, CoS Principal Clerk 1929-30; Rev. John White, CoS Moderator 1925-26, 1929-30.

¹³⁹ See *Times* 30/05/23

To some degree, however, the Presbyterian case was weakened by its gross exaggerations. As early as April 1923, the Clerk of Glasgow Parish Council claimed that: "The rumours as to a large influx of Irish immigrants were quite unfounded ... Neither is there any indication of any attempt on the part of such immigrants to benefit by the dole given by the parish councils"¹⁴¹. There were other reasons why the campaign's chances of success were limited, not least the weakness of the anti-Catholic caucus amongst Scottish Unionism. Desire to pursue a radical anti-Irish agenda arose in precisely that constituency whose political marginality ensured that the Presbyterian campaign would prove fruitless.

THE FAILURE OF THE KIRK CAMPAIGN

In 1928 the Churches presented their case to the Home Secretary, William Joynson-Hicks and Scottish Secretary Sir John Gilmour. They complained that Scotland had become "a dumping ground" for "Irish undesirables" since the USA had reduced immigrant quotas; and "that the Irish population of Glasgow are so shiftless that they draw 70 per cent of parish and other relief funds". Insisting "their case ... was based solely on racial, economic, educational, and civic considerations" they advocated immigration quotas and the repatriation of those Irish claiming welfare "within a given time of [their] arrival in Scotland". This second point, which entailed a return to pre-1922 relief arrangements, was already the subject of negotiation between Dublin and London, and here the politicians were "sympathetic in their attitude"¹⁴². The deputation was promised "the fullest enquiry", and handed a statistical bombshell:

the Home Secretary produced some figures as to the number of non-Scottish people employed in certain industries and areas which did not tally with those submitted by the deputation. The [deputation] were inclined to question the official returns, but had not sufficient authority to question them.¹⁴³

¹⁴⁰ *Times* 31/05/27. White told the 1928 Assembly that "He hoped the discussion ... would be from the point of view of race and not of creed." *Scotsman* 29/05/28

¹⁴¹ *GH* 24/04/23

¹⁴² *Scotsman* 20/07/28. See also J.A.Jackson (1963 & 1986), Drudy (1986b)

¹⁴³ *Scotsman* 20/07/28

Governmental criticism was hardly surprising: at a 1927 Inter-Departmental conference the Dominions Office insisted that the IFS-born "were British subjects by birth ... and as such could neither be excluded nor deported from this country"¹⁴⁴.

The *Scotsman* flatly rejected claims that the campaign was concerned with purely secular matters: "it is quite impossible to keep [religion] out of the controversy ... [and] it would be unreal to pretend that the religious aspect is a matter of indifference". The *Scotsman* concluded that the wider implications of restricting immigration outweighed any benefits: "we have never had any barrier upon the immigration of British subjects, and it would be a big departure to fix a quota for Irish immigrants, as yesterday's deputation desired"¹⁴⁵. Here was the crux of the matter. Whilst the Free State remained a Dominion its citizens remained British subjects. The difficulties of maintaining border controls between the IFS and Northern Ireland, and the likelihood that such action would lead to Dublin's withdrawal from the Commonwealth, made it difficult for the Government to even contemplate such measures.

Edinburgh's *Scotsman* was not alone in its criticism of the campaign. In March 1929 the *Glasgow Herald* "dealt a serious blow to the Presbyterian campaign". The paper "demonstrated what was already obvious": that economic recession had reduced immigration to "a mere trickle", and that barely 0.2% of claimants on Glasgow's poor relief were Irish-born. The *Herald* concluded that the Presbyterian case could "no longer be effectively pressed"¹⁴⁶. The Government, which found "no evidence of any considerable immigration from Ireland to Scotland", clearly concurred¹⁴⁷. In January 1929 "the Home Office insisted ... that no statistics or other information be supplied to the Scottish Churches" on this issue¹⁴⁸.

After seven years the Presbyterian case reached a dead end, the Conservative Government not simply cool towards it, but frankly irritated. Prospects worsened

¹⁴⁴ Quoted in Delaney (1999:243)

¹⁴⁵ *Scotsman* 20/07/28

¹⁴⁶ S.J.Brown (1991:34-35). See *GH* between 20 & 26/03/29

¹⁴⁷ Quoted in Delaney (1999:245)

with the 1929 return of a Labour Government. After repeated requests, the Churches gained a hearing with Scottish Secretary William Adamson in May 1930, but were refused any concessions. Several days later, the campaigners insisted "there is good reason for alarm concerning the type of people coming to us from the Roman Catholic parts of Ireland". For the campaigners: "too many of our people, employers of labour, legislators, educationalists, and journalists have allowed tolerance to pass into indifference, to the great hurt of the cause which has been committed to us"¹⁴⁹.

At the 1930 General Assembly Rev. J. Hutchison Cockburn (Dunblane Cathedral) insisted:

The invasion of cheap labour and of alien and unabsorbable people had been going on for three generations [and] was going on yet ... They must demand from the Government full statistics or a Commission of Inquiry. (Applause) ... The situation was one of grave anxiety, and a really serious menace to Scottish civilisation and culture. (Applause).

In a resolution "gladly accepted" by Cockburn, it was suggested that the campaign was "proceeding in the wrong fashion" by seeking legislation. Instead the campaign should persuade Scottish business "to employ Scottish labour where such is available": "no Government would undertake to stop the immigration. Their appeal was not to the Government, but to the patriotism of their Scottish labour employers"¹⁵⁰.

This strategy had inauspicious beginnings. In December 1930 Cockburn alleged that Catholic Irish foremen gave employment preference to fellow countrymen at Peterhead's harbour works. Government investigation found that no Irish foremen had been employed at the works, and that of the 370-strong workforce, only two were Irish-born¹⁵¹. Such allegations destroyed the credibility of the campaign, and further alienated an already hostile Government. An attempt to revitalise the campaign was made in 1931 when ministers were asked for information on Catholicism in their locality, its "racial composition" and "the steps being taken in

¹⁴⁸ S.J.Brown (1991:35). See also Delaney (1999:245)

¹⁴⁹ *Scotsman* 13/05/30

¹⁵⁰ *Scotsman* 24/05/30

their parish to confront the Roman Catholic threat". Around one-third of ministers did not respond¹⁵².

By the mid-1930s Assembly interest in the campaign was declining, not least because successive Governments had ignored it. A "heated debate" in 1935 "broke the usual unanimity on this issue". One minister asked:

Was it worthy of the Church of Scotland, at a time when materialism was rampant and sheer paganism not only beyond the Rhine but in their own midst, that they should engage in that agitation against a Church which, however they deplored her errors, did stand for spiritual things, and on the side of Christ?¹⁵³

A last, forlorn, shot of the campaign was made in 1938 but this "proved to be the last official call by the Church of Scotland" against the Catholic Irish in Scotland¹⁵⁴.

IRISH IMMIGRATION

There is a deep irony regarding the failure of the campaign in that Irish immigration gained Parliamentary currency at precisely that time the campaign was effectively dead. Gallagher has argued that it was during the 1931-35 Parliament that "the most forceful cries for a regulation of Irish immigration to Scotland were heard", and that "legislation did not result was due to Scottish members being unable to convince English fellow Tories of the urgency of the problem"¹⁵⁵. In fact, demand for legislative action came between 1937-39 from English MPs¹⁵⁶. The *Hansard* indexes reveal that the Presbyterian campaign did not result in a high level of Scottish Unionist questions to the Government. Only two questions were tabled concerning Irish immigration over 1925-26 - both by Scottish Unionists - and both received the reply that no statistics were available¹⁵⁷. In 1927 Labour's Tom Johnston (Dundee)

¹⁵¹ S.J.Brown (1991:36-37)

¹⁵² S.J.Brown (1991:38)

¹⁵³ Quoted in S.J.Brown (1991:39-40)

¹⁵⁴ S.J.Brown (1991:41)

¹⁵⁵ Gallagher (1987a:145)

¹⁵⁶ Parliamentary Questions concerning Irish immigration were rare before 1929. There were 14 between 1929-35; 43 between 1936-39. Seven were tabled by Scottish MPs, five during 1929-31.

¹⁵⁷ 180 *HC Deb 5s* (20/02/25); 197 *HC Deb 5s* (29/06/26)

was supplied with figures of arrivals from, and departures to, the IFS at Scottish ports. These negated claims of sustained immigration:

PASSENGERS AT SCOTTISH PORTS¹⁵⁸:

	Arriving from IFS	Leaving for IFS	Surplus
1924	20,954	19,862	1,092
1925	20,309	21,539	-1,230
1926	18,333	15,357	2,976

In one of the few Parliamentary interventions supporting the campaign, Argyllshire Unionist Frederick MacQuisten told the Scottish Health Committee in 1928 that the poverty problem in Scotland was exacerbated by:

a considerable invasion of people from the South of Ireland who have a different standard of living from the Scottish people ... There is a currency law known as Gresham's law, which lays it down that bad money drives good money out of circulation, and in the same way the Irish people are driving out the Scottish people, to some extent.¹⁵⁹

Government action, however, was limited to the pursuit of an agreement with Dublin regarding the anomalous position of repatriating those chargeable on local poor rates to their parish of origin. Whilst this had been technically possible prior to Partition, no arrangements had been agreed with the IFS, and Conservative and Labour Governments entered long negotiations to secure a post-Partition agreement. Labour's Scottish Secretary William Adamson confirmed in 1929 that the Government were still considering the question¹⁶⁰. Ramsay MacDonald, frustrated by Dublin's refusal to agree to a reciprocal agreement, subsequently complained it was "becoming a perfect scandal ... the question ought not to be allowed to arise"¹⁶¹.

The evidence of the 1931 Census could not have been pleasing to the campaigners. Numbers of Irish-born in Scotland, far from increasing, had declined sharply over the 1920s. Further, more of the Irish-born were from Northern Ireland (55%) than from the Free State (45%). As the campaign consistently used 'Free Staters' and 'Southern

¹⁵⁸ Adapted from 206 *HC Deb* 5s:190-191 (10/05/27)

¹⁵⁹ 220 *HC Deb* 5s:2016 (31/07/28). MacQuisten's speech was ruled out of order.

¹⁶⁰ 232 *HC Deb* 5s:260 (19/11/29)

Irish' as euphemisms for 'Irish Catholic' this fact went some way in discrediting their claims. Residency figures gave the lie to wild claims of 9,000 Catholic Irish immigrants entering Scotland each year¹⁶²:

RESIDENCY OF SCOTLAND'S IRISH-BORN, 1931:

<i>% by column</i>	Born NI	Born IFS
Over 50 years	14	9
20-49 years	51	46
10-19 years	19	23
Under 10 years	12	18
Not stated	4	4
<i>N=</i>	67905	55487

Around 18,500 persons of Irish-birth, therefore, became resident in Scotland between c.1922 and 1931, many of whom may have come via a long residence elsewhere in Britain. We cannot tell what proportion of these arrivals were Catholic, but quite clearly the campaigns claims as to immigration were grossly - and irresponsibly - exaggerated. It might be noted that the number of Irish-born persons in England & Wales increased between 1921 and 1931 by over 26,000, the first recorded increase since 1861. Again, however, this hardly constituted an invasion of the Irish, Catholic or otherwise.

Irish migration to England, however, did increase considerably over the 1930s, in particular with economic recovery after c.1935. Parliamentary questions on this issue became more frequent often containing accusations that Irish workers were given preference over local labour. The Government's response was to point towards the Census, which showed that across Britain the number of Irish-born residents had declined¹⁶³. Concern was not restricted to the Conservatives, one Welsh Labour MP urged the Government to double the contributions to employment insurance for seasonal agricultural workers "so as to put a bar upon the import of this labour from Ireland". Other Labour members also called on restrictions on Irish immigrants¹⁶⁴. In

¹⁶¹ Quoted in Delaney (1999:248)

¹⁶² Claim quoted in S.J.Brown (1991:28)

¹⁶³ E.g. 297 *HC Deb 5s*:491 (31/01/35); 302 *HC Deb 5s*:177 (21/05/35); 310 *HC Deb 5s*:1425 (26/03/36)

¹⁶⁴ 322 *HC Deb 5s*:1892 (22/04/37); 333 *HC Deb 5s*:569 (17/03/38); 342 *HC Deb 5s*:3059 (22/12/38); 343 *HC Deb 5s*:349 (02/02/39); 343 *HC Deb 5s*:1876 (16/02/39)

1937 the Government appointed an Inter-Departmental committee on Irish immigration which reported "no evidence of any marked increase in the number of persons of Irish Free State origin applying for relief". Further:

The general conclusion which is drawn is that there is clear evidence of a recent increase in emigration from the Irish Free State into Great Britain but that the immigrants are being absorbed into employment ... there is no evidence that they come here with the specific purpose of obtaining, when unemployed, assistance from public funds on a more generous scale than is obtainable in the Irish Free State. On the contrary, it appears that many of them readily obtain employment ... [in] work of an unskilled character for which ... it is said that it is difficult to find an adequate supply of equally satisfactory applicants already available in this country.¹⁶⁵

Claims about abuses of the welfare system persisted but elicited little Government sympathy¹⁶⁶. The restrictions on Irish immigration implemented in 1939-40 were provoked by IRA bombs and the outbreak of world war¹⁶⁷. Wartime labour shortage was eased by workers recruited in Eire, and free entry to the United Kingdom was reintroduced in the later 1940s¹⁶⁸.

CATHOLICS, THE IRISH-BORN AND CRIME

Elsewhere, however, there is evidence which helps to explain the depth of feeling against the Catholic community held by some ministers. Viewing individual moral failing as central to crime and social discontent, the campaigners pointed to the disproportionate presence of the Irish-born, and of Catholics, in Scottish prisons:

¹⁶⁵ 329 *HC Deb 5s*:2411-13 (03/12/37)

¹⁶⁶ E.g. 344 *HC Deb 5s*:2147 (03/03/39); 346 *HC Deb 5s*:531 (20/04/39)

¹⁶⁷ The IRA campaign killed five and injured 70 in Coventry. The Prevention of Violence Act (1939) required Irish citizens in Britain to register with the police and 167 had been deported under emergency legislation by May 1940. See Delaney (1999); Drudy (1986b); 361 *HC Deb 5s*:290 (23/05/40)

¹⁶⁸ Delaney (1999:242,255,259).

SCOTTISH PRISON STATISTICS¹⁶⁹:

Year	Those gaoled	% Irish born	% Catholic	% Presbyterian
1926	14,904	23	39	57
1927	14,007	23	40	56
1932	13,295	15	36	57
1935	14,057	12	37	56
1938	12,603	11	38	56

These statistics, at face value, support the Presbyterian claim that Catholics were disproportionately responsible for Scottish crime. A less shallow analysis, of course, would have considered the extent to which the prison population represented wider disadvantage, and perhaps a degree of legal discrimination, experienced by Scotland's Catholics. Put simply: Catholics were disproportionately to be found amongst Scotland's urban poor, and if that same urban poor provided the majority of Scotland's prisoners, then one might expect - independent of any cultural factors - that Scotland's Catholics would be over-represented in Scotland's prisons. There is indeed convincing evidence that disproportionate numbers of prisoners were from low status occupations¹⁷⁰. The tendency toward crime - or more accurately imprisonment - was a socio-economic rather than religious characteristic of Scotland's Catholics. Contemporary Government Reports themselves tend towards this view, in that they saw the causes of crime, to some extent, as social. A number of reports carried, as illustrative appendices, short prisoner biographies. The following are for Catholic prisoners in the mid-1920s:

A very little drink upsets her and she makes a fool of herself. Husband practically a total abstainer. Prisoner active and of good address.

Has been idle for more than a year. Single. Does not drink. Strong and active. Seems a decent lad who would do well if he could get steady employment.

Finds he is more easily intoxicated since he was gassed [in the war] ... Seems a decent hard working man.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁹ *Annual Report of the Prison Commissioners/Prisons Department for Scotland, 1926, 1927; 1932, 1935, 1938; [hereafter 'Prison Report']*

¹⁷⁰ In 1926 50% of male prisoners were described as 'general labourers'; in 1938 60%.

¹⁷¹ *Prison Reports, 1926, 1927*

For the campaigners, however, idleness or drunkenness were individual failings, and the prison statistics simply confirmed their belief that Irish Catholics had lower moral standards - and a greater propensity to sin - than Protestant Scots.

THE POLITICAL LIMITATIONS OF ANTI-IRISHNESS

It is clear that, in terms of its legislative aims and its hope for a return of Presbyterian social authority, the Kirk's anti-Irish campaign must be described as a failure. Although successive Governments were concerned about the effects of Irish immigration, no action was taken. Successive Governments viewed the Kirk campaign as an ill-informed irritant. The issue of how much public support the campaign garnered is far less clear cut. Stewart Brown rejects the view that the Kirk was "swept along by a popular nativist movement outside the Church" and argues the campaign was pursued for essentially "ecclesiastical purposes"¹⁷². Williamson insists that the 1923 report, and the subsequent campaign, resonated weakly beyond "the upper echelons of the Church of Scotland":

It was a self serving document giving vent to frustrations of the Kirk in Scotland as the nature of Scotland became less uniform and more diverse, and therefore less under the control of the national church. The fact that the Kirk report failed to gain any credibility outside of traditional anti-Catholic circles is testimony to a growing reconciliation with the Catholic community.¹⁷³

A number of writers did align themselves with the tenor (if not the practicalities) of the campaign. Two prominent members of the Scottish Party, a right-wing Nationalist pressure group, contributed to the debate in language rivalling the most emotive elements within the Kirk. George Malcolm Thomson, predicted that Scotland would be Catholic by the late twentieth century¹⁷⁴, and was critical of the Kirk's "callous indifference" to the Irish menace: "the public spirit of the Church is suspect. They think of congregation rather than nation"¹⁷⁵. Andrew Dewar Gibb

¹⁷² S.J.Brown (1991:20)

¹⁷³ Williamson (1998:24)

¹⁷⁴ Thomson (1927 & 1928). To Liam McIlvanney, Thomson was "utterly unrepresentative of literary Scotland" - *Sunday Herald* 09/04/00

¹⁷⁵ Thomson (1927:56,16)

argued that without the Irish, Scotland "would be the most law abiding country in the world":

Wheresoever knives and razors are used, wheresoever sneak thefts and petty pilfering are easy and safe, wheresoever dirty acts of sexual baseness are committed, there you will find the Irishman in Scotland with all but a monopoly of the business.¹⁷⁶

Gibb was a respected expert in Scottish law but his electoral record was an uninspiring one and his presence in the nascent Scottish Nationalist movement was to tinge it with the taint of anti-Catholicism for decades. Whilst figures such as Gibb and Thomson viewed the Catholic Irish presence in Scotland as an unmitigated national disaster, other Nationalists took a very different line. In 1926, for example, Christopher Grieve argued that Irish immigration was "destined ... to be the best thing that happened to [Scotland] for over 200 years"¹⁷⁷. Such Celticism was influential amongst Nationalists during the early 1920s, but by the later part of the decade had moved to the fringes of the National Party of Scotland (NPS)¹⁷⁸. During the 1930s a number of Nationalist writers - Grieve, Edwin Muir, Lewis Grassie Gibbon, William Power – described the Reformation as a national disaster, and Presbyterianism an un-Scottish "cultural aberration"¹⁷⁹. Compton Mackenzie, Catholic novelist and Nationalist, went further, insisting that "Satan himself ... can fairly be regarded as the first Protestant of all"¹⁸⁰.

Finlay notes that:

The nationalist movement was perhaps unique among Scottish political organisations for containing within its ranks active pro- and anti-Irish factions which both believed that the issues of race and religion were crucial to their understanding of Scottish nationalism.¹⁸¹

The relationship of the Nationalist movement to the religious question highlights the limitations of an analysis which takes the Presbyterian campaign as representative of

¹⁷⁶ Gibb (1930:55)

¹⁷⁷ Quoted in Gallagher (1987a:122)

¹⁷⁸ See R.J.Finlay (1994)

¹⁷⁹ Liam McIlvanney, *Sunday Herald* 09/04/00

¹⁸⁰ Mackenzie (1936:168)

¹⁸¹ R.J.Finlay (1991:46)

Protestant Scotland. In 1932 Unionist Robert Horne claimed "it would be a very natural thing" if Scotland's Catholics were to support a left-leaning and pro-Irish Nationalist Party:

They could easily form the determining element in the balance between the Scottish parties, and you might find that ... Scottish Home Rule turned out to be a form of very insidious Irish domination in our politics. While I have every respect for the Irish people, that is a result I do not wish to see in Scotland.¹⁸²

Labour's George Buchanan disagreed, insisting that: "part of the motive power behind [Scottish Nationalism] is anti-Irish"¹⁸³. Nationalism was caught between two accusers: to the right they provided a vehicle from which the influence of the 'Irish' would be disproportionately increased; whilst some on the left saw them as using sectarianism to divide the Scottish working class. This reflected the Janus-faced nature of the movement itself, as one of the rare forays into sectarianism by a Nationalist candidate illustrates. In the Hillhead by-election of June 1937, the SNP's John MacCormick argued for repeal of the 1918 Education Act and complained over the welfare claims of recent Irish immigrants. This had little electoral impact, the SNP taking 9% of the poll. More revealing was the "great resentment" within the party itself: "I cannot agree to the tactic of appealing to a popular prejudice against a class who is attracted to Scotland under capitalism, to become our poorest wage slaves"¹⁸⁴. MacCormick's campaign in Hillhead jarred with a leftward drift in the SNP which left right-wingers like Gibb feeling increasingly isolated. Gibb, Party chairman from 1936 offered his resignation in 1939 over this drift, and because he felt that: "The Party has a curiously contradictory determination not to do anything which would wound the feelings of Irish Roman Catholics"¹⁸⁵.

The campaign against the Irish, therefore, had only limited political support. Whilst there were elements within Unionism which gave vocal support to the scapegoating of Scotland's Catholics, these were without much influence. And whilst leading figures on the Nationalist movement were either strongly supportive or prepared to

¹⁸² 272 *HC Deb* 5s:245 (24/11/32)

¹⁸³ 272 *HC Deb* 5s:287 (24/11/32)

¹⁸⁴ Archie Lamont, quoted R.J.Finlay (1994:193)

dabble in the murky waters surrounding the campaign, other leading Nationalists found the campaign deeply disturbing. It must be stressed that the Nationalists remained on the fringes of Scottish political life - the key players remained the Unionists and Labour, and here support for the Presbyterian campaign (and sectarian posturing more broadly) was muted at best.

The campaign did find favour exactly where it might be expected - from various small militant Protestant political organisations. The key achievement of the campaign was to grant to these bodies a degree of ecclesiastical sanction they had never before enjoyed in the twentieth century. These bodies, however, were unconvinced that the campaign was being fully supported by all sections of the Kirk. The Scottish Reformation Society (SRS), for example, complained in 1930 that:

there is still much apathy among many excellent Christians, and a refusal to look at the growing menace which Rome brings to a community. It is not easy to persuade some people that we are simply taking our stand as upholders of the Reformation, and ... of religious and political liberty.¹⁸⁶

As we shall see, the refusal of established political parties to pick up the themes of the campaign allowed fringe Protestant political groups to lay claim to policies proposed by Scotland's mainstream Protestant Churches. Unable to persuade 'respectable' parties of the justice of their campaign, the Churches found that their calls were answered by populist demagogues with whom they were loathe to be associated.

CONCLUSION

Although a failure, the Kirk campaign is nevertheless crucial to our understanding of religious conflict. That one of Scotland's key social institutions should embark on a bitter anti-Catholic campaign could only sour religious relations for decades to come. Several points, by way of conclusion, should be emphasised. Firstly, the campaign stemmed from the fear in some ecclesiastical circles that Presbyterianism was losing direction and influence, a fear fusing, in right-wing Kirk circles, with anxiety over

¹⁸⁵ Gibb resigned in 1940 and developed an anti-Semitic outlook. R.J.Finlay (1994:198)

the growing power of the left, continued emigration and the feared 'End of Scotland'. What stands out in the history of the campaign is that, by and large, the wider clergy and laity remained silent. This lends some credence to Bruce's claim that the General Assembly administratively sidelined the campaign into subcommittees. The campaign did not engage the attention of the Presbyterian Churches to the extent of the union negotiations or the Forward Movement, although it must be stressed that the scapegoating of Scotland's Catholics was undertaken by Churchmen of the highest influence. The wider clergy, if it cannot be clear that they shared these Churchmen's views, were certainly culpable by their silence. Overall, Aspinwall's view of the campaign seems appropriate:

the much noted General Assembly outburst against the Irish race was a dying kick of a fading mentality. The declining Irish migration, the social catastrophe of the depression, [the resuscitation of a] more socially concerned Presbyterianism, and more secular concerns gradually relegated old religious controversy to the margin.¹⁸⁷

As for Scotland's Catholics themselves, there can be little doubt that the campaign had a substantial effect on their confidence over their place in Scottish society. The Presbyterian campaign propelled Scotland's Catholics even more firmly into the Labour camp – thus a central impulse of the campaign proved a self-fulfilling prophecy. Similarly, the campaign drew the Catholic community defensively inward, ironically enough given the campaign's complaint over Catholic insularity. This circling of the Catholic wagons was evidenced by Charles Diamond's 1928 claim of rising circulation for his newspapers: "to which the bigotry of the ruffianly attacks upon the race and creed of our readers has already contributed much and must continue to contribute a very great deal more". Characteristically controversial, Diamond ridiculed the "bonneted chieftains" of the Kirk. The resurgence of Catholicism in Scotland, and the Presbyterian backlash, was:

surely proof that barbarism is again giving way to civilisation. Some of the furious outbursts to which I refer remind us of the last dying outburst of Paganism before the steady advance of Christianity. These Pagani in our

¹⁸⁶ SRS, *Annual Report 1929-30*. The 1934-35 *Report* warned "What we really fear is not Romish aggression but Protestant indifference".

¹⁸⁷ Aspinwall (1989:79)

midst are out of date. It is perhaps useless to talk reasonably to these fomenters of hatred and of national animosities.¹⁸⁸

Diamond's dismissal of Protestantism as unchristian barbarism did not reflect the entire spectrum of Catholic opinion, but it does indicate that - in the late 1920s at least - there were influential Catholic figures prepared to confront the bigotry of the campaigners with a little bigotry of their own.

¹⁸⁸ For Diamond, Presbyterianism sprang from "the revolutionary and demoralising doctrines preached by those who assisted to plunder the Church and rob the poor", the Reformers being "vile religious revolutionaries". *Scotsman* 30/01/28

CHAPTER SIX:

"A HAPPY SOLUTION TO A DIFFICULT PROBLEM"

A central issue in the debate over 'sectarianism' in Scotland is that of separate Catholic schools, an issue highlighting the mythologies surrounding Catholic-Protestant relations in modern Scotland. The journey of Catholic - and Episcopalian - Church schools from their refusal to join the state system in 1872, to their entry in 1918, is a fascinating and illuminating story. Whilst relatively little academic work has been published on Episcopalian schools, there is a broad literature on Catholic education¹. Missing from most treatments of the subject, however, is an *explanation* of Catholic educational separatism. Treble, for example, dispenses with Catholicism's "conscious repudiation" of State education in 1872 by noting that it:

owed much to the emphasis which was placed by bishops and clergy upon the value of religious education. But ... they were also consciously influenced by their own perception of the limited potential of the board school. For whereas they accepted that the training of children in a Catholic atmosphere could deepen their commitment to the Faith, board schools were seen as either an instrument for advancing the interests of the Church of Scotland or, at worst, as a force promoting the growth of apathy and leading ultimately to 'the possibility of *Secularism* dominating National Education'.²

Two impulses are present here. One is suspicion that religion would be either ignored in the new state system, or would prioritise the majority faith. The other rests on a theological emphasis on 'religious' education. Catholic educational separatism can *only* be understood in the context of two facts: that separatism was not limited to education, but was pursued in the social, political and personal spheres; and, that Catholic separatism was a global phenomenon. Over the nineteenth century Catholicism developed "a vast and complex system of parallel institutions" including schools, labour and business organisations, youth movements, and - in some states - political parties³. Whilst such 'pillarisation' was most obvious where Catholic *political* organisations developed furthest - in the Netherlands for example - it was also present to a significant degree wherever Catholicism had a notable presence. By

¹ Skinnider (1967); Kenneth (1968); Treble (1978; 1980); Gourlay (1990)

² Treble (1978:111)

³ Herberg (1960:233-4)

c.1900, Glasgow Catholicism was a "self-enclosed world in which the Church had duplicated every movement of Protestant and secular social service and charity"⁴. Such duplication characterised the Catholic experience throughout the modern world.

In terms of the Catholic 'struggle for the schools', the religious question was answered in Scotland more comprehensively and earlier than elsewhere. In 1960, Herberg noted that state funding for US Catholic education remained an "area of bitter controversy [and] the focus of religio-communal conflict"⁵. State funds were conceded in Australia in 1963 and New Zealand in 1970 - almost a century after the establishment of state education. Denominational school funding in Ontario sparked electoral controversy as recently as 1985⁶. In England the State-Church compact of 1902 did not go as far as the Scottish settlement, and provoked a level of organised dissent quite missing in Scotland after the passing of the 1918 Act. Many of the educational difficulties faced by Catholics in Scotland were faced not only in other 'Protestant' countries, but also in 'Catholic' societies (such as Italy, France, Spain and Portugal), where secular Liberal governments were often violently hostile to Catholicism.

It is crucial, therefore, to acknowledge that the Scottish settlement was a remarkable legislative reform, and provided an international benchmark by which Catholic educationalists could measure their achievements. Mgr. William Brown, whose "radical courage" helped reconcile the Scottish Church to reform, "confidently asserted [in 1936] that the 1918 Act had given Scottish Catholics a school system better than any in the world"⁷.

MODERNITY AND 'CATHOLIC SEPARATISM'

As we have seen, the Catholic Church reacted to the upheavals of the nineteenth century by condemning them, and withdrawing - even in ostensibly Catholic societies - behind the institutional walls of the faith. One hymn, published in 1862, encapsulated the Catholic mistrust of the modern world;

⁴ Gilley (1989:215)

⁵ Herberg (1960:233)

⁶ Bruce (1998:198); Gallagher (1987a:339); Dakin (1973:81-5); Kiernan (1986:3)

I shun the haunts of those who seek
To ensnare poor Catholic youth
No Church I own, no schools I know
But those that teach the Truth.⁸

The argument for Catholic schools in Scotland must first and foremost, therefore, be seen as a Catholic argument, rooted in the presumptions and fundamentals of Catholic thought and practice. Williamson has argued that "there has been a tendency ... to devalue the overtly 'Catholic' aspects of the social and political behaviour of the Catholic community":

Catholicism is not simply a means of identification, a tag to separate one section of the community from others for the convenience of social scientists and historians. It brings with it a 'world view' and series of obligations that go to the core of individual identity. My purpose here is simply to put the 'Catholic' back into the Catholic community, so that when we look at the development of a community defined to a large extent by their religiosity that religion is included in the discussion.⁹

Williamson's point is a useful one - 'religion' is often relegated to no more than a marker (or at best a complicator) of class, ethnicity or nationality. Such analyses emphasise the external, 'anti-Catholic' factors in Scottish Catholic separatism and ignore global Catholic practice. To do so is to relate - and to privilege - only part of the story. Likewise, to dismiss opposition to, or suspicion of, Catholic aims and actions as simply reactive anti-Catholic bigotry undervalues religious and political idealism as a framework through which behaviour is constructed and understood¹⁰.

CATHOLIC SEPARATISM IN SCOTLAND

Before examining the genesis and the consolidation of the state-Catholic educational settlement, and reactions to the 1918 Act, it would be instructive to pose a very simple question: why do Catholics insist on their 'right' to maintain separate schools? One Scottish newspaper recently dealt with this issue in one sentence.

⁷ Quoted in Anson (1937:197)

⁸ Second verse of Hymn No. 62 ('I am a faithful Catholic') in the *Crown of Jesus Hymn Book*, London & Dublin, 1862. Quoted in Litvack (1996:81)

⁹ Williamson (1998:12)

claiming: "Catholic schools came into existence in the 19th century as Irish immigrants encountered violent hostility in the Protestant-run schools"¹¹. Hickman argues that the "proselytising intent" of Protestant-run schools in England "ensured that segregated schools became the hallmark of Catholic educational policy":

Where schools run by Protestants respected the right of Catholic children not to take part in any religious exercises of which their parents might not approve, the Church raised no objection to Catholic children attending them, for example this was the case in parts of Scotland.¹²

Hickman refers here to the Church of Scotland's 1829 decision to allow Catholic children to attend its schools and be excused from religious instruction. In effect this meant that a "conscience clause" operated in the bulk of the Scottish school system by the 1830s: the Church of England resisted this principle because it implied a separation of 'secular' and 'religious' instruction, "a principle hotly denounced by many Anglicans"¹³. Separate schools for Catholics in which "no formal creed was taught" were set up by Glasgow's Catholic Schools Society from 1817, predominantly funded by Presbyterians¹⁴. Such schools did not satisfy Catholic aspirations, however, and Church-managed schools (providing secular and religious instruction) were operating from the mid-1830s¹⁵. It is very difficult, therefore, to posit Protestant proselytism or 'bigotry' as *the* key motive for Catholic separatism in Scotland.

A more useful explanation for Catholic separatism can be found in the teachings of the Church itself. Canon Law lays out that: "Christ's faithful are to promote Catholic schools, doing everything possible to help in establishing and maintaining them"¹⁶. Separate schools form part of a historically developed critique which insisted that

¹⁰ To some extent the privileging of socio-economic or 'political' motives over the 'religious' is an expression of the influence of secularisation - we should be exceptionally cautious, however, of applying presumptions of a secularised or ecumenical worldview to the past.

¹¹ SoS, 25/04/99

¹² Hickman (1995:124)

¹³ Murphy (1971:12,38-9)

¹⁴ By 1831 the Society had 5 schools, catering for 1400 Catholic children. Skinnider (1967:14-5). See also Aspinwall (1996:162); M.Mitchell (1998:124)

¹⁵ Handley (1947:191)

¹⁶ Code of Canon Law, 800 (2)

Catholicism was the only bulwark against the evils of modernity¹⁷. To many Catholics, non-Catholic schools were *dangerous*. In 1924, Edinburgh's Bishop Henry Graham, warned that:

In these schools our children are deprived of all Catholic instruction; they are daily under the influence of teachers belonging to the Protestant religion or to no religion, who may, even in secular subjects such as History, instil into the children's minds many things contrary to Catholic faith and principles; they are placed in the midst of surroundings hostile to the faith and in an atmosphere that chills their religious fervour and tends to indifferentism; they are in danger of growing up with a weakened if not a perverted faith, insufficiently instructed in their religion and looking at everything from a Protestant point of view; and through their close companionship with Protestant friends, run the risk of lapsing finally into the evil of a mixed marriage - fitting retribution of a career spent in the teeth of the Church's prohibition and fulfilling the Scriptural warning, "he that loves the danger will perish in it".

Catholic education had at its centre the education of the soul: secular education provided for life in this world, only Catholic education provided for life in the next. This demanded:

Catholic teachers, trained to teach and mould the children in a Catholic way; the visits of the Priest; the constant round of religious observances; ... encouragement for frequent and daily Communion; the Catholic pictures and statues; Catholic companions - in short, the "Catholic atmosphere" ... They will never go far astray after that in later life, and if they do, you can bring them back because of their early grounding in the faith. But if that is wanting, what have you got to work upon?¹⁸

This was the touchstone of Catholic educational demands: "the Catholic Church is contending with the Devil and the World and the Flesh for both the body and the soul of the child"¹⁹.

This view was emphasised at the highest levels of the Church. Whilst Leo XIII, in 1898, praised Scotland's public schools as "thoroughly efficient", he emphasised the

¹⁷ Pius IX denounced the view that "Catholics may approve of the system of educating youth unconnected with Catholic faith and the power of the Church". Pius IX (1864:48).

¹⁸ Graham (1924)

¹⁹ Graham (1924)

“vital importance to defend most strenuously” separate Catholic schools²⁰. The ‘Catholic atmosphere’ could not be abandoned, and it “could not be guaranteed except by the daily contact of believing teacher with believing child”²¹.

‘THE STRUGGLE FOR THE SCHOOLS’

During the legislative debates of 1917-18, Sir John Struthers of the Scottish Education Department (SED) praised the ‘Highland solution’ by which Catholic-dominated School Boards provided Protestant teachers to give religious instruction to a Protestant minority. Pupils received their secular education together, and their religious education separately:

It is a matter to be regretted that this liberality of view was not followed by the School Boards of Scotland generally, otherwise there is a reasonable probability that the necessity for the provisions of Clause 18 of this Bill would never have arisen.²²

Would more ‘liberality’ from the Boards have ‘solved’ the religious question? The Highland solution was not one that could have been extended. Mixed schools were acceptable to the Catholic Church only where Catholic control of the Boards ensured that a school’s ‘atmosphere’ and staff were Catholic. Only in the context of some Parish Boards in the Gaidhealtachd before 1918 did such an eventuality exist²³.

The Catholic demand, therefore, was that the state recognise the principle of Catholic atmosphere. The 1872 Act had side-stepped the religious question because the Liberals were neither prepared to concede state-provided denominational schools, nor able to impose a fully non-denominational solution. The ‘Cowper-Temple’ Clause in the English Act of 1870 restricted religious instruction in state schools to ‘undenominational’ Bible reading, forbidding the use of “religious catechism or.... formulary distinctive of any particular denomination”. The clause was unacceptable

²⁰ Leo XIII (1898:12). Leo conceded that Catholics sometimes found placing their children in non-Catholic schools unavoidable, but insisted that “Wherever the Church has allowed this to be done, it has only been with pain and through necessity” Leo XIII (1897:4).

²¹ Beales (1950:381)

²² Quoted in a letter to the *Herald* from Fr. George Donaldson, Lecturer at Scotus College, Bearsden 10/04/99. Clause (and later Section) 18 legislated for separate denominational schools.

²³ Of 32 Catholic schools in the Argyll & Isles Diocese, 25 were “Board Schools under Catholic teachers”. *Catholic Directory for Scotland*, 1915.

to Catholics and - crucially - to Anglicans, and these bodies remained outside the English state system, and outside rate aid²⁴. To Catholics the 'undenominational' claim rang hollow: "Bible teaching by the lay teacher, and interpreted by the individual, which is Cowper-Templeism at its most irreducible minimum, is ... Protestantism to the Catholic, and sectarian, denominational, dogmatic"²⁵.

In Catholic and Anglican eyes it was unjust that rate aid was given to 'dogmatic' schools but withheld from 'denominational' schools. In Scotland the question was less complex as most Scots were Presbyterians. As Presbyterians were providing most of the schools for the new state system, they argued that there should be statutory recognition of the Presbyterian tradition in these schools. The 1872 Act, however, went no further than allowing School Boards to provide religious instruction according to local opinion, a permissive 'fudge' which suited Gladstone:

Why not adopt frankly the principle that the State or the local community should provide the secular teaching, and either leave the option to the ratepayers to go beyond this *sine qua non*, if they think fit, within the limits of the Conscience Clause, or else simply leave the parties themselves to find Bible and other religious education from voluntary sources?²⁶

Whilst in practice the 1872 Act allowed for Presbyterian instruction in Board Schools across most of Scotland, the refusal of statutory protection rankled the Churches. The segregated time-tabling of religious instruction also led to a marked decrease in the religious content of school textbooks²⁷. As in England, Catholics and Episcopalians remained outside the new state system. Whilst in England most schools had thus remained 'voluntary', in Scotland only a small minority remained in the 'voluntary' sphere. The Catholic system was to expand significantly over the next 50 years, in no small part due to the introduction of compulsory education in 1872:

²⁴ Beales (1950:375)

²⁵ T.P. O'Connor, MP, Quoted in Byrne (1907:4)

²⁶ Quoted in Beales (1950:373). On conscience clause see Strong (1919:16)

²⁷ Handley (1947:220), C.G.Brown (1997:143)

PROVISION OF SCOTTISH SCHOOLS, 1876 & 1919²⁸:

SCHOOL TYPE	1876	%	1919	%
Board/Public	2091	75	3048	92
Church of Scotland	420	15	3	*
Free Churches	124	4	1	*
Roman Catholic	102	4	226	7
Episcopalian	70	3	49	2
	2807	100	3327	100

SCHOOL BOARD POLITICS

In 1872, the Lord Advocate had dismissed calls for mandatory religious instruction as “eccentric and superfluous”: “If the teaching of religion is to be safe in the future: if it is not only not to be hindered, but to be stimulated and promoted so as to be made efficient, it is not by statutory enactment, but by the feeling of the people themselves”²⁹. School Board elections were often, therefore, fought on denominational lines as the Churches sought to ensure that ‘the feeling of the people’ was met. The minority Churches also felt compelled to secure Board representation: whilst their communities were liable to pay the education rate, they had an interest in the fiscal conservatism of the Boards³⁰. Secular interests also contested Board elections, often under the guise of ‘economy’. Ratepayer interests were increasingly active as educational provision (and therefore expense) burgeoned. By the 1890s the Boards were dominated by interests stressing economy. A further secular interest was represented by the entry of the Labour movement into Board elections, although Labour’s electoral record here was a dismal one.

With such a diversity of interests, a complex interplay of principle and self-interest ensured that the Boards operated on an increasingly consensual educational agenda. This is not to say that candidates in the Board election did not utilise robust religious rhetoric, only that it was, on the whole, just that - rhetoric. Prior to the 1888 campaign in Glasgow the *Glasgow Herald* predicted “some pretty play of a non-scholastic character” between a ‘Knoxite’ caucus and the Catholic nominees, but also

²⁸ Darragh (1978:232); *Report of the Committee of Council on Education in Scotland (hereafter Report on Education), 1919-20.*

²⁹ 211 *HC Deb.* 3s:303-306 (06/05/1872)

noted that "within the Board-room these antagonists seem to get on very well together"³¹. More broadly, the centralising impulse of the SED and the gravitation toward a recognisably educational (rather than denominational) consensus contributed to "a fundamental shift in educational ideology", and the:

perception of fading evangelical, and indeed Presbyterian, control of Scottish education ...Issues of 'social justice', of providing free books, meals, spectacles and shoes, now symbolised the welfare function of education rather than its evangelical design.³²

Religious intransigence on the part of Board members was rewarded with marginalisation. An initial rallying of Presbyterian interests was not sustained beyond the mid-1870s, and by the time that Presbyterian divisions had been bridged by *c.*1918, a pragmatic and secular educational agenda had been firmly established³³.

THE SCHOOL BOARDS & VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS

The shift in educational ideology meant that the economic demands made upon minority Church schools increased substantially:

It was not fully foreseen that [1872] was but a beginning, as education demands would grow, causing costs to rise. The Act of 1872 opened an era in which Government legislation would continually outstrip Catholics' most strenuous efforts.³⁴

Whilst the minority Churches resented their exclusion from rate aid, many on the Boards disliked the existence of state-funded schools outwith their control. Many Boards rejected the voluntary demand for a share of the education rate arguing that secular education was offered to all, regardless of religious background, under the protection of the conscience clause. Crucially, voluntary schools represented an *economic* challenge, attracting Treasury Grants which would otherwise have gone to the Boards. (In passing it might be noted that claims that Catholic schools were entirely funded by the Catholic community are mistaken - direct central Government

³⁰ See Splaine (1894) for a Catholic critique of educational "extravagance".

³¹ *GH* 28/03/1888

³² C.G.Brown (1997:144)

³³ See Roxburgh (1971)

³⁴ Skinnider (1967:25)

funding provided most of the income for British denominational schools³⁵). Crieff School Board, for example, lobbied the SED in 1891 against recognising a new Catholic school. They argued that the two voluntary schools in the town would earn £200 in Treasury Grants each year, much of which had hitherto accrued to the Board's own two schools. As the conscience clause had operated in Crieff without complaint, they viewed the new school as unnecessary. In an attempt to stop what they regarded as inefficient educational provision, the Board offered to "cease giving any religious teaching" in their own schools, if the two voluntary schools were closed. The minority Churches and the SED rejected the offer³⁶.

By the late nineteenth century many Boards accepted that the minority Churches would not accept mixed or 'secular' schools, and held out the offer of rate aid in exchange for a role in the management of voluntary schools. The principle of 'No Control, No Rates' could provoke a furious response from the minority Churches: "So this is what it has come to. If we want any help out of the rates, to which of course we have to pay our quota, we must give up the management of our schools, those schools which we have loved and cherished"³⁷.

In certain circumstances, however, there was considerable co-operation between the Boards and the Catholic Church. In 1908, finding that the Church was unable to provide 'Day Industrial Schools' for its 'delinquent' children, the Board provided two such schools exclusively for Catholic children with an entirely Catholic staff and a 'Catholic atmosphere' to the satisfaction of the Church. The opening of the second school was in defiance of legal opposition from local Presbyterians³⁸. The Glasgow Board also provided a Truant School at Springboig, for more serious 'delinquents', from 1905. Catholic and Protestant children were "fully integrated" with the exception that religious instruction was held separately. This contrasted sharply with

³⁵ The *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (1967) claims that Scottish "Catholic schools were supported entirely by the voluntary contributions of the faithful until 1918" (see entry under "Scotland").

³⁶ Handley (1947:224-5)

³⁷ Splaine (1894:24)

³⁸ The legal challenge arose from a Presbyterian congregation who retained some property rights dating from the 1872 Act. The Board won the case at the Court of Session. See Roxburgh (1971:193). Byrne (1907) offers a highly coloured view.

the rigid segregation of denominations at Liverpool's Truant School³⁹. The success of these schools in overcoming religious obstacles provided considerable hope that a future settlement was possible.

NEGOTIATING A SETTLEMENT

On the Catholic side pressure on resources increasingly led to an acceptance that some public control might have to be conceded :

Between 1873 and 1919, the Catholic Church was unable to meet the educational needs of the whole Catholic population: it had too few schools, too few properly qualified teachers, meagre post-primary provision, and in Lanarkshire at least gross overcrowding by 1918-19, with more than one third of its schools enrolling more pupils than they had places. From 1900, the Church was keen to enter the state system on a basis that would protect its influence upon Catholic education, and many of the city school boards agreed.⁴⁰

In fact, as early as 1896 the Catholic school managers in Glasgow had approached the SED: "stating that in return for rate aid the Catholic schools of Glasgow were willing to submit to the school board, provided they retained proprietary rights to their school buildings, with control of staff and school management"⁴¹. The ensuing discussions foundered on the recognition that continuity of policy on *ad hoc* bodies was impossible without Parliamentary legislation: such legislation was politically impossible before c.1910.

The Balfour Education Act of 1902 had granted to voluntary schools in England and Wales the settlement sought by Glasgow Catholics in 1896. English denominational schools gave one-third of the places on school-management committees to local government nominees, in return for substantial rate-aid. The Churches retained control of recruitment and responsibility for the upkeep and provision of school buildings. The Churches were not, therefore, entirely relieved of the financial burdens of their schools, although they retained a large degree of managerial control. The English Act also abolished *ad hoc* Boards and passed responsibility for

³⁹ Roxburgh (1971:195-198)

⁴⁰ C.G.Brown (1997:144)

⁴¹ Skinnider (1967:41)

education to County and Borough councils. Many Liberals saw this as an assault on local democracy, and secularist and Non-conformist alike balked at the religious settlement, especially to the extensive Anglican system. Welsh opposition was particularly fierce, and Nonconformists complained about 'Rome on the Rates'. The Liberal assault, led by Lloyd George, extended beyond Parliament, and Carmarthen Council refused to implement the Act. A campaign of 'passive resistance' between 1903 and 1905 led to the prosecution of up to 30,000 for non-payment of the education rate. By 1906, with the return of the Liberals to power, the campaign had petered out, and attempts to redraw the 1902 settlement were stifled by the Anglican-Tory majority in the Lords⁴².

In Scotland, a further attempt to reach a compromise was initiated by Glasgow School Board in October 1910, and the Liberal Government - whose educational policy had warmed considerably to the possibility of solving the religious question - offered to legislate if the parties could reach a settlement. The negotiations, however, foundered upon a Catholic "fatal obsession" with the English settlement⁴³. Scotland's Catholics, rather unrealistically, hoped to improve upon the financial aspects of the Balfour Act while surrendering an equal degree of control. By March 1912 the SED had given up hope of a settlement and the proposed Bill "was no longer a practical consideration"⁴⁴.

THE 'MUNRO' SETTLEMENT

The situation in Catholic schools worsened considerably after 1914, and the war acted as a spur towards compromise. A concerted effort was made in Edinburgh, where the Board and the minority Churches met between 1915 and 1917. Handley implies that the negotiations foundered on the need for legislative sanction, while Skinnider suggests that strong opposition from the Archdiocese of Glasgow ended the initiative⁴⁵. In fact the Conference sat over 31 meetings, with an assurance of Government support, and despite internal Catholic opposition. Whilst the Catholic

⁴² A. Wood (1960:386); Beales (1950:384-86); Dugdale (1936:329-30); Murphy (1971:94-96)

⁴³ Kenneth (1968:94)

⁴⁴ Skinnider (1967:51-52); Kenneth (1968:94-5)

⁴⁵ Handley (1947:237); Skinnider (1967:56-7)

Church could not agree to the Conference's Report in 1917, the key issues were now well rehearsed and clarified. That the Episcopalians did come to a settlement in Edinburgh increased the desire for a settlement on Catholic schools⁴⁶.

The only significant opposition to the Edinburgh Conference came from within the Catholic community, in particular from the Archdiocese of Glasgow, which represented a significant majority of Scotland's Catholics. Unease was not limited to the West: a majority of Fife's Catholic Education Board, for example, voted against the Edinburgh proposals in late 1916⁴⁷. An anonymous pamphlet, circulated to the clergy, attacked the negotiations as:

an error of the first magnitude. It is worse - it is a crime. ... it means the selling ... of a sacred trust; and the parties implicated in this unholy and illegitimate bargain should be held responsible for the violation and betrayal of that trust... We are asked to part with our children ... a cruel and heartless suggestion ... contrary to all Catholic instinct and tradition. It is like selling our heritage - our Catholic children's inheritance - for a miserable mess of pottage.⁴⁸

The pamphlet insisted that "anti-Catholic prejudice" would ensure any settlement "would be received with hostile opposition":

Under this proposed scheme our schools simply cease to be what they formerly were, namely, purely and essentially Catholic schools. The children are to be surrendered to the absolute control of *Protestant* clerical and lay managers of the *Protestant* School Boards.⁴⁹

Senior clerical interests seemed to agree - Glasgow's school managers, in early 1917, decided to oppose the concession of any degree of control in return for rate aid⁵⁰.

The Scottish Secretary, Robert Munro, asked of Scotland's Catholics in August 1917:

⁴⁶ Report of Conference, submitted to Edinburgh School Board on 06/06/17 - *Minutes of the Edinburgh School Board* (hereafter *Min.EdSB*) (1917:341-346)

⁴⁷ *Minute Book*, Fife Catholic Education Board, 13/12/16. Scottish Catholic Archives (hereafter SCA) SM 13/16

⁴⁸ (Anon.) 'Rev. School Manager' (1916:6-7)

⁴⁹ (Anon.) 'Rev. School Manager' (1916:6) - my emphases.

⁵⁰ Skinnider (1967:56-7). See also Kenneth (1968:97-101)

Are they willing to bring their schools under public control, subject to suitable safeguards both in the matter of choice of teachers and religious instruction, and so enjoy the benefit of rate aid? I cannot hold out any hope, so long as they decline to do so, of any such aid; but if ... they can affirmatively answer that question, it is obvious that the position of the schools would in every particular immediately improve I think that I am right in saying that from the moment they assent to my proposal the Catholic community would never regret having come in on the terms I have ventured to suggest.⁵¹

That Winter, Munro introduced his Education Bill. Among its proposals were that administration should be conducted by County Council committees rather than Parish *ad hoc* bodies. Voluntary schools would be wholly transferred to these committees in return for full public finance - the school buildings could be sold or leased to the County as the Churches saw fit. Religious instruction in transferred schools would be guaranteed by statute, and the Churches would enjoy a religious veto on staffing. Compared to the 1872 Act, the minority Churches were being asked to give up less in return for considerably more than had been offered in 1872. Under the terms of the 1872 Act there had been no compensation for transfer (Presbyterians gifting their schools to the Boards), and, as we have seen, legislative protection for religious instruction had been refused to the Presbyterian Churches.

Presbyterians saw, in a Bill which had "a good many desirable objects", the opportunity to secure the mandatory clause. They felt that the advance of Presbyterian unity enhanced the strength and justice of their demand. With legal protection for religious instruction proposed for the minority Churches, it was felt that the Government was now at liberty to extend legislative sanction to the Presbyterian majority⁵². There was considerable opposition to the Bill's administrative proposals, and a spirited defence of the *ad hoc* principle forced Munro to accept elected Education Authorities at the County level. Otherwise the Bill remained substantively unaltered from the Second Reading onwards: Presbyterian hopes for mandatory religious instruction had been frustrated once more⁵³.

⁵¹ 97 *H.C. Deb.* 5s:463 (08/08/17)

⁵² *Scotsman* 14/05/18; 23/05/18

⁵³ See Kenneth (1968:117)

Little organised discontent emerged concerning the proposed transfer of voluntary schools. A meeting of Scotland's larger School Boards unanimously supported the transfer of voluntary schools into the state sector, although they disagreed on the details. Whilst a majority of representatives voted to "approve generally" Munro's transfer scheme, a significant minority voiced "strong disapproval" that it would not "ultimately obviate the need for establishing, at enormous public expense, a dual system of elementary public schools". Clearly significant numbers on the Boards still held out hopes of a unified - mixed or secular - schools system⁵⁴. The Bill's Second Reading, however, was characterised by the *warmth* with which the transfer proposals were welcomed⁵⁵. Doubts remained most deep rooted amongst Catholics. The first half of 1918 saw a deepening of Catholic misgivings. Bishop Graham advocated outright rejection of the legislation:

I question very much whether any Protestant [sic] government will give us the safeguards we consider necessary to preserve the Catholic character and control of our schools. If the Bill passes, it will pass embodying not *our* safeguards for Catholic schools but Protestant safeguards - and we know what these are worth. Personally, I have no hesitation in saying that I am utterly opposed to handing over our schools no matter what conditions and safeguards we secure ... To make them State schools is the first step on the downward path towards secularising them.

The Bill proposed the scrapping of Grants for Voluntary Schools remaining outside the new state system - a mechanism clearly designed to force the hand of the minority Churches. Graham saw this as: "a piece of coercion very much to be resented, and a very curious kind of repayment to Catholics for all that they have suffered and sacrificed for education in the country, under conditions of brutal injustice, for half a century past"⁵⁶.

The Bishops accepted the legislation at the eleventh hour. Mgr. William Brown persuaded the Bishops that they would never achieve a settlement along the lines of the Balfour Act, and that Munro's proposals were in fact better⁵⁷. The brute facts of

⁵⁴ Report of Conference of Larger School Boards, Edinburgh, 08/02/18: *Min. EdSB* (1918)

⁵⁵ See 107 *H.C. Deb. 5s*:1074-1168 (26/06/18)

⁵⁶ Quoted in McEwan (1973:136). The 'coercive' clause became Section 18 (5) of the Act.

⁵⁷ Brown was an English cleric appointed by Rome as 'Apostolic Visitor' to Scotland. On his intervention, see Skinnider (1967)

demography and economy made it clear that: "On the demand side ... the Church in the West of Scotland during the 1920s [would be] faced with a potentially massive programme of reconstruction. But on the supply side its funds were quite inadequate to meet all these needs"⁵⁸.

The following tables demonstrate the rapidity with which wartime Voluntary School expenditure outstripped income, despite a significant increase in Treasury Grants. The improved situation in the 1918-19 figures reflects extensive state assistance given in the payment of teachers' salaries before the Act was implemented. Catholic teachers, it might be noted, warmly welcomed the Bill and were at the forefront of Catholic support for legislation. Reform offered Catholic teachers not only improved pay and conditions, but improved security and career prospects⁵⁹:

INDEX OF INCOME & EXPENDITURE OF SCOTTISH VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS, 1912-19⁶⁰:

	Index of Income	Index of Expenditure	Income as % of Expenditure
1912-13	100.0	102.3	97.7
1915-16	102.8	103.2	99.6
1916-17	123.5	139.4	88.6
1917-18	146.2	159.3	91.8
1918-19	145.1	142.1	102.1

Note: Base is Income in 1912/13: 100.0 = £306,295

To a large extent the problems faced by the Voluntary schools were caused by declining voluntary contributions:

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS TO VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS, 1912-19⁶¹:

Year	Voluntary Contributions	% of Total Income
1912-13	£53,300	17.4
1915-16	£58,744	18.7
1918-19	£40,505	9.1

⁵⁸ Treble (1978:126)

⁵⁹ See T.A.Fitzpatrick (1990). Archbishop Maguire "deprecated" the teachers' welcome to Munro's Bill.

⁶⁰ *Reports on Education 1914-1921*

⁶¹ *Reports on Education 1914-21*

Given the urban poverty of the Catholic community, it is likely that wartime belt-tightening hit Catholic schools particularly hard. In some industrial areas in 1916-17, voluntary subscriptions accounted for as much as one-quarter of Voluntary school income: as the demands of the war intensified, this source of funding became increasingly precarious⁶². Despite the economic reality, the feeling of coercion lingered. In time, however, even Bishop Graham was reconciled, viewing the Act "as a happy solution to a difficult problem ... The transfer of the schools had been an act of justice on one side and an act of faith on the other"⁶³.

CATHOLIC UNCERTAINTY 1919 - 1922

After the Act became law, many Catholics remained suspicious: "that the gains of 1918 could still be lost in the face of overt hostility"⁶⁴. The *Glasgow Observer* warned:

some of the largest public authorities are manned (as to the majority of their membership) by individuals bitterly hostile to either Catholic claims or interests and resolutely bent on penalising the Catholic schools as far as the letter of the law will allow.⁶⁵

This was a "sweeping claim unaccompanied by even the most superficial analysis", and was certainly not borne out by subsequent experience⁶⁶. Many Catholics, though, remained resolutely hostile to the Act. Attempts to reorganise the Catholic Education Council in 1921 foundered as the Glasgow clergy "absolutely refused" to co-operate due to their continuing opposition to the Munro Act. The Bishops dropped the matter until 1925⁶⁷.

The implementation of school transfer proved largely unproblematic. Where disagreements arose over financial terms, the Authorities and the Churches were happy to agree to SED arbitration. Indeed, given the sums involved the rapidity and

⁶² *Report on Education, 1917-18*

⁶³ McEwan (1973:114)

⁶⁴ Treble (1980:30)

⁶⁵ *Glasgow Observer*, 06/12/19 - quoted in Treble (1980:30)

⁶⁶ Treble (1980:30)

⁶⁷ *Resume of History, Catholic Education Council*, typescript, n.d., SCA, DE99/3/1

smoothness of the transfer were remarkable⁶⁸. By June 1921, all of Scotland's denominational schools had transferred to the new Authorities. The following tables highlight the regional concentration of the Catholic and Episcopalian systems. Whilst over half of Scotland's Catholic schools, and over three-quarters of the Catholic school roll were found in the Industrial West, the district contained only one Episcopalian school:

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS BY TYPE & REGION 1919⁶⁹:

Region	Total Schools	Public Schools	Catholic Schools	Episcopalian Schools
Industrial West	795	669	125	1
East of Scotland	555	493	51	11
North East	501	470	14	17
North & Highland	1,089	1,049	24	16
Southern	387	371	12	4
<i>SCOTLAND</i>	<i>3,327</i>	<i>3,052</i>	<i>226</i>	<i>49</i>

PUPILS BY TYPE & REGION 1919⁷⁰:

Region	All Pupils	Public School Pupils	Catholic School Pupils	Episcopalian School Pupils
Industrial West	410,926	326,842	83,671	413
East of Scotland	188,344	171,201	14,670	2,473
North East	106,073	97,047	6,464	2,562
North & Highland	89,813	86,107	2,303	1,403
Southern	38,358	36,350	1,309	699
<i>SCOTLAND</i>	<i>833,514</i>	<i>717,547</i>	<i>108,417</i>	<i>7550</i>

In all the regions, Catholic school rolls exceeded the Episcopalian. Only in nine of 38 Authorities did the Episcopalian roll exceed the Catholic; of these only Aberdeenshire could boast an Episcopalian roll in excess of 1,000⁷¹.

⁶⁸ E.g. GH 04/12/20. The Churches received £280,000 between 1920-24, and £140,000 in 1929-30. *Reports on Education*

⁶⁹ *Report on Education, 1919-20*

⁷⁰ *Reports on Education, 1919-20*

⁷¹ The largest number of Episcopalian children (1,202) was found in Edinburgh.

Some commentators have suggested that the focus on Catholic schools by opponents of the Munro Act indicates that anti-Catholicism was a central motive for opposition⁷². However, whilst anti-Catholicism undoubtedly had a role, Catholics drew the greatest fire not merely through having the greater number of schools transferred, but by the fact that over much of urban Scotland the Catholic Church was the *only* denominational beneficiary of the Act. There were several positions from where the Act could be criticised. To focus on anti-Catholicism obscures the wider sources of opposition to the Act, and simplistically discounts critics of the Act as 'unprincipled' anti-Catholics.

That the Authorities approached the particular concerns of Catholic education in a positive light allayed Catholic doubts⁷³. Given the Irish War and the economic crisis which occurred at just the time - 1920-22 - that full implementation of the Act was undertaken, there was "surprisingly little friction" between the bodies concerned⁷⁴. Catholic problems were treated sympathetically: faced with recruitment problems in 1920, for example, Dunbartonshire petitioned the SED to recognise Catholic teachers trained in Ireland, accepting the Catholic demand for Catholic staff⁷⁵. Lay voices found the Act allowed them to articulate grievances. A pupil strike at St. Ann's RC school in Cadzow ended when Lanarkshire Education Authority agreed to investigate parental grievances. The Authority refused to investigate events *prior* to the school's transfer in 1918: the Act opened up new opportunities for Catholic parents to express dissent. Remarkably, in the St. Ann's case the parents sought redress for the school's allegedly lax approach to religious instruction, redress not obtained through the Church. It is profoundly ironic that Catholic parents had to resort to the statutory protection for such instruction to ensure that the school maintained a properly 'Catholic atmosphere'⁷⁶.

⁷² See Chapter Two.

⁷³ Several studies indicate that by and large the Authorities embraced the Act with some enthusiasm. See Treble (1980); Roberts (1967); McCaffrey (1991)

⁷⁴ Gallagher (1987a:139)

⁷⁵ The SED refused to recognise the courses at Irish Colleges (which were shorter than in Scotland and England) as adequate training. GH 07/02/20

⁷⁶ GH 26/04/20

Lanarkshire was also the site of a dispute over who had the right under the 1918 Act "to deal with deficiencies in the provision of Catholic school accommodation as and when they arose". All parties agreed that the existing accommodation at Whifflet RC school was inadequate - but whilst the Church proposed to pay for a £8.500 extension to the existing premises, the Authority insisted that a new £25,000 school was provided at the Authority's expense. The Church did not dispute the Authority's right to define the educational needs of Catholic children, but argued that it should provide accommodation *only* where the Church explicitly repudiated such a role. After three years of dispute, Crown Office arbitration ruled in favour of the Catholic claim⁷⁷. In 1928, however, the Church in Lanarkshire voluntarily waived the rights it had fought to secure. Treble offers two reasons for such a fundamental - and swift - change in policy. Firstly, Catholic mistrust was eroded through the positive reality of Authority-managed Catholic schools. Secondly, there was a sobering realisation of the enormity of the task of transforming chronically overcrowded Catholic schools:

Archbishop Mackintosh and his advisers were ultimately compelled to acknowledge that they had gained at best a Pyrrhic victory. For when they turned to translate the consequences... into financial terms they soon realised that the Church lacked the requisite resources to discharge the burden which she had so strenuously fought to place on her own shoulders.⁷⁸

The Whifflet case reveals the willingness of the Authorities to invest in Catholic education. The contentious question rested upon *who* set the agenda and defined the needs in the new era of Catholic schooling. Many of these issues were finally resolved in a long running and bitter dispute between the Catholic Church and the Stirlingshire Education Authority.

EDUCATIONAL CONFLICT IN STIRLINGSHIRE

A bitter clash between the Catholic Church and the Stirlingshire Authority was only defused with a House of Lords' ruling and the winding up of *ad hoc* authorities in 1930. The dispute hinged on whether or not an Authority was obliged to *extend* the system of Catholic education transferred to it in 1919. In 1922 the Authority declined a Catholic request for a school in Bonnybridge, arguing that existing accommodation

⁷⁷ Treble (1980:33)

was adequate to meet local educational needs; that a separate Catholic school represented unnecessary expense; and, further, that the Catholic children of the district had been hitherto educated in non-denominational Authority schools (without complaint) under the protection of the conscience clause. Rev. Edward Miley, priest at Bonnybridge, did not accept the 'undercrowding' argument and hinted that Bonnybridge might provide a useful test case:

If this reason for refusal ... were admitted, it could easily be made to prevent any new Catholic school at all being built and would lead to the extinction of existing Catholic schools when these got worn out ... In our humble judgement the claim is a just, indeed, an irresistible one. If Bonnybridge is not a good case, then there will never be a good case for *any* new Catholic school.⁷⁹

Whilst the SED sympathised with the Catholic case, the Church was informed that "in view of the precise terms of ... the Act of 1918 [the SED] could take no further action to secure the provision of a school."⁸⁰ The Authority then offered to provide, in non-denominational schools attended by Catholic children:

a suitable Roman Catholic teacher to give such Roman Catholic pupils religious instruction for the same time as is set apart for the religious instruction of other pupils ... or alternatively, to agree to the Roman Catholic Church ... appointing an instructor to give ... religious instruction.

Should this offer be unacceptable to the Church, the Authority further offered to cooperate with the Church authorities: "in preparing and presenting to the Court of Session, at mutual expense, a special case to determine what facilities ... the Education Authority is under a legal obligation to provide"⁸¹. It was apparent, therefore, that the Authority too were keen to make a test case out of the issue, and relations between the two bodies rapidly deteriorated. It should be noted, however,

⁷⁸ Treble (1980:34)

⁷⁹ Rev. Edward Miley, Bonnybridge to Bishop H.G. Graham, Edinburgh 28/12/22. See "Joint Print of Documents for the Parties" (hereafter, *Bonnybridge Documents*), SCA, ED9/106/3

⁸⁰ *Proof of Closed Record of Action, Court of Session* 13/12/27. SCA, ED9/106/1-2

⁸¹ Stirlingshire Education Authority (hereafter, SEA) to Rev. James MacDonald, Bannockburn. *Bonnybridge Documents*.

that Stirlingshire acted alone - no assistance was forthcoming from the other Authorities⁸².

THE STIRLINGSHIRE DISPUTES

Ignoring Catholic opposition the Authority adopted the policy of mixed religious instruction in their schools. This had particular implications for post-Qualifying education, as there was no Catholic secondary school in the County. Hitherto the Authority had provided bursaries for Catholic children to attend Catholic secondary schools outside Stirlingshire. As 'adequate religious instruction' was now, in the Authority's view, being provided within the County, no further Bursary would be granted. The SED refused to give their statutory sanction to the proposed scheme, resulting in a public enquiry conducted by James Fleming, Sheriff of Fife & Kinross.

The key issue was the 203 Catholic children receiving Authority bursaries to attend Catholic schools outwith Stirlingshire: the Authority claimed that their scheme would reduce bursary costs by 75%⁸³. With regard to religious instruction the Authority argued that: "the religious beliefs of the parents ought to be taken into close consideration, but the precise method in which their desire should be carried out is a matter of public policy *which we are elected to decide*"⁸⁴. Fleming ruled that "as matters now stand, the immediate bringing in to operation of the Scheme is not feasible", and he found the Authority's policy on religious instruction was: "hopelessly insufficient and ... a system to which [Catholics] could not conscientiously approve"⁸⁵. He insisted that the Authority "seem to have no option, if they are to fulfil their obligations ... but to pay for suitable education" as the Catholics had insisted. Further, Fleming was unimpressed with the Authority's apparent desire to make the issue the Munro Act itself:

⁸² The Association of Education Authorities in Scotland (AEAS) provided legal assistance to a number of individual Authorities. At no point was any such assistance offered to SEA on the 'religious' issue. *Minutes of the AEAS*, (hereafter *Min.AEAS*)

⁸³ Typescript Enquiry report of Sheriff Fleming to the SED, 28/03/25. Hereafter: *Fleming Report*, SCA, ED9/104

⁸⁴ *Fleming Report* – emphasis in original. The Authority had come to an amicable agreement with the Episcopal Church on the same terms offered to the Catholic Church.

⁸⁵ *Fleming Report*

As the inquiry went on it became more and more apparent that the predominant feeling in the minds of the majority of the Authority is that the Act of 1918 has given an undue preference to denominational bodies, and that therefore they would restrict their actions as regards these bodies to what they are clearly bound to do. Suggestions as to the repeal of the Act of 1918 I discarded as being outside the scope of the enquiry.⁸⁶

The Church was keen to press its claims, and they built and equipped a school in Bonnybridge themselves, requesting that the SED *transfer* it under the provisions of Section 18. The Authority refused the SED's transfer request, moving the dispute into the Courts. The Catholics insisted that under Section 18(1) the Authority was obliged to transfer the school. The Authority countered that with 600 unoccupied school places in the district the school was not required; that a school built against the wishes of the Authority was outside the spirit and the letter of the 1918 Act; and, finally, that no school could be transferred without Authority consent⁸⁷. Whilst the Catholic case was at first successful in the Court of Session, the ruling was overturned on appeal by a vote of 3-1 and the subsequent Catholic appeal moved the dispute to the House of Lords⁸⁸. The Lords found by six votes to four (the narrowest possible majority) in favour of the Catholic appeal⁸⁹. The *Scotsman* devoted most of a full page to the decision, and made extensive editorial comment, underlining the historic nature of the decision.

The *Scotsman* welcomed the decision, arguing that going back on Section 18 "would be to the detriment of the children", and that had the Catholic case lost then: "it would be only a matter of years before the children of Roman Catholic parents would be again outside the public school system ... Such a development would obviously defeat the object of the 1918 Act"⁹⁰. The Catholic Church emerged from the disputes in Stirlingshire with two very important principles established by precedent. The two

⁸⁶ *Fleming Report*

⁸⁷ *Scotsman*, 21/03/28. Section 18 (7) stated that a school built after the Act "may with the consent of the Department be transferred": the Authority argued that 'may' did not constitute compulsion.

⁸⁸ The dissenting judge in the Court of Session decision was Robert Munro, now Lord Alness, the political architect of the 1918 Act.

⁸⁹ The original case at the Court of Session was heard in March 1928; the Lords ruled on the matter in December 1929. The dispute lasted over 7 years.

⁹⁰ *Scotsman* Editorial, 17/12/29

cases secured for the Church an interpretation of the Munro Act which would not merely maintain the system of Catholic schools, but *extend* it.

INTERPRETING STIRLINGSHIRE

The dispute in Stirlingshire threw up a number of issues, not least the question of whether 'religious' concerns outweighed the rights of an elected Authority to define the local educational agenda. It raised the spectre (and it proved exactly that) of budgets thrown into chaos as the SED authorised denominational schools against the wishes of the Authorities. Whilst a 'respectable' case could be constructed from the Bonnybridge affair, some reactions to the Lords' decision were explicitly sectarian. One Authority member complained that the decision: "put his loyalty to the test": "He was asked to subscribe to a foreign potentate, and to pay rates to propagate a creed that was alien to him and to the people of Scotland ... we were being overridden by an organisation that was nine-tenths political"⁹¹.

It is impossible to discern how much of the Authority's position - defended for almost a decade in defiance of the SED - was motivated by anti-Catholic sentiment, and how much by a sincere desire to protect the interests of Stirlingshire's schools and ratepayers. Indeed, it is probably impossible to separate the two sources of opposition to Section 18. The important point is that neither aspect should be denied. It is likely that opposition to the Catholic case gained momentum, and had its resolve hardened, by anti-Catholicism. Sectarian posturing, it must be noted, was not conspicuous in the dispute until it was reaching the bitter end.

The Church of Scotland's General Assembly in 1930 demonstrates that disappointment over the failure to establish an integrated school system fuelled opposition to the Munro Act and resentment towards the continuing Catholic insistence on segregation. It also reveals that the Kirk was not inclined to push the issue with any degree of vigour. One minister noted sadly :

It must have been the dream of those who framed the Education Act of 1918 that at last they were going to have education placed on a truly national basis

⁹¹ *Scotsman*, 10/01/30

in Scotland ... that in the schools of the country all children, irrespective of their religious beliefs of their parents, would sit side by side. That dream had assuredly not been realised [and] it was quite evident that the Roman Catholics would never accept mixed schools.

A Stirlingshire minister failed to rouse the Kirk with his dire warnings that:

They now had no deterrent whatever to the ambitions of the Roman Catholics in Scotland ... the compromise which the Education Authority of Stirlingshire offered to the Roman Catholic body was ... fair and reasonable, although it was ignominiously rejected. The whole of Scotland looked to this great Church for a lead ... He asked that a definite and decisive lead should be given.⁹²

The Assembly referred the matter to its Education Committee, viewing no other action as necessary. The following year the Committee Report complained that the Bonnybridge case placed the interests of "ratepayers in jeopardy" and recommended further consideration of the matter. Moving an amendment seeking to close the matter, Sir Henry Keith, Chairman of Lanarkshire Council Education Committee argued that dispute would have been avoided had "there been the exercise of common sense [on the part of the Authority] and a greater observance of the golden rule". For the Assembly to continue its considerations would "create a ferment of ill-will and sectarian jealousy, which they would not get rid of for many years". Although the unamended Report was authorised by a large majority, the Assembly had in effect deferred action yet again. This reflected the fact that segregated education was functioning smoothly in many parts of Scotland. As if to demonstrate this fact, Keith left the debate to participate in the official opening of a new Catholic school near Airdrie, taking the opportunity, alongside Archbishop Mackintosh, to praise the Munro Act. That same day Scottish Secretary Willie Adamson opened another Catholic school at Tranent, hearing Archbishop Macdonald praise the Act as: "the greatest that had been passed for many centuries ... it would be appreciated more in the future than it had in the past"⁹³.

⁹² *Scotsman*, 27/05/30

⁹³ *Scotsman*, 26/05/31

'ROME ON THE RATES'

No understanding of the educational settlement would be complete without contextualising the Protestant backlash to the terms of the 1918 Act. Whilst the following chapter will consider political Protestantism in the 1930s, the concluding part of this chapter will consider the political impact of those protesting against the 'endowment' of Catholic schools in the decade following the Munro Act. Handley argued that the Act:

aroused resentment among certain of the official upholders of Scottish Protestantism who regarded any concession to Catholics as the inroad of the death-watch beetle in the fabric of their religion. In such an atmosphere the old discord was renewed. In Glasgow the education authority election of 1922, the first following the working of the new act, was heralded with a roll of anti-papal drums ... A slogan was born that continues to rally opponents of the Education Act of 1918: "Rome on the rates!"⁹⁴

Whilst the 1922 election was the first following the implementation of the Act, the inaugural elections of March 1919 had immediately preceded the coming into effect of the Munro Act. There had been no "roll of anti-papal drums" in 1919 - and neither was the issue prominent in 1925 or 1928. The slogan 'Rome on the rates' too, did not originate in 1920s Glasgow, but had a longer (and possibly English) provenance⁹⁵. The Protestant 'backlash' against the religious settlement in Scottish education differs substantially in tone and scope from the Liberal outcry that followed the English settlement of 1902. In 1919 the central issue for Protestant educational interests remained the necessity of securing 'Use & Wont' (the continuation of traditional Bible instruction) through representation on the Authorities, and not sniping at the privileges conferred on the minority Churches. The Orange Order recommended candidates - as it had done since 1873 - on the basis that it was:

of vital importance that good, sound Protestant candidates should be elected who will see to it, while justice is done to every individual no matter what his religion or his creed may be, that the Bible shall continue to be taught in the public schools.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ Handley (1947:303)

⁹⁵ The slogan featured in the protests against the 1902 Balfour Act, and may have a longer history.

⁹⁶ GH 28/03/19

The Scottish electorate were unexcited about this new era of education and the 1919 educational polls were abysmally poor⁹⁷. The minority Churches, however, were relatively successful in persuading their congregations to the polls. Whilst candidates supporting 'Use & Wont' received "substantial representation" on Glasgow's Authority, the "most striking success" was the return of all 12 Catholic candidates. Catholic candidates were successful across urban Scotland, and, where organised, the Episcopalians also increased their representation⁹⁸. Catholic success, and the more modest gains of Labour, were not initially seen as problematic by the majority of Glasgow's Authority members. When one (Moderate) Authority member resigned in 1919 the Authority co-opted a Labour nominee in his place, increasing the Catholic-Labour minority to 19 out of 45.

By 1921, however, the size of the minority was causing concern to some, stimulated by issues other than education. Ireland was immersed in a bitter war of reprisal; Labour was emerging as a significant electoral force; and the long fought Temperance campaign had come to a crunching halt with the abject failure of the Local Veto polls. Unemployment spiralled in 1920-21 and showed little promise of short-term improvement. These processes were subtly interwoven. Economic conditions improved Labour's electoral outlook at the same time that 'disloyal' Irish Catholics were demonstrably supporting the Party. In return, Labour tempered many of its long held principles to suit this electorate. Labour's commitment to Ireland was long-standing and unchanged - but the principles of integrated secular education, and of Temperance were shelved at the very time that the Irish Question was coming to a bloody 'solution'.

Added to these political processes was the fact that the implementation of the 1918 Act had placed an added and disproportionate burden on the rates⁹⁹. Parish Councils complained that the Act "was a cumbrous, unworkable, and appallingly expensive

⁹⁷ Edinburgh, 19%; Glasgow, 27%; Dundee 21%; Aberdeen 13%.

⁹⁸ GH 07/04/19. Episcopalian organisation was never more than loose.

⁹⁹ Between 1913-20 the amount levied by the education rate rose by 165% whilst Treasury Grants rose by 155%. *Min.AEAS* (v.1):145 (12/11/20)

machine”¹⁰⁰. In November 1919 rural Parish Councils in Lanarkshire threatened to refuse to levy the education rate in protest at the “extraordinary sums” demanded of them¹⁰¹. The transfer of denominational schools did not feature in these attacks, leading Munro to point out:

that in criticism of the expense of the Education Act *it is often forgotten* that the entire cost of the voluntary schools in Scotland has now been taken over and is borne by the local authority, and that this to a large extent accounts for the increased cost.¹⁰²

Pressure on the Authorities did not only come from the ratepayers. With the onset of a global recession from 1920, there was considerable pressure from the SED to curb spending: “Just when the initial difficulties appeared to be easing, when the new Authorities had time to form their plans ... the demand for drastic retrenchment in public expenditure supervened”¹⁰³.

The spark for the sectarian campaign in Glasgow came from a “semi-private” speech by a leading Catholic, reported in the *Glasgow Herald* with its “context carved away”¹⁰⁴. Professor John Phillimore, Catholic convert and Glasgow University lecturer, described Scotland’s Universities as “undefended cities” open to be “captured” by Catholic scholars¹⁰⁵. One UFC minister, complaining of “provocation and aggression” and “Jesuitical proselytism” in “execrable taste”, warned that “a widespread and deplorable apathy prevailed” in education with an “indifference to the Roman Catholic menace”¹⁰⁶. A CoS minister warned of “a most unholy alliance between the Roman Catholic Church and the representatives of the advanced Labour Party” which aimed to capture a majority of Education Authority seats¹⁰⁷. Whilst the *Glasgow Herald* placed economy at the head of its concerns regarding the Authority

¹⁰⁰ *GH* 30/09/20. The religious question was not aired at anti-Munro Conferences organised by rural parishes between 1919-21. See *Poor Law & Local Government Magazine*, Dec. 1919; Sept.1920; Nov.1920; May 1921

¹⁰¹ *Scotsman* 07/11/19. See also *Poor Law & Local Government Magazine*, January 1920

¹⁰² *133 H.C.Deb.5s:1544* (26/10/20) - my emphasis.

¹⁰³ *Report on Education, 1921-22*. In 1921 some £150,000 (one third of the Education Authorities’ total capital expenditure) was paid to the minority Churches for the purchase of schools transferred.

¹⁰⁴ Handley (1947:302)

¹⁰⁵ See Phillimore (1922:184-185); McEwan (1979)

¹⁰⁶ Rev. W.T. Bankhead (UFC), *GH* 15/02/22

election, it too referred to the "measure of understanding" between Catholics and Labour: "plainly a considerable danger exists of their obtaining a majority on the Authority"¹⁰⁸.

James Maxton dismissed the notion of the 'unholy alliance' as an attempt to obscure squabbling over "which of the two teams of rival Protestants was to be on top", a struggle based primarily on "personal ambitions and personal aggrandisements"¹⁰⁹. Division between the Orange Order and the Unionists over Ireland meant that some were keen to develop a distinctive 'Orange' voice on the Authority, free of the restraints of broader Tory interests. There was little unanimity between those ministers peddling an anti-Catholic card during the election, and senior Orangemen stayed entirely aloof from the No Popery drum beating¹¹⁰. All Moderate candidates, however, insisted that apathy placed the continuation of 'Use & Wont' in real danger. The result was a spectacular, if brief, reversal in the fortunes of the Catholic and Labour interests on the Authority. Maxton insisted that Labour had been the real target: "It is the Protestant churches ... which will suffer in the days to come ... It is not good business ... for the Protestant churches to stand blatantly as the enemies of the working class even when the attack is made behind the mask of religion"¹¹¹.

The campaign succeeded in rousing Protestant electors to the defence of 'Use & Wont' but the momentum was short-lived, and by 1925 the minority parties had regained much of the lost ground. That there was no Moderate return to the 'sectarian' card suggests that it was the specific congruence of Irish bloodshed, economic crisis, Orange-Unionist division, and the fear of Labour which lay behind the 1922 'drum beating' rather than the provisions of the Munro Act *per se*:

¹⁰⁷ Rev. J. Maclagan (CoS), *GH* 22/02/22

¹⁰⁸ *GH* 04/03/22. The *Herald's* list of candidates made barbed comments about some Labour candidates and noted the Irish Republican connections of several Catholic nominees. *GH* 24/03/22

¹⁰⁹ *GH* 04/03/22

¹¹⁰ There was clear collusion between three UFC Ministers - Rev. D. McQueen, Rev. J.V. Logan; Rev. T. Cameron - and an Independent Presbyterian Rev. J.M. Brisby. Rev. J. Maclagan (CoS) peddled a strongly anti-Catholic line, but did not co-operate with the Brisby-UFC clique. Other Orangemen avoided the sectarian issue. See also Gallagher (1987a:185) on Catholic infighting in 1922.

¹¹¹ Quoted in Knox (1987:35).

VOTES - GLASGOW EDUCATION ELECTIONS, 1919-1928¹¹²:

Party	1919		1922		1925		1928	
	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%
Moderate	66437	55	176803	68	130115	62	145601	65
Labour	12658	10	26392	10	26587	13	24191	11
Catholic	39288	32	53290	21	53929	26	52549	23
Others	3150	3	2414	1	90	*	1882	1
TOTAL	121533		258899		210721		224223	
Turnout	27%		57%		46%		47%	

SEATS WON - GLASGOW EDUCATION ELECTIONS, 1919-1928:

Party	1919	1922	1925	1928
Moderate	27	35	28	30
Catholic	12	7	12	11
Labour	6	3	5	4

The most striking aspect to the Glasgow results (and this was mirrored across Scotland) was the very poor support shown to Labour candidates. Labour long fared poorly in educational politics, being without a "strong voice" on Glasgow School Board before 1903¹¹³. Over the 1920s Labour strongly established themselves in Glasgow gaining between two-fifths and one-half of Glasgow's Parliamentary votes - four or five times the proportion gained in education elections. It is clear that many voters separated their educational politics from the politics of local and central government. Whilst this has been a recognised feature of Catholic politics, there has been less recognition of a Protestant combination of support for Labour with a traditionalist affection for religion in educational matters.

THE IMPACT OF 'SECTARIAN' POLITICS

Discerning the electoral impact of 'sectarian' over and above denominational and party-political preference is, because of the vagueness of educational Moderatism, difficult. There is, though, strong evidence to suggest that bigotry was never prominent in Authority politics. That the 'Rome on the Rates' campaign in Glasgow was limited to a small coterie of Ministers in 1922 and that "the hubbub had died

¹¹² Only First Choice Votes shown.

¹¹³ Roxburgh (1971:220)

down" by 1925 suggests that the sectarian card was of short-term utility¹¹⁴. More direct evidence relates to most significant entry into an education poll of an explicitly anti-Catholic party, the Scottish Protestant League (SPL) in Edinburgh, 1925¹¹⁵. The SPL hoped to exploit a controversy - initiated by themselves - over the re-housing of a Catholic school in premises recently vacated by non-Catholic children. Seven candidates were put forward, SPL leader Alexander Ratcliffe arguing that the Munro Act:

metes out gross injustice to the Protestant ratepayers for the benefit of Roman Catholics ... The sectarianism of Rome is propagated in our public schools at the expense of the ratepayers, while the sectarianism of Presbyterians, Baptists or Methodists is not. Public and national schools for all is the election cry of the 'Protestant' candidates ...¹¹⁶

Ratcliffe gathered together a fairly plausible list of candidates, including a Parish Councillor and a future Moderator of the Free Church¹¹⁷. Their entry into the poll, however, came under fierce criticism from both clerical and the 'ratepayer' elements on the Authority, one Minister noting tartly that Authority "Members ... were not sent back to amend the clauses of the Education Acts, because they had no power to do so"¹¹⁸.

The Capital's electors seemed to agree; while Ratcliffe scraped past the Quota on the thirteenth and final count in South Division, the six other candidates polled woefully short. Ratcliffe's victory was achieved in the Division containing the 'controversial' school, suggesting that whatever electoral mileage could be made by the SPL was strictly parochial¹¹⁹. In the following table each Division's quota (the number of Votes required to secure representation on the Authority) is shown to highlight just how marginal the SPL were:

¹¹⁴ Gallagher (1987a:136). Phillimore (1922:185) dismissed the campaign as a "stunt".

¹¹⁵ On the OPP in Lanarkshire see Chapter Five.

¹¹⁶ *EN* 02/03/25

¹¹⁷ Professor John R. Mackay was Moderator in 1929-30.

¹¹⁸ *EN* 25/02/25; 04/03/25; 09/03/25

¹¹⁹ Edinburgh South had (marginally) the highest Divisional poll, and Newington ward (where the controversial school was sited) also polled relatively highly. However, given the low turnout (South Division 26%; Newington ward 33%) this should not be overstated.

SPL CANDIDATES, EDINBURGH EDUCATION ELECTION 1925¹²⁰.

Candidate	Occupation	Division	Vote	%	Quota
George W. Taylor	Retired Clothier	Central	294	5.4	912
John Forrester	Consultant Engineer	West	256	2.8	1284
James S. Lawson	Teacher	West	55	0.6	1284
Horace Caldwell	Coal Merchant	South	410	3.6	1426
Peter Campbell	House Painter	South	129	1.1	1426
Alexander Ratcliffe	Railway Clerk	South	1041	9.1	1426
Prof. J.R. Mackay	FCoS Lecturer	Leith	481	6.5	920

With a total of 2,666 votes (5.7% of the poll) the SPL had gained a toehold on the Authority, and Ratcliffe won some kudos in the small milieu of militant Protestantism¹²¹. Ratcliffe's sojourn on the Authority was, however, an unhappy one: without allies amongst his fellow members he was unable to make any impact on the politics of the Authority and had a poor attendance record. Neither Ratcliffe nor the SPL stood for the Authority in 1928¹²².

One Education Authority did attempt to make an explicitly 'Protestant' stand against the Munro Act in the mid-1920s. Caithness Education Authority, a body with no transferred schools in its responsibility, circularised the Authorities in June 1925 seeking support for its contention that:

Section 18 of the Education (Scotland) Act, 1918, is inimical to the best interests of Scottish education in as much as [it] provides facilities for the maintenance and propagation of an alien creed at the public expense and also leads to administrative extravagance in its operation.¹²³

The plea received no support from any other Authority in Scotland. The Association of Education Authorities in Scotland (AEAS) did not discuss the religious clauses of the Munro Act *at all* between its inception in 1919 and its winding up eleven years later. Opposition to Section 18 appeared in only three motions in the life of the AEAS - two Stirlingshire motions were heavily defeated without discussion in 1926:

¹²⁰ Only First Choice Votes shown. Minutes of Edinburgh Education Authority. (*Min. EdEA*): 179-184 (1925)

¹²¹ The contention that "widespread hostility to Catholic schools being state-aided helped get him elected" [Gallagher (1987a:151)] seems exaggerated.

¹²² Ratcliffe raised no motions in the Authority after November 1925, and had effectively ceased to attend its meetings six months before his tenure actually expired. *Min. EdEA* 1925-1928

¹²³ Quoted in *Min. EdEA*: 14/02/25 (p585)

and a Caithness protest over the Bonnybridge ruling failed to find a proposer in 1930¹²⁴.

The most telling judgement about the record of the Authorities in administering denominational education came from the Catholic Church itself. By the late 1920s the taking over of education by the local councils was firmly back on the political agenda. The Catholic Church was quick to point out that the proposals might well mean the removal of religious interests - Protestant and Catholic - from the local administration of education, a situation unacceptable to both the Church and the Kirk:

There is no suggestion in the White Paper of any method whereby this representation is to be continued. The Government's proposals involve the introduction of sectarian controversy into town or county elections. This cannot be contemplated with satisfaction or composure.¹²⁵

The 'sectarian controversy' referred to related not to 'anti-Papal drumbeating' but to the general desire of different Churches to ensure their educational interests were safeguarded. For Catholics this meant ensuring sympathetic management of their schools, to Presbyterians it meant the continuance of 'Use & Wont'. That the Catholic Church saw the elected Authorities as a *defence* against erosion of their educational position calls into question Callum Brown's assertion that Presbyterian ministers utilised opposition to the Munro Act in Authority elections as "a spark for Protestant reassertion"¹²⁶. To some, local government reform offered an opportunity to curb the (already waning) influence of the Presbytery by limiting the number of religious representatives on the new education committees. Senior Catholics, rather than welcoming the curbing of Presbyterian influence, believed Catholic interests would suffer as a consequence:

As far as I can gather the non-Catholics on the Town and County Councils are anxious to be rid of their ministers as far as possible; that means ... they

¹²⁴ Minutes of Association of Education Authorities in Scotland (hereafter, *Min.AEAS*), (v.3): (17/03/26); (19/05/26); (19/03/30)

¹²⁵ Minutes of Catholic Union of Glasgow, Vigilance Committee on Education, 27/07/28, SCA, DE101/1/3. Catholic priests and Orange chaplains collaborated in opposing the measure, *Min AEAS* (v.4): (26/09/28); (10/10/28); (19/12/28)

¹²⁶ C.G.Brown (1997:145)

will not readily agree to the co-option of anything approaching that maximum permissible, because if they did, they would have amongst them more ministers than they would want to have ... That this objection to ministers exists and that it is widespread in the West I am certain possibly the dislike ... merely indicates increasing secularism, and unless we take care it will be our turn next.¹²⁷

The central concern for Catholic educationalists, therefore, in 1929 as in 1872, was not the relation between Catholic and Protestant, but between the interests of religion and the claims of the secular state. Despite some evidence that the Labour Government attempted to play Catholic and Presbyterian interests against each other, the issue of representation was settled amicably¹²⁸.

CONCLUSION

'Sectarianism' offers a fatally limited framework within which we can understand the evolution and expansion of Scottish Catholic education. The Catholic Church achieved a very generous settlement in 1918 which did not simply guarantee the survival of distinctively Catholic schools, but expanded the scope and depth of Catholic education. In the aftermath of the settlement the relationship between Catholic schools and the institutional agencies of education - the Scottish Office, the Authorities and the SED – was, on the whole, a positive one. By 1930 the right of Scottish Catholics to separate schools, fully funded by the State, was an entrenched reality. Only two Authorities made a stand against the religious provisions of the Munro Act, and both found themselves friendless. Stirlingshire succeeded only in securing an interpretation of Section 18 which well suited the desire of the Catholic community; and Caithness found that few cared to even discuss their theological objections. The SED, in their behaviour after 1918, played absolutely true to Munro's promise that the Catholic community "would never regret having come in on the terms I have ventured to suggest"¹²⁹.

The Scottish settlement did *not* produce a backlash in any way comparable to the Liberal campaign of civil disobedience waged in England & Wales between 1902-

¹²⁷ Abp. Mackintosh (Glasgow) to Abp. Macdonald (St Andrews & Edinburgh) 07/12/29, SCA, DE101/2/5.

¹²⁸ "RCs on Education Committees (County Councils) 1928-30"; SCA, DE101

06. Within this comparison lies the crux of the failure of a 'Protestant backlash' in education in the 1920s. Whilst the 1902 Act was a Tory measure which raised the ire of secular and Nonconformist Liberals, the Munro Act sprang from very different historical circumstances. Politically, the Munro Act was the child of the wartime coalition, and thus belonged as much to the Scottish Unionist as to the Scottish Liberal. Those Unionists who disliked the reform resided in a party dominated by an English Anglican majority historically committed to denominational schools, and the Scottish Liberals saw the Act as a triumph of Liberal tolerance. Even in an era when educational politics were directly accountable to the ballot box, no significant attempt to repeal Section 18 took place. Politically, at Parliamentary, national and local educational levels, a practical consensus on Catholic schools fell into place which left little room for sectarian politicking. In the 1930s, however, as the following chapter will show, militant Protestant chafing against this consensus was to capture - albeit briefly - a mood of popular Protestant nativism in both Edinburgh and Glasgow.

CHAPTER 7:

"THE REFORMATION MUST BE FOUGHT AGAIN"¹

The last chapter demonstrated the marginality of anti-Catholicism in Scottish educational politics. This chapter will investigate the intrusion of militant Protestantism into the municipal politics of Scotland's largest cities. The Scottish Protestant League (SPL) in Glasgow, and the Protestant Action Society (PA) in Edinburgh achieved remarkable, but brief, success in the 1930s. On one level their success suggests a deep reservoir of latent anti-Catholicism. At another the rapidity of their emergence and decline suggests that this reservoir was not deep enough to sustain a successful movement even in a limited area. Militant Protestant success was largely contingent on localised and short-lived social and political factors, not on the vibrancy of anti-Catholic sentiment. The militant Protestant politics of the 1930s represents a conscious attempt, with markedly limited success, to mobilise anti-Catholicism into political form. The historiography on the militants is interesting: only obliquely referred to the contemporary Catholic commentator Compton Mackenzie, and ignored altogether by Handley in the 1940s², they re-emerged from obscurity with the publication of studies by Bruce and by Gallagher in the 1980s³. Few subsequent accounts have ignored the phenomenon. Indeed, these organisations have been central to the view that the inter-war period represents the high point of religious conflict in modern Scotland. Writing of PA, for example, Devine has claimed that: "It was Cormack's supporters who were behind the most violent anti-Catholic riots seen in Scotland this century"⁴.

MILITANT PROTESTANTS

Both SPL and PA were heir to a 'Protestantism Before Politics' tradition which believed that "the Unionists and the [Orange] Order were weak-kneed and supine representatives of Protestant interests"⁵. This critique had some history. Some militant Protestants – such as Harry Long in the late nineteenth century and Rev.

¹ Protestant Action slogan, 1935

² Mackenzie (1936); Handley (1947)

³ Bruce (1985a); Gallagher (1985b, 1987a, 1987b).

⁴ Tom Devine, *Herald* 18/07/98

James Brisby in the early twentieth – were content to forge a quasi-independent path, emphasising an ‘Orange’ worldview, but staying within the mainstream right. Others, such as Hugh Ferguson, began as independent representatives of a ‘true blue’ outlook but, with political success, embraced mainstream Unionism (and, in Ferguson’s case were dropped as soon as their popularity waned). Others still remained resolutely independent. Two Kirk Ministers, Glasgow’s Rev. Robert Thomson and Fife’s Rev. Jacob Primmer were indefatigable campaigners against Catholicism in the later nineteenth century. Thomson stood twice – unsuccessfully – for Glasgow Council, and served for nine years on Glasgow School Board despite his Church’s opposition to his candidacy⁶. Primmer became a CoS missionary in Fife during 1876 and promptly “entered into a thirty years war with his own congregation, his Presbytery and the General Assembly”⁷. From 1888 Primmer and Thomson, toured Scotland, their outdoor meetings courting violent controversy, and it was Primmer who provided the vision for later militants.

SCOTTISH PROTESTANT LEAGUE

In 1920, Alexander Ratcliffe (1888-1947) launched his SPL in Edinburgh before a “large audience [from] various evangelical Protestant denominations”. A “new aggressive Protestant movement”, the SPL was “evangelical, undenominational, and non-political” and would oppose “spiritualism, Christian Science, and various other systems of anti-Scriptural teaching [and] Roman Catholic Sinn Fein”⁸. Despite this remit the SPL was essentially anti-Catholic, born days after a leading Sinn Feiner warned an Edinburgh rally:

If England wants an Irish Question then we will give her an Irish question on her own soil. We will let them see that two can play at the game of Armies of Occupation. I may speak strongly, but I am not saying anything that is extravagant.⁹

⁵ G.Walker (1995:68)

⁶ *Scotsman*, 05/11/1884

⁷ Bruce (1985a:40)

⁸ *EN* 29/09/20; *GH* 29/09/20

⁹ *EN* 15/09/20. Six weeks later a policeman was seriously wounded in Bothwell leading to the arrest of 21 Republicans, nine of whom were convicted in 1921. See *GH* 29/10/20; *Times* 07/12/20; 21/03/21; Patterson (1993); Cooney (1999)

Whilst his tenure on Edinburgh's Education Authority was a miserable one, membership raised Ratcliffe's profile and, by the late 1920s, he boasted Lord Scone, a young Unionist activist, as Honorary SPL President. Ratcliffe was good box office, 2,000 paying to hear "escaped nun" Edith Auffray in Edinburgh during 1928¹⁰. However, Ratcliffe was increasingly frustrated by the ineffectual nature of militant Protestantism in Parliament and he duly contested the 1929 General Election at Stirling & Falkirk. It was an obvious choice: sitting MP, Labour's Hugh Murnin, was Catholic and the Division was home to the Bonnybridge controversy. Ratcliffe attacked Murnin for his Catholicism and challenged Unionist candidate Douglas Jamieson over his Protestant commitment. Murnin refused to "debate the religious question" and Jamieson dismissed Ratcliffe as "a man who opened his mouth and spoke of religious subjects alone". Ratcliffe offered to withdraw should Jamieson pledge to seek amendment of the Education Act: Jamieson replied "that it was made in the knowledge that it could never be accepted"¹¹. Bruce suggests that the rejection "looks foolish" with hindsight¹²:

STIRLING & FALKIRK BURGHS, 1929:

		Vote	%
Hugh Murnin	Labour	15,408	47
Douglas Jamieson	Unionist	10,164	31
Alexander Ratcliffe	SPL	6,902	21

Poll: 79%

There were good reasons for refusal, not least Catholic concerns over Labour's education policies. Scone, with an eye to his political future, complained about Ratcliffe's candidacy against a fellow Unionist and resigned from the SPL¹³.

In 1930 Ratcliffe moved his base of operations to Glasgow and entered the municipal fray in 1931 with three candidates. Two, against expectation, were successful. In 1932, eleven candidates stood, winning one seat, and in 1933 the SPL ran twenty-three candidates, winning four seats, and 68,000 votes. At this peak the SPL won

¹⁰ *Scotsman*, 09/05/28

¹¹ *Scotsman*, 14-17/05/29, 27/05/29

¹² Bruce (1985a:51)

¹³ Scone was Unionist candidate against Jennie Lee in North Lanark - See Chapter 5

22% of the Glasgow vote, marginally behind the Moderates, and in those seats it contested the SPL was the most popular party. The SPL advance may have been even greater had there not been signs of disharmony. In two East End wards former members stood against the SPL and from here the SPL disintegrated as Ratcliffe's autocratic grip alienated his followers. Of seven councillors elected on an SPL platform, four resigned the whip between 1933-34, all criticising Ratcliffe's dictatorial style. Only five SPL candidates stood in 1934, as did four Independent Protestants. All, including Ratcliffe, were defeated. No SPL candidates stood in 1935, and Independent Protestant candidates were comprehensively defeated. Of the four councillors elected on an SPL platform in 1933 three stood in 1936 as Independents. All four lost, three humiliated at the foot of their polls. In 1937 Ratcliffe polled weakly in Camphill, and various independent Protestants fared very poorly. This was the end of electoral Protestantism in Glasgow – a spectacular but ultimately brief phenomenon:

SHARE OF MUNICIPAL VOTE: GLASGOW 1929-35:

% by column	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935
Moderates	43	58	47	29	24	36	35
Independent Moderates	-	-	-	*	5	2	2
Independent	3	*	1	2	1	2	3
Nationalists	-	1	-	2	-	*	-
Labour	53	39	43	31	32	40	45
ILP	-	2	2	20	11	12	12
Communists/Other Left	1	*	2	5	4	2	1
Scottish Protestant League	-	-	5	11	22	5	-
Other Protestant	-	-	-	*	1	1	2

SCOTTISH PROTESTANT LEAGUE AND 'INDEPENDENT PROTESTANT' RECORD IN GLASGOW MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS, 1931-38:

	Wards contested	Seats won	Seats lost	Total Vote	% in wards contested
1931	3	2	-	12579	44
1932	12	1	-	31438	30
1933	26	4	-	72451	32
1934	9	-	2	19847	26
1935	8	-	1	6772	10
1936	6	-	4	9098	17
1937	2	-	-	2966	24
1938	1	-	-	507	8

PROTESTANT ACTION

PA emerged in mid-1933 after a schism in the Edinburgh Protestant Society (EPS). Until c.1934, however, Edinburgh anti-Catholicism was dominated by the conservative Presbyterians of the Scottish Reformation Society (SRS) and Protestant Institute. Critical of 'unorthodox' attacks on Rome, they reacted to a play staged by the SPL by insisting: "we must attain our objectives by teaching and example. It is unscrupulous to carry out attacks by means of a play"¹⁴. As 'unscrupulous methods' began to demonstrate *political* potential, however, Edinburgh's 'respectable' No Popery held back those wishing to pursue a similar course. In the late 1930s Cormack's newspaper denounced the SRS: "And while [the] common vulgar men were *working*, the reverend poltroons talk, talk, talked, and did nothing but hinder. Words, words, words, wind, wind, wind"¹⁵.

The choice of title for Protestant Action suggested that some militant Protestants felt a more active approach would yield results¹⁶. In 1934 three Protestant municipal candidates stood in Edinburgh. The EPS polled poorly in Newington and PA had mixed fortune, faring badly in affluent West Leith, but winning North Leith, one of Edinburgh's poorest wards. PA profited from the coincidence of several high-profile Catholic events in the city and organised spectacular protests. In 1935 PA ran five candidates and supported an Independent in South Leith. Two other Protestant organisations ran candidates: the Protestant Progressive Society (PPS) and the Protestant Defence Society (PDS), both offshoots of the now peripheral EPS. In all, the Protestants won 18,000 votes, 23% of the poll. There was, however, just one victory, in South Leith, although there were close seconds, the PDS losing in Dalry by four votes.

Whilst SPL success was followed by defections, success in Edinburgh united militant Protestants behind Cormack. In 1936 they won 35,000 votes, pushing Labour into third place. In the wards they contested, Protestant candidates were by far the most

¹⁴ Rev. Hector McPherson, quoted in Gallagher (1987a:140)

¹⁵ *Protestant Action*, 02/04/38

¹⁶ Initially, however, PA did not differ greatly from the EPS. 'Protestant Action' may have been chosen simply as a retort to 'Catholic Action'.

popular. Six seats were won, giving PA a bloc of nine seats and Cormack struggled to maintain discipline, briefly assuming personal control of PA, for which Ratcliffe derided him as a "Protestant pope"¹⁷. In 1937 PA contested thirteen wards, and supported the PPS in Dalry. Unusually Cormack stood in both North Leith and Gorgie, his reasons unclear. Gallagher suggests desire to consolidate his grip on the party, a lack of suitable candidates, or both¹⁸. It proved a costly error: opponents successfully accused Cormack of egotism and opportunism. After a tense campaign there was only one PA victory. Moderates had strategically withdrawn from some wards, and PA was not strong enough to beat Labour in straight fights. Despite taking 28,000 votes PA had suffered a definite setback.

PA did not self-destruct like the SPL. Councillors, whilst enjoying more autonomy, remained aligned with PA. All eight candidates in 1938 belonged to, or were backed by, PA. Cormack won South Leith, giving PA all three of the ward's seats, but elsewhere Protestantism polled poorly and one seat was lost. In early 1939 PA failed to make any impact on a Dalry by-election, and failed to contest a by-election in Broughton caused by the death of one of their own councillors. As war approached the militant Protestant advance had collapsed:

SHARE OF MUNICIPAL VOTE: EDINBURGH 1929-35:

% by column	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938
Moderates	51	52	53	42	37	37	42
Independent	1	-	1	-	3	-	-
Nationalists	7	-	-	-	-	-	-
Labour	38	40	36	34	29	37	41
Other Left	3	8	3	1	1	*	1
British Union of Fascists	-	-	-	-	-	*	-
PA & other Protestants	-	-	6	23	31	26	16

¹⁷ Gallagher (1987b:139)

¹⁸ Gallagher (1987a:141)

MILITANT PROTESTANT RECORD IN EDINBURGH MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS, 1934-38:

	Wards contested	Seats won	Seats lost	Total Vote	% in wards contested
1934	3	1	-	4837	21
1935	9	1	-	18109	36
1936	13	6	-	35002	41
1937	14	1	1	27810	34
1938	8	1	1	14999	37

DIFFERENCES IN MILITANT PROTESTANTISM

Municipal Protestantism in the two cities thus seems very similar – both emerged from obscurity, scored remarkable successes, then evaporated. There are important differences, not least militant Protestantism's deep internal fractures. In 1935 Ratcliffe derided PA as a criminal "Protestant Underworld", and several of Ratcliffe's Glasgow rivals appropriated the label of 'Protestant Action'¹⁹. In 1937 both the SPL and the Communists published damaging allegations about PA finances. Ratcliffe's authoritarianism bitterly divided the SPL from its erstwhile allies in the East End, and they stood in electoral competition with the SPL, and then with each other. Whilst the SPL went from success to internal squabbling, the picture in Edinburgh was reversed. After internecine struggle between PA and James Graham's EPS during 1933-34, Cormack's North Leith victory, and Graham's expulsion from the EPS, did much to bring the different factions together. By 1936 most groups had united around Cormack.

Alongside esoteric anti-Catholic lectures, militants attacked the Education Act and 'Free State' immigration. Labour were criticised for defending 'Catholic' interests, and the Unionists and Moderates for ignoring 'Protestantism'. Catholics were accused of discriminating against Protestants, of monopolising sectors of municipal employment, and of enjoying an undue share of Public Assistance. Militants complained that 'loyal' Protestant ratepayers were subsidising a 'disloyal' minority, and that priests were involved in immoral and criminal activities. Here there were many similarities, in substance if not tone, with the Kirk's anti-Irish campaign.

Despite mainstream Protestantism's hostility towards the militants, there is no doubt that the 'Kirk's Disgrace' gave them a depth and respectability they would otherwise have been denied.

If there were few differences of substance between the militants, there were considerable differences of style. Following an internal purge during 1934, Cormack lectured on "Leadership: What it Entails!" and shortly afterwards PA's stylistic approach changed, perhaps as younger activists took over many functions. PA began to offer musical entertainment followed by, as one advert described, a "Bright Sparkling Address on a Burning Topic: It's Real Hot, Whew!" The new PA promised entertainment and enlightenment, spicy allegations about local priests as well as a critique of Popery²⁰. A few pennies at Oddfellow's Hall offered Protestants music and a furious oration from Cormack, undoubtedly a talented speaker. Cormack's key weapon was the simplicity of his message. Cormack insisted that PA would not co-operate with ex-Catholics, because 'Once a Papist. Always a Papist': "To be born and raised a Catholic was a stain that could never be erased"²¹. This broke the militant Protestant consensus (not always reflected in practice) that the enemy was *Catholicism*, not individual Catholics, for which Ratcliffe damned Cormack as "a coward and a humbug"²². From its inception PA described itself as '100% Protestant' but the slogan 'Once a Papist' was coined during PA-EPS conflict in 1934. James Graham, himself an ex-Catholic, derided it as "Absurd and Stupidly Ignorant". However, by the 1936 elections PA was supporting Graham, and Cormack maintained long-standing connections with ex-Catholic evangelist Mrs Walter Young. Cormack lectured at Young's mission in 1931 on "Should Protestants Be Bitter Towards Roman Catholics?" his co-operation with converted Catholics providing the answer. The slogan, therefore, was as much a weapon against Graham, as a deeply-held principle. Its utility was wider. When Cormack urged that Catholic bodies be banned from public halls, Ratcliffe denounced PA as "intolerant pro-

¹⁹ EN 06/07/35; 06/11/35

²⁰ Notices, EN 24/03/34; 07/04/34. On one contemporary priest still exciting curiosity see *Herald*, 29/11/00

²¹ Gallagher (1987b:79)

²² *Protestant Vanguard*, 29/06/35 quoted in Bruce (1985a:101). PA insisted 'We do not attack a System only, we attack those who keep the System in being, i.e. Papists', EN 30/03/35

Romanists who would deprive Romanists of their rights". For Ratcliffe, the touchstone of Protestantism was civil and political rights for all, the key character of Catholicism its denial of such rights. Cormack's opposition to granting Catholics access to public halls thus "savours of Popery"²³. The cumbersome gymnastics of such 'logic' made 'Once a Papist' attractive for its simplicity.

SOURCES OF ELECTORAL SUPPORT

Who supported the militant Protestants, and why? The obvious answer is that they were supported by urban Protestants viewing the presence of Catholicism in their midst with distaste. Such an answer begs two questions: why did anti-Catholicism become politically viable at *that* moment; and did militant Protestants focus upon religiously mixed wards? McLean, in analysing Glasgow's Labour vote, concludes that the SPL vote in a given ward "probably bore little relation to the proportion of Catholics [in that ward]. The enemy did not have to live next door to be hated or feared"²⁴. Indeed all but two of the thirteen Glasgow wards with no Catholic church during the 1930s were contested by Protestant candidates. Lack of a church need not mean absence of Catholics, but in several wards with a heavy concentration of Catholics, SPL candidates did poorly, or did not compete at all. A different pattern emerged in Edinburgh where PA took votes in precisely those areas where Catholics had a sizeable presence. Catholicism in both cities was crucially different, however. In Glasgow, Catholics comprised around a quarter of the population, and in some wards considerably more; it was well organised and (at least within the Labour movement) politically influential. Edinburgh's Catholics made up less than one tenth of the population and were less politically organised. They were not faced with a rival 'Orange' community, and neither were they as well assimilated within the Labour movement. All this suggests that Edinburgh Catholics were less able to resist the challenge of militant Protestantism in their own neighbourhoods. Edinburgh's left was weak and there was no 'machine' to direct the Catholic vote. While the SPL were to avoid, or fail in, certain wards because of a sizeable and organised Catholic

²³ Notices, *EN* 01/09/34; 02/05/31; 02/04/35; 08/04/35

²⁴ McLean (1983:225)

political presence, there was no such obstacle for PA who successfully exploited fear of Catholic advancement in specific localities.

Yet anti-Catholicism alone cannot explain the success of either party. They also exploited more secular concerns and benefited from voters disillusioned with Moderatism but not yet reconciled to Labour. Where did militant Protestants win seats? Detailed ward data are scarce, but some judgements can be made using the 1931 Census. The following table groups wards according to a measure of housing quality: persons per 100 windowed rooms (PWR). The table also shows the number of times each ward was won by Labour/ILP between 1921-38: Labour-Moderate voting bifurcated roughly according to housing, suggesting that this is a useful surrogate measure for class²⁵. The table then shows the best performance by Protestant candidates as a proportion of the *electorate* (rather than only those who voted) in each ward. Wards where Protestant candidates emerged victorious are highlighted in bold:

²⁵ See Miller (1985) for the utility of this measure at ward level.

PROTESTANT ELECTORAL RECORD BY WARD:

GLASGOW	PWR	Labour wins	% elect.	EDINBURGH	PWR	Labour wins	% elect.
Kelvinside	65	-	-	Morningside	66	-	-
Pollokshields	80	-	-	Haymarket	75	-	-
Cathcart	87	-	30	Newington	77	-	13
Park	91	-	-	Corstorphine	80	-	-
Langside	96	-	21	Merchiston	85	-	7
Camphill	98	-	32				
				St. Bernard's	93	-	-
Whiteinch	123	1	16	Colinton	96	-	4
Pollokshaws	125	1	19	St Stephen's	98	-	-
Dennistoun	133	-	36	West Leith	102	-	11
North Kelvin	135	-	-	St Andrew's	108	-	13
Partick East	141	-	16	Portobello	108	-	16
Partick West	141	5	17	Broughton	109	-	24
Blythswood	143	-	-				
Sandyford	143	3	14	Liberton	125	4	9
Govanhill	155	2	23	George Square	132	-	17
				Calton	135	5	21
Maryhill	175	8	18	South Leith	144	-	29
Fairfield	176	16	20	Gorgie	152	14	25
Springburn	176	18	-	Canongate	155	8	26
Townhead	176	10	15	St Leonard's	160	15	27
Woodside	176	14	12	St Giles'	162	8	15
Provan	178	14	-	Dalry	163	13	21
Shettleston	178	15	22	Central Leith	169	3	26
Kinning Park	184	7	27	North Leith	183	9	26
Ruchill	185	11	25				
Anderston	187	12	13				
Exchange	188	2	13				
Cowlairs	190	13	15				
Kingston	192	14	20				
Gorbals	194	18	13				
Whitevale	195	7	19				
Govan	201	15	21				
Calton	204	16	17				
Parkhead	207	17	21				
Cowcaddens	209	16	20				
Hutchesontown	229	18	-				
Mile End	238	18	19				
Dalmarnock	247	17	31				

Some of the best results for the SPL were achieved in Glasgow's middle class wards, whilst Edinburgh's militant Protestants fared best in the city's most working class areas. In both cities most victories came where the Labour presence was weak. As Labour success in Govanhill and Kinning Park came *after* the decline of the SPL, all

SPL victories except Dalmarnock, came where Moderatism was dominant. In Edinburgh, the left was weaker, dominating only three wards. In all three PA polled well, although only one (Gorgie) was taken. The other Protestant gains were in solidly Moderate or politically unpredictable wards. Whilst the SPL had a broad appeal extending into Glasgow's affluent suburbs, PA was largely limited to working class areas where Labour were poorly organised.

The 1930s also witnessed the acceleration of suburbanisation. Edinburgh and Glasgow's population rose by 5% between 1921-31, but in both cities population declined in older central areas and increased markedly on the suburban fringes. The SPL and PA mapped on to these changes differently. The SPL proved more popular in 'receiving' areas than in the declining inner city, whereas the reverse was true in Edinburgh. In large part this reflects the class differences already implied. Whilst the SPL could win a growing middle class suburb such as Cathcart, similar areas in Edinburgh were barren ground for PA. Where PA won ten of their eleven seats in Edinburgh's nine most working class wards, the SPL garnered only two victories in Glasgow's 22 most working class wards.

Ratcliffe himself believed the SPL vote benefited from disgruntled Moderates, although the evidence suggests a considerable proportion came from erstwhile Labour supporters²⁶. Distinct patterns are difficult to discern, but examination of individual ward results suggests that the SPL attracted votes from both right and left, including many former Moderates who had recently ceased to vote. In some working class wards, particularly those with an Orange tradition, the SPL was more likely to benefit at the expense of the Moderates. This seems to have been particularly true in parts of the East End, such as Dalmarnock in 1931, where the Moderates apparently haemorrhaged votes to the SPL. Across Glasgow as a whole, results suggest that a significant proportion of SPL voters had previously supported Labour, and that many others used the SPL as a stopping off point as they moved from Moderate to Labour²⁷. The pattern of PA support is also unclear, not least because the city's left

²⁶ Bruce (1985a)

²⁷ Bruce (1998:07) seems accurate in this respect.

was, in comparison to Glasgow, fairly undeveloped. Many PA voters were former Moderates, but PA success in the most working class wards suggests that they also attracted votes from the Left. Nowhere is the picture so confused as Central Leith where PA won a 1935 by-election apparently by taking Moderate votes. Subsequent elections in the ward make little sense unless there was tactical anti-PA voting. In 1935 and 1936 this benefited the sitting Moderate councillor, but in 1937 – perhaps because of the Moderate failure to hold the seat – Labour benefited. The only middle class ward to elect a PA councillor was Broughton where, in 1936, the defending Moderate was a Catholic, James Gorman. Labour supported Gorman by withdrawing and Moderates urged "Vote for Gorman and uphold the dignity of your city"²⁸. On a relatively stable poll, however, the Moderate vote dropped by around a quarter whilst the PA vote doubled. Many Labour voters, it might be assumed, had supported PA in the absence of their own candidate, a conclusion strengthened by the reduction in the PA vote when Labour reappeared in the ward the following year. In both cities, therefore, the Protestant vote was not simply drawn from disillusioned Moderates, but also from a substantial proportion of erstwhile Labour voters. In Glasgow a substantial number of voters appear to have shifted from Moderate to Labour, supporting the SPL for a year or so in between. It is difficult to find evidence of this in Edinburgh because no elections were held 1939-44.

A final factor regards turnout. Some Protestant candidates appear to have reaped the benefit of unusually high polls, and it is possible that many who either did not customarily vote, or who had recently ceased to vote, found a temporary home with the SPL or PA. However, Protestant success often contributed to a higher poll the next year, many tempted out to oppose the Protestants. In Edinburgh, five PA victories coincided with an increased poll, three with a stable poll, and two with a reduced poll. With the exception of South Leith, PA victories saw an increased poll and Protestant defeat the following year. The Glasgow picture is less clear as two seats were won in seats where Moderatism had previously won unopposed. Of the remaining victories, four coincided with an increased poll and only one with a

²⁸

EN 26/10/36; 02/11/36

reduced poll. Only once was SPL victory followed by a higher poll the next year and it worked against them.

The key effect of the intrusion of militant Protestant parties was an energising of local politics after a fairly dull period from the late 1920s. The 1933 election in Edinburgh was "sleepy and enervating"²⁹, with only ten wards contested and a turnout of 35%. The PA challenge in working class wards gave a vibrancy to later elections - in 1936 the poll had risen to 51% - and worked to Labour's long term benefit. If there was any doubt over the commitment of Edinburgh's Catholics to the left before 1934, there was none afterwards: in attacking the 'Catholic block-vote', PA ensured its heightened organisation and commitment to Labour. Apathy in Glasgow politics was lower and 55% polls were common. Between 1932-34, with the SPL at their most popular, the polls rose to 60%. The SPL, too, wedded Catholics more firmly to the left, and they pulled back from political apathy those disillusioned with the Moderates but not yet trusting Labour.

"WE HAVE ONLY ONE 'PLANK'..."

In a city so utterly dominated by Moderatism, the long term political impact of PA was slight, and its continued survival dependent on the illusion that it offered an effective alternative in working class wards. In 1934 Cormack insisted:

We have only one 'plank'. It is a comprehensive one. Wherever in the political life of our country, municipal or national, the Papist beast shows its head we must crush it or, at least, keep it in subjection. [PA] is composed of Protestants of every political party who want ... to defend our Protestant faith.³⁰

Such a 'plank' was of strictly limited value, but PA took care to make it seem relevant in specific locales. In slum clearance areas, for example, there were concerns over the future use of cleared land and over where people were to be re-housed. Clearance caused localised housing shortages and rent increases; landlords, including many leading Moderates, were thus accused of profiting from the failure of Corporation house-building schemes. PA emphasised these issues in North Leith in

²⁹ EN 08/11/33

1934, where defending Moderate Andrew Murray, “favoured the transfer of people from areas which were grossly overcrowded to other areas where they could have decent houses, sunshine, and pure air”³¹. With Labour and Moderate sharing this position, PA was well placed to benefit from those who feared their communities were being torn apart. Shopkeepers in clearance areas saw their customer base shrink, whilst those customers left behind were frequently unemployed and desperate. On such concerns PA focused their ‘plank’: the new Corporation houses on peripheral estates were disproportionately leased to Catholics; Labour was in thrall to the Catholic vote; Catholic managers and foremen ensured Catholics were given Corporation jobs. PA fought dirty, claiming that Murray was engaged to a Catholic and intended to convert, drawing him into the *Ne Temere* controversy. That the rumour was absolutely false, and that in 1935 PA claimed that Murray was linked to the anti-Catholic Hope Trust, illustrates their audacity. PA organised effective heckling in 1934 and 1935, their opponents facing incessant questioning on religious issues and jeers and catcalls when, and if, they replied. Many refused to address religion as they viewed it as irrelevant – such silence was represented by PA as evidence of “Popish intrigue in local affairs”³².

Such tactics were limited, with constructive policies inevitably demanded. This was precisely the problem that had faced Ratcliffe in Glasgow. The SPL whip was concerned only with religious issues, on others councillors voted as they pleased. Whilst the general tone of SPL policy was, for the *Glasgow Herald*, “essentially a socialist case wrapped up in the vestments of religion”³³, individual candidates adapted their policies to local audiences. The SPL was left without a political identity beyond anti-Catholicism. In 1934 one opponent argued that “the whole foundation of the SPL programme was to ‘Kick the Pope’, take that away and there is nothing left”, an accusation Ratcliffe accepted: “Yes we *do* kick the Pope! That *is* our job! That *is* our programme!”³⁴. The SPL cast around for controversies to exploit, and personalities to attack. In 1931 they tapped concern over Moderate austerity

³⁰ EN 12/10/34

³¹ EN 18/10/34

³² PA slogan 1934. EN 06/11/34

³³ GH 06/11/33

measures and the violence associated with the left. The 1931 elections followed unemployment riots and a "free fight" over budget cuts in the Council Chamber³⁵. Ratcliffe targeted Dennistoun and Partick East where Moderates were deeply split and appealed to Labour voters appalled at recent violence³⁶. Ratcliffe attacked Labour's "hot-headed policy" and Moderatism's "vacillating methods": "Representing on the one hand a thoughtless demand for the impossible, and on the other a narrow-minded ... and clannish effort to run civic affairs on party lines, the result of which has been incompetence and waste"³⁷.

A different approach was taken in Dalmarnock where a rowdy and violent campaign employed a notorious gang, the 'Billy Boys' as 'stewards'. "Respectable" and 'rough' elements of the SPL came together at a Partick rally where local youths surrounded the hall, outraged at the presence of the Bridgeton gang³⁸. The following year, Ratcliffe focussed on Labour's working class wards, particularly in the East End suggesting that he viewed Dalmarnock – rowdy campaigning and 'Kicking the Pope' - as the way forward. By 1933 Ratcliffe changed his mind and targeted Moderate seats, including those represented by Orange tinged councillors in working class wards. Relations with Orangeism were frosty and Ratcliffe targeted such councillors in 1933, claiming that: "During the two years I have been in the Glasgow Town Council, the Orange members in the Council have been struck dumb on every question pertaining to the Protestantism and Orangeism of Scotland"³⁹.

The change in focus was profitable, winning four seats, all from the Moderates in middle class wards. Another twelve Moderates were unseated by Labour/ILP where they would have won if they had taken the votes given to the SPL. However, it is doubtful they *would* have taken these votes. Many of the lost seats were originally won through anti-Government sentiment in 1930, and Moderate losses in 1933 were expected without the presence of the SPL. This was confirmed in 1934 when the SPL

³⁴ *Vanguard*, 29/09/34 quoted in Gallagher (1987a:155)

³⁵ GH 16/10/31. On riots see Chapter 4.

³⁶ *Scotsman* 20/05/31; GH 07/10/31; 14/10/31

³⁷ GH 30/10/31

³⁸ GH 02/11/31

³⁹ Bruce (1985a:53) quoting *Protestant Vanguard*.

was much weaker. Of the twelve Moderate seats lost to Labour in 1933, three were held by the Moderates in 1934, whilst Labour/ILP held three and gained six. In other words, without the complication of the SPL, Labour took Moderate seats in 1934.

However, with Labour taking over the administration of Glasgow in 1933, the SPL appeared as an obstacle to Moderate revival and in 1934 an electoral pact was agreed. This gave the SPL a clear run against Labour (and a claim on Moderate votes) in a number of wards, and seemed to assure Ratcliffe's successful defence of Dennistoun. For the Moderates, it ensured that the SPL would not continue to grow at their expense. The Moderates got the best of the deal: the SPL stood only five candidates, three in safe Labour wards. However, Matthew Armstrong, a long-standing Moderate with Orange connections, had lost Kingston in 1933 largely because of the SPL, and stood in Dennistoun as an Independent Moderate. Senior Moderates failed to dissuade Armstrong⁴⁰, and the left (excepting an Independent Communist) withdrew. The Orange Order endorsed both candidates, and Armstrong made contact with Catholic Union representatives in the ward. With the Glasgow press and many Glaswegian pulpits urging an anti-Ratcliffe vote, Armstrong won by 300 votes⁴¹.

Whilst the SPL seemed to be unsure of where its core support really lay, oscillating between centrist populism and 'Kicking the Pope', PA's programme remained consistently focused, seldom contesting middle class wards and canvassing working class enclaves in those they did. PA claimed to be a "worker's party", attacking Labour for offering "a half-hearted, craven, jelly-fish Communism"⁴², and demanded public works to boost employment and a religious census of Corporation employees. Success hinged on the fact that Edinburgh as a whole escaped the worst ravages of the Depression and did not qualify for Special Area Assistance. Thus, deprived pockets of the city felt doubly burdened – ignored by both Westminster and the ruling Moderates. Leith had particular grievances after its 1920 amalgamation with

⁴⁰ See *Forward*, 20/10/34

⁴¹ Bruce (1985a:57); Gallagher (1987a:156)

⁴² EN 21/03/35

Edinburgh, a measure Edinburgh pursued with some arrogance⁴³. Leith was acutely sensitive to economic crisis, its dockworkers suffering particularly high levels of unemployment⁴⁴. In the mid-1930s Leith contained 19% of Edinburgh's population and 25% of its total unemployed, over a third of those 'temporarily stopped', and 90% of those 'normally in casual employment'⁴⁵. 1930s Leith was an unemployment blackspot without political influence. As one Leither complained:

It is well known that Leith is one of the most distressed areas ... but the port cannot be classified as such nor be given any special benefits because of her misfortune in being amalgamated with Edinburgh ... Edinburgh and Leith are rather like Dives and Lazarus, Dives being utterly indifferent to the sores and pains of Lazarus at his gate. Dives does not want to be bothered or interrupted in his pleasures, and so he shuts his eyes to the misery so near by.⁴⁶

PA harnessed such resentment, winning in three of four Leith wards and the Port became the heart of the Protestant movement. Although PA's offices were in central Edinburgh, its 'social offices', running games' nights, mother and toddler and pensioner groups, were in Leith. Yet only a decade before, in the 1925 Education elections, the SPL failed miserably in Leith, taking 481 votes across the entire Port⁴⁷. In 1936 PA was Leith's most popular party, taking 9,438 votes, 41% of the total. This remarkable turn around in militant Protestantism's appeal in Leith suggests that anti-Catholicism was less important than more secular, and time specific, issues.

PA appealed to sections of the working class who felt unappreciated by both Labour and Moderate. The SPL also attracted those who saw neither established municipal party as representing their aspirations, but were rather more successful amongst the lower middle class. Marshall's explanation of militant Protestantism is of limited value applied to the SPL, but accurate for PA:

⁴³ 75% of Leith electors opposed amalgamation in a postal ballot whilst Edinburgh Council argued it would "be no great hardship ... to surrender the sentiment of being a Leith citizen in favour of the sentiment of being a citizen of the Scottish Capital" – Town Clerk of Edinburgh (1919:24). Similar Acts expanded Glasgow (1912) and Dundee (1913) over local opposition.

⁴⁴ 32% of insured dockworkers across the UK were registered unemployed in 1935. *Board of Trade* (1939:142-143)

⁴⁵ *EN* 07/11/33; 08/09/36

⁴⁶ Letter to *EN*, 14/2/35

⁴⁷ See Chapter 6

[Their] success was essentially a reaction to the disillusionment many people felt at the inability of the existing and traditional parties to deal effectively with their problems. Ordinary people at the sharp end of economic recession are not often interested in the myriad and complex issues surrounding their plight, they simply want something done about it, and fast.⁴⁸

"THE YOUNG FELLOWS"

A number of authors have regarded PA as a 'fascist' organisation, given their scapegoating of Catholics and their use of violence⁴⁹. This is a poor analysis. Firstly, inter-war fascist movements glorified violence in a manner that PA or the SPL never did. Secondly, most militants at the time rejected fascism as a *Catholic* doctrine. It did not escape their notice that fascism arose in Catholic Southern Europe, and all the Edinburgh groups took an explicitly anti-fascist stance when Mosley's BUF organised in the city. This opposition was not simply rhetorical – PA posed the question "Fascism *or* Protestantism. *Which?*" – the BUF was physically attacked by PA supporters⁵⁰. PA's anti-fascism was largely 'theological', in that they viewed fascism as 'Catholic' but they also viewed Mosley (with some justification) as 'pro-Irish'⁵¹. Neither was PA characterised by anti-Semitism: indeed one of its councillors, Esta Henry, was Jewish. Henry was a Canongate jeweller who had been a Moderate Parish councillor in 1928 and an unsuccessful municipal candidate during the early 1930s. In 1936 Henry stood as an Independent in Canongate, but, largely through expedience, joined PA before the poll. Henry remained within the PA orbit until *c.*1938, and her adoption brings into question PA's claims to be '100% Protestant'. Ratcliffe derided Henry's candidature and was to come to see Jews, rather than Catholics, as the greatest threat to Protestant liberty. The only *substantial* link one can make between Scottish militant Protestantism and fascism during the inter-war period is Ratcliffe's late decline into Hitler-worship⁵².

⁴⁸ Marshall (1996:143)

⁴⁹ For example, "neo-fascist thugs", Damer (1997:191), "the fascistic Cormack". Calder (1989:20), "fascist connections and racist sympathies", Williams & Walls (2000:233)

⁵⁰ See *EN* 03/03/34; 21/06/34.

⁵¹ See McFarland (1990:217)

⁵² See Holmes (1989)

If militant Protestantism did not share fascism's exaltation of violence, it did see violence as a legitimate strategy. Whilst Williamson is right to caution that "it is easy to concentrate on the more colourful elements of the SPL, but they were never more than a minor inconvenience to the Catholic community"⁵³, the SPL was involved in violent incidents. One Dalmarnock election meeting "was the scene of panic" as violence flared, and was followed promptly by "Uproar in Partick" as the gang-connections of the SPL backfired⁵⁴. In 1935, seven were arrested as "running fights" disrupted an SPL meeting⁵⁵. However, the SPL did not adopt physical confrontation as a deliberate strategy and neither was it adept at producing public spectacle. In 1931 "several thousands" protested against a Corporation reception for the Catholic Young Men's Society (CYMS). The protest coincided with an Empire Day rally of Young Unionists, and the end effect was that the Unionist day was ruined. Disrupting remembrance of the City's war-dead was hardly a positive outcome for a party espousing 'loyalty', and this seems to have been the first and last SPL mass demonstration in Glasgow. Undoubtedly Ratcliffe had an eye for controversy but lacked the manipulative skill to turn them to his advantage. A visit to Fauldhouse in 1935 resulted in thirteen arrests after what was "according to the Procurator Fiscal ... nothing short of a riot". The court clearly disagreed, feeling that the SPL had provoked violent opposition, and all thirteen were admonished⁵⁶.

It is with PA that violence is most often associated. Various events during what Gallagher terms "The Hot Summer of 1935" have been described as "riots"⁵⁷. PA was fortunate that its rise coincided with a number of high profile Catholic events in the city. Such events were by no means a recent development in Edinburgh: in 1929 Catholics celebrated the installation of Archbishop McDonald and the Emancipation Centenary. The city authorities attended McDonald's consecration, after which the clergy walked in procession "witnessed by large crowds"⁵⁸, and the Centenary saw a public procession of 2,000 Catholic children whose "distinctive banners and flags

⁵³ Williamson (1998:25)

⁵⁴ Two were hospitalised at Dalmarnock; and the 'Billy Boys' left Partick "amidst a hail of bottles, stones and iron bars". *GH* 31/10/31; 03/11/31

⁵⁵ *EN* 19/08/35

⁵⁶ See Bruce (1985a:72); *EN* 13/07/35; 30/07/35; 16/08/35

⁵⁷ Gallagher (1987b:35); G.Walker (1995:75); Knox (1999:201); Tom Devine, *Herald* 18/07/98

attracted considerable attention"⁵⁹. Such public displays of Catholic faith drew no notable protest and throughout the early 1930s Catholics held regular meetings at the Usher Hall and smaller venues without harassment from militant Protestants⁶⁰.

It was 1934 before militants organised successful protests against Catholicism's Edinburgh activities; EPS demonstrators heckled a Catholic speaker and then walked out of the Usher Hall⁶¹. On the same day PA complained over a BBC broadcast from a Catholic Church, a programme cancelled when "it was found that the microphone wires had been 'mysteriously' severed"⁶². In May 1934 there was a "melee" between the EPS and Catholics at the Mound after which James Graham was prosecuted⁶³. These were isolated events with no other Catholic function disrupted before 1935⁶⁴. It was a planned Council reception for the CYMS which ignited the sectarian issue, and PA benefited from Catholic plans for a Eucharistic Congress in Morningside⁶⁵. Eucharistic Congresses had already proved controversial in the British Isles. In 1908, a procession of the Host in London was cancelled after its legality was placed in doubt, and in 1932 De Valera used the Dublin Congress to publicly snub the United Kingdom⁶⁶. PA could hardly have wished for a better political opportunity than a Catholic display of strength and devotion in an affluent suburb.

From its electoral debut PA had a reputation for roughness, with Labour activists complaining in 1935 that "they could make no progress against rowdyism, even at outdoor meetings". Cormack retorted, "why squeal now when the same medicine is administered to themselves, which they loved to administer to their opponents"⁶⁷.

⁵⁸ *EN* 24/09/29; *Scotsman* 25/09/29

⁵⁹ *EN* 15/10/29; *Scotsman* 16/10/29

⁶⁰ The larger Catholic rallies featured Hilaire Belloc (25/10/30); Cardinal Bourne (06/06/31); Bishop Henry Graham (04/03/33)

⁶¹ *EN & Evening Dispatch* 01/02/34

⁶² *Evening Dispatch*, 01/02/34. The report clearly implicates (the as then unknown) PA.

⁶³ Graham was fined £3 for assault. A similar charge against George Ballantine, future PA councillor, was not proven. *EN* 14/05/34; 23/05/34; 05/06/34; 06/06/34

⁶⁴ On well publicised – and well attended – meetings with no reported disruption see, *EN* 01/11/34; 17/11/34; 08/12/34; 05/01/35; 09/02/35; 11/02/35; 23/03/35

⁶⁵ *EN* 28/03/35. There is no evidence, as Bruce (1985a:89) and Calder (1989:20) suggest, that the Church planned a procession along Princes Street.

⁶⁶ On London see Chapter 4 and Machin (1983); on Dublin see P.Murray (2000), *Times* 18-24/06/32

⁶⁷ *EN* 24-25/04/35

Certainly PA's *electoral* tactics during 1934-35 were no more violent than Labour tactics in some areas during the General Election of 1935, and considerably less so than Labour's Parliamentary campaign in Leith in 1929⁶⁸. PA did, however, see violent physical confrontation as a useful propaganda tool. Addressing the Usher Hall, Cormack warned that Edinburgh would learn "what a real 'smash up' was" if the CYMS reception went ahead. Supporters were urged to mobilise "even if for nothing else but to cry 'No Popery'", and told in an aside that "they could leave the other part of the business to the young fellows"⁶⁹. PA demonstrations that summer were large and boisterous – 10,000 gathered for the CYMS protest, and 10,000 for the main anti-Congress demonstration - although many were attracted by curiosity rather than active anti-Catholicism. These events have been described as "the most violent anti-Catholic riots seen in Scotland this century"⁷⁰, yet they seem to have been characterised by noisy confusion not physical violence. The CYMS protest "passed without any serious developments", although there was a brief confrontation in the Cowgate which "blew over quickly". Three arrests were made, two of drunken opponents of PA⁷¹. As the Congress approached, PA focused its campaign on its closing Mass at St Andrew's Priory, Morningside. No protest was planned for the first two Congress days. On the opening day of the Congress Cormack arranged a rally at the Usher Hall, drawing his followers away from premature confrontation. There were, however, some minor clashes on Princes Street that evening, and PA quickly announced a demonstration for the *second* day, against a rally of Catholic women. Gallagher is wrong to claim that "A suitable opportunity for venting hate did not present itself until ... the second day of the Congress"⁷², rather it seems that Cormack preferred to focus on the final day but was overtaken by events. Notably this was the only major PA protest at which Cormack was not present, suggesting that he was not entirely happy with the fairly impromptu arrangements.

⁶⁸ Liberal MP Ernest Brown had a torrid time at the hands of Labour supporters in 1929, and ironically his then opponent, Alex Paton, became a fierce critic of PA tactics see *EN* 23-24/05/29; *Scotsman* 28/05/29. On the Left's acceptance of electoral 'ruffianism' from their own supporters see *New Statesman and Nation*, 09/11/35

⁶⁹ See *EN* 18/04/35; *Scotsman* 27/04/35. The statement was reported to the Procurator Fiscal but was ambiguous enough for no further action.

⁷⁰ Tom Devine, *Herald* 18/07/98

⁷¹ *Scotsman & EN* 29/04/35

⁷² Gallagher (1987b:49)

This protest, involving around 1,500 demonstrators, proved to be the most violent with outbreaks of fighting, although “the situation never got out of hand”. Eleven arrests were made and nine men subsequently convicted, the court imposing harsher sentences than previously handed down for ‘sectarian’ offences⁷³. All of the men were working class by occupation and residence, and two – convicted of fighting each other – were next door neighbours in Prestonfield. The following day was very tense, yet the Police seemed remarkably unprepared for the size of the crowds in Morningside. Around 10,000 Catholics attended the Mass, and 10,000 more gathered outside, to demonstrate or to spectate⁷⁴. Nevertheless, the evening did not produce much in the way of violence. Several buses carrying Catholics were stoned but these were isolated cases on the fringes of an evening marked by confusion⁷⁵. Cormack spent the evening desperately trying to keep the crowd under his leadership, and the image of a Priory besieged by demonstrators is inaccurate. Some priests left the Priory *unaware* of the presence of protestors⁷⁶. One Catholic recalls that protestors “were cordoned off by a fairly strong contingent of police” and that “there were no major incidents of violence to mar the day”. He recalls, however, that there was a large degree of tension and that:

The atmosphere was not calmed by the presence of a group of [Catholic] men who set up camp in the grounds as self-appointed guardians that weekend, and armed themselves with a strange assortment of items to serve as clubs. Fortunately their martial arts were not called upon.⁷⁷

The *News* praised the “peaceful persuasion’ of the Police who kept in check those who would have hoped “to create serious trouble on a large scale”. Indeed the night

⁷³ *Scotsman* 25/06/35; *EN* 26/06/35 Graham had been fined £3 in 1934 for *assault*, those convicted after the CYMS protest were fined £1 (or 7 days) for *breach of the peace*: those convicted for (sometimes minor) offences during the Congress were fined £10 (or 30 days).

⁷⁴ Some estimates – Calder (1989) suggests 35-40,000 protestors and 30,000 Catholics – are preposterous. The numbers quoted are from *Scotsman*, *EN* & *Evening Dispatch* 26/06/35

⁷⁵ Priests were asked to report their experiences to Fr. Michael Bruce at St Peter’s, Morningside – see SCA DE162/51-52. Three priests reported separate incidents of stoning, resulting in minor cuts, bruises and shock. Press reports suggest at least two other incidents.

⁷⁶ See SCA DE162/51

⁷⁷ Letter from Abbot Alban Boulwood OSB, Washington DC, to Michael Turnbull, June 1999. I am very grateful to both for permission to cite their correspondence.

yielded only four arrests, all involved in the stoning of a bus. The four were heavily fined and warned that a subsequent conviction would see them jailed⁷⁸.

Small scale confrontation continued throughout the summer. One of the worst incidents saw "angry scenes ... scuffles and blows" between PA supporters and Canongate Catholics. Police dispersed the crowd and PA regrouped for a St. Leonard's meeting where further violence broke out involving a recently formed Catholic Vigilance Association (CVA)⁷⁹. The CVA had gone to the assistance of a priest, caught on the outskirts of the PA meeting, and one of its number was seriously assaulted. In response to the CVA Cormack announced the formation of "A Real Vigilance Association": Cormack's Kaledonian Klan⁸⁰. Much has been made of the 'K's', but it would appear that they did not exist as a 'paramilitary' force, as some have claimed, but rather as a grand title for Cormack's 'young fellows'. The name was a conscious reference to the North American Klan as well as a sneering reference to an obscure and short-lived Ratcliffe 'bodyguard', the Knights of Kaledonia Klan⁸¹. Although the 'K's' were never seriously organised, Cormack's homage to the North American Klan - who in the inter-war period were characterised primarily by their urban focus and their anti-Catholicism rather than rural racism⁸² - has fuelled claims that PA was 'fascist'. Several weeks after the St. Leonard's clash nine were remanded without bail after a fracas at an Abbeyhill dance hall, in which "Cormack's bodyguard" was implicated⁸³. A study of the local press - which frequently reported 'sectarian' disturbances in the city - between April and December 1935 suggests that a total of 38 criminal charges were brought in connection with such incidents⁸⁴. Almost half of the charges (18) related to violence in Abbeyhill dance halls where Leith PA supporters clashed with Southside youths, many of whom were Catholic. Whilst this total undoubtedly underestimates the number of disturbances in the city during the high point of religious tension, it does

⁷⁸ Again the sentence was £10 or 30 days. *EN* 26/06/35; *Scotsman* 27/06/35

⁷⁹ McDonald insisted that the CVA should comprise only practising Catholics and should be "non-aggressive". Press reports suggest CVA activists chafed at this second rule. *EN* 01/08/35

⁸⁰ *EN* 01 & 03/08/35

⁸¹ Bruce (1985a:73)

⁸² On Klan anti-Catholicism see K.T.Jackson (1967); Moore (1991); Calderwood (1972)

⁸³ *EN* 17/08/35; 21/08/35; 24/08/35

⁸⁴ Around two-thirds appear to have been Protestants.

suggest that the extent of the disorder has been exaggerated. PA's physical presence on the Edinburgh streets was also a brief phenomenon. In North Leith, during the 1936 election, PA speakers were drowned out by opponents who "kept up a continual barracking by the singing of Irish songs", an affront PA was not strong enough to overcome⁸⁵.

REJECTING THE MILITANTS

One reason for the exaggeration of PA violence is the shock experienced in a city relatively unused to 'sectarian' controversy. Catholics were shaken by the turn of events in a city where, until very recently, their activities were rarely criticised, let alone physically challenged. Archbishop McDonald had considered cancelling the Congress, but was persuaded that it would not be disrupted⁸⁶. McDonald subsequently wrote to the Scottish Office complaining that the fact that "a riot ... did not actually take place" was due only to Police action "deserving of the highest commendation" and the "commendable self-restraint" of Catholics. He further urged that steps be taken against PA's "incitement to violence"⁸⁷. McDonald was furious at press reports of "minor disturbances" largely "confined to the lower elements", insisting there had been "a serious riot" in Morningside (contradicting his earlier view); that Catholic feelings were ignored; and that stern action was required⁸⁸. The scale of the violence was rapidly magnified by the absence, in McDonald's view, of an adequately wide and sympathetic recognition of the Catholic experience.

The publicly expressed commendation of the Police masked private concerns about non-Catholic indifference to, or even sympathy for, Cormack's protests. These concerns were echoed by Gallagher:

The fact that no major Edinburgh institution such as the Kirk, the police, or the press took a major stand against Cormack or consistently sought to deflect

⁸⁵ EN 15/10/36

⁸⁶ See letters from McDonald to Sir William Thomson, Lord Provost, 05/05/35, and from Sir Godfrey Collins, Secretary of State to McDonald, 15/05/35 in Scottish Catholic Archives (SCA) DE 162/49/1-2

⁸⁷ McDonald to Collins, 16/07/35 SCA DE 162/49/4

⁸⁸ See reports and McDonald's responses in *Times* 06 & 14/08/35; *Spectator* 09 & 16/08/35

public opinion away from him ... causes apprehension even at a distance of fifty years.⁸⁹

In fact a number of institutions *were* consistent in their hostility to PA. Edinburgh's Lord Provost publicly warned Cormack before the CYMS protest that "the whole power at the disposal of the authorities" would deal with "any disturbance" and that the authorities would "not be intimidated", a message repeated before the Congress⁹⁰. Edinburgh's press was implacably hostile, the dailies taking a firm stance against militant Protestantism even before its electoral debut. Whilst PA notices were still accepted and PA activities reported, the press consistently editorialised against them. The Courts treated those convicted of sectarian offences particularly harshly: convictions after PA demonstrations during 1935 drew fines of £10 (with an option of 30 days gaol), much more punitive than sentences for more serious charges without sectarian motivation. There is also evidence that the Courts were lenient towards Catholics provoked by militant Protestants⁹¹. The authorities were hampered by the fact that Cormack was adept at stretching the limits of the law and were concerned that a Court appearance, far from chastening Cormack, would afford him publicity. These concerns were well-founded. In 1936 James Graham and another PPS figure were convicted of breach of the peace, the Sheriff noting that "The time had arrived when the authorities must take up a firm attitude and put down these disturbances"⁹². Charges against PA leaders were unexpectedly preferred six weeks after a protest against a Catholic meeting, the delay suggesting the authorities were encouraged by the lack of interest in Graham's prosecution. Cormack's trial, however, opened amid "extraordinary scenes", and interest remained high throughout the case. The charges were relatively innocuous – breach of the peace – and the fines unremarkable (£1 each with an additional £20 surety for good behaviour on Cormack), the intention clearly being to warn PA over its future conduct. Cormack, however, revelled in the publicity and refused to pay⁹³. He was subsequently arrested but spent only one night in prison, a supporter having paid the

⁸⁹ Gallagher (1987b:187)

⁹⁰ *Scotsman* 26/04/35; *EN* 10/06/35

⁹¹ See cases reported *EN* 01/08/35; 06/11/35

⁹² *EN* 30/01/36; 22/02/36 *Evening Dispatch* 10/03/36

⁹³ *Evening Dispatch* 25 & 27.03.36; *EN* 14.02.36; 08/04/36; 11/05/36

surety against Cormack's wishes⁹⁴. The authorities may well have thought that Cormack's popularity was on the wane, but the Court case did him no harm and later in 1936 PA hit their electoral peak. The case does seem, however, to have been a deliberate attempt to curb PA activities.

No mainstream religious figure publicly supported PA, nor indeed the SPL. Only three clerics supported PA: Rev. Percival Prescott, an independent evangelical; Rev. James Trainer, an independent evangelical who had links with, but was not a minister of, the UFC; and Rev. George Goodman, a student pastor with the UFC who broke his PA links when given a charge at Dysart⁹⁵. All of the other 'religious' figures associated with PA were lay evangelical preachers⁹⁶. To some extent the initial Kirk reaction was that PA was not 'their' problem: their ministers were not involved, and PA supporters were regarded as 'unchurched' and religiously ignorant. Presbyterians did, however, express their disgust with PA in the press and within the Edinburgh Presbytery⁹⁷. An outright condemnation not only of PA but of "Our Attitude to the Church of Rome" was written by leading Kirk figure Rev. W.M. McGregor and published as the leading article in the CoS magazine *Life & Work* in September 1935. The article warned: "if Protestantism can be vindicated only in such ways, its day is nearly done", and claimed that in the face of "a rising tide of paganism both in faith and morals": "It is not inconceivable that some day all who call Jesus Lord may be driven to stand together, acknowledging and assisting one another, in order to save the nation from the deluge"⁹⁸.

The significance of McGregor's article must be emphasised. Here was the Principal of the CoS, condemning militant Protestantism *and* the Presbyterian anti-Irish campaign in the Kirk's flagship publication. To some extent it was a sobering warning to those attempting to revive the anti-Irish campaign that they were providing succour to disreputable militants. The following month the Edinburgh CoS

⁹⁴ Gallagher (1987b:128)

⁹⁵ Goodman served at Dysart until 1945. Trainer became a South Leith councillor, and the provenance of his ecclesiastical title remains unknown. I am indebted to John Fulton, UFC General Secretary, for information relating to these two men.

⁹⁶ This fits well with the argument developed in Bruce (1986)

⁹⁷ E.g. *Scotsman* 27/06/35; *EN* 18/07/35

Presbytery noted that recent events "had caused much heart-searching and deep concern to many of their people" and rejected as "fundamentally unchristian": "all methods of violence, all interference with personal freedom, and every word and action which expressed the spirit of hatred". In 1936 Edinburgh UFC Presbytery, whilst remaining critical of "Romish error", unanimously denounced PA as "unworthy of our religion and injurious to its good name"⁹⁹. In short, press, civic authorities and mainstream Presbyterians *did* oppose PA and attempted to deflect opinion away from them. That they did not oppose them *more* might well be explained by the belief, perhaps a prescient one, that PA was riding on an outburst of socio-economic anxiety "mass hysteria, as experience shows, dies away as quickly as it arises"¹⁰⁰.

CONCLUSION

Much has been made of the brief popularity of militant Protestant parties during the 1930s. Most analyses, however, have focused on their sensational and violent aspects and not on the underlying basis of what was, essentially, a brief moment of electoral protest. At its peak, militant Protestantism attracted 23% of the vote in Glasgow, and 31% in Edinburgh, and this has hitherto received less analysis than it merits. Militant Protestantism reveals all the paradox of populist politics – by necessity they were outsiders, and their distance from the discredited policies of the established left and right parties in municipal politics was central to their appeal. The electoral pact in Glasgow, however, stripped the SPL of any sense of offering an alternative. The rapid decline of the SPL in a city that has long been associated with religious division was remarkable, and illustrates the underlying shallowness of the *political* aspect of such division. Put simply, anti-Catholicism was not strong enough to sustain a Glasgow party at municipal level even in the polarised 1930s. Edinburgh offers a quite different insight because it did not have a strong tradition of religious division. What makes Edinburgh so enigmatic is that the extent of violence has been historically magnified by the fact that Edinburgh's Catholics were simply stunned by the rise of PA. Their surprise illustrates how marginal organised anti-Catholicism

⁹⁸ *Life & Work*, September 1935

⁹⁹ *EN* 02/10/35; *Evening Dispatch* 05/03/36

had been in Edinburgh throughout the first three decades of the twentieth Century. Yet much of Edinburgh's working class, frustrated at their lack of political representation in a relatively prosperous city dominated by Moderatism, turned to a party whose only 'plank' was crushing the 'Papist Beast'. PA polarised Edinburgh politics, and inadvertently galvanised a hitherto ineffectual left, rapidly undermining the very basis of its own appeal.

Whilst the success of militant Protestantism in municipal politics reveals the existence of a strong cultural divide between Scotland's urban Catholics and Protestants during the inter-war period, it also reveals its strict political limitations. In the realm of Parliamentary, educational, and municipal politics, anti-Catholic sentiment was too ephemeral to provide the ideological basis for successful political organisation. On the surface PA, SPL and OPP; the election of Hugh Ferguson; and the Presbyterian anti-Irish campaign, suggest the vibrancy of anti-Catholic politics in inter-war Scotland. In fact, they are the proof of the marginality of religious particularism in Scottish politics. Unlike Northern Ireland there were no major secular cleavages in Scottish society which dovetailed with ethnic or religious cleavages. In Ulster, conservative Protestantism operated as a 'sacred canopy' under which Protestants united in defence of their economic and political interests. In Scotland, the key issue was class, and here Labour provided a 'secular canopy' within which individuals of all religions and none found their economic interests represented. Whilst the 'Kirk's disgrace' did try to weld national and 'sectarian' interests together, it lacked support and remained within the confines of the General Assemblies. To a large extent the 1920s and 1930s saw the final kick, rather than the peak, of 'Protestantism before Politics' populism. The OPP was a short-lived failure without legacy, and the SPL and PA - strictly limited by time and location - ultimately served to strengthen Labour. The limitations of the militant Protestant vote confirmed what the Unionist/Moderate elite already knew - 'Protestantism before Politics' was political fantasy.

CONCLUSION

“REALITY IS ALWAYS A LITTLE MORE COMPLEX”

This study has sought to demonstrate that Scotland is not a ‘sectarian’ society, at least when that term is used as an analytical concept rather than a pejorative description. Scotland is an increasingly secular country and although religion remains important to many Scots, it does not provide a significant marker of political and social cleavage. Nor did it represent such a line of cleavage at what is usually taken to be the key period of modern sectarianism. In the impoverished and polarised 1920s and 1930s religious conflicts were localised and ephemeral. They were, to all intents and purposes, epiphenomenal to broader, secular, cleavages and conflicts in Scottish society. One crucial question, then, remains. Why is it that religious division – or, in the popular lexicon, ‘sectarianism’ - has emerged as a controversial topic at the end of the twentieth century? Why, when religion is declining in its social significance, when the relations between churches tend towards the warmly ecumenical, should questions of ‘sectarianism’ excite the minds of both the media and the academy? In a sense, the current debate over religious conflict is a lacklustre echo of the more polarised grievances of the inter-war period, which themselves invoked a mythical religious past in response to a moment of national crisis. The present debate has proved even more ephemeral. To some degree the *actual* religious conflicts of the inter-war decades were prompted by fears over the ‘End of Scotland’, concern that Scotland’s day as a distinctive and identifiable national community were over. In contrast, late twentieth century debate over *perceived* religious conflicts is prompted by the ‘rebirth of Scotland’. With constitutional change and the establishment of the Scottish Parliament, the Scots are confronted by questions of identity: Who are the Scots; where are we going; where have we been?

The relative recentness of the debate on religious conflict in modern Scotland might be gauged from a chronology of academic literature. In the forty years between Handley’s *Irish in Modern Scotland* (1947) and Bruce’s *No Pope of Rome* (1985), books concerned with ‘sectarianism’ were remarkably thin on the ground. Since then, and particularly during the 1990s, there have been a number of works

specifically or secondarily concerned with religious division¹. Some of this research has begun with the assumption that 'sectarianism' has been brushed under the carpet, "shoved to the side, perhaps out of embarrassment, perhaps out of a belief that it has gone away" or perhaps to "Let [anti-Catholic] sleeping dogs lie"². There is, of course, another possibility, one supported by this study. The absence of a debate, and of an academic literature, on religious conflict stems from the fact that such conflict has been episodic, localised, and relatively insignificant. To claim that religious conflict is relatively insignificant is not to deny its existence, or its localised impact, only to argue that when placed beside other conflicts - over class, over gender, between generations - it pales in historical and contemporary significance. If religious conflict did not command the attention of Scottish academic enquiry in the 1950s or 1960s (when Scotland was a more religious society) it was because it was seen, and rightly so, as marginal to the important issues of Scottish life. For sure, it was not marginal to the victims or perpetrators of religious bigotry (Protestant, Catholic or otherwise), but, at a *societal* level, religious conflict has been virtually absent in the Scottish twentieth century. Why, then, the debate at the secularised end of the twentieth century?

Much of the debate is marked by reference to a vaguely-defined 'sectarian' past. For some commentators, for example, the lack of contemporary evidence for economic discrimination suggests that the discrimination which 'used to happen' has simply found new homes. If it happened in the past, goes the logic, we should assume it is happening today, albeit in different, and residual, forms. Reilly, who draws heavily on notions of a virulent anti-Catholic Scotland in the past and (marginally less so) in the present, sees little to celebrate in the decline of religious bigotry in the Scottish labour market. For Reilly this decline was driven by the rise of credentialism and the shift of ownership to the multinational company. He notes: "A man, your sworn enemy from birth, attacks you every time you meet. One day you come across him wearing a straitjacket. It's a relief not to be attacked, but has he changed or do you

¹ Handley (1947); Bruce (1985a, 1998); Gallagher (1987a; 1987b); McFarland (1990); Walker & Gallagher (1990); Devine [ed] (1991 & 2000); I.S. Wood [ed.] (1994) Bradley (1995e); G. Walker (1995); Marshall (1996); Boyle & Lynch [eds] (1998); M. Mitchell (1998); Devine & MacMillan [eds] (1999)

owe it to the straitjacket?” This metaphor rests on two assumptions: that anti-Catholicism was a key characteristic of Scotland in the past (and embedded in the structure and culture of the Scottish economy); and that it survives in Scotland, albeit constrained by the new structural realities of the labour market. Anti-Catholicism has declined “Not in the souls of men but in the world of business”³. The present existence of anti-Catholicism in the Scottish Protestant soul, therefore, is ‘proved’ by Scotland’s anti-Catholic past. Yet this is a view not supported by this study. Anti-Catholicism was not a defining part of the polarised Scotland of the 1920s and 1930s. Although it is beyond the scope of the present study, there is also evidence that neither was anti-Catholicism a defining feature of earlier eras in Scottish history⁴.

Dissenting voices have only recently begun to emerge from within Scottish Catholicism, criticising such appeals to the ‘sectarian bad old days’. Historian Bernard Aspinwall argues that Reilly and others, “the self-appointed guardians of Catholicism”, are “stuck in their Tardis around 1939, crying wolf or barking up the wrong tree at some imaginary threat”⁵. He argues that the “myth” of a socially isolated Catholic ghetto has proved a “political tool” for various elements within the Catholic Church and Catholic community, “a device to sustain a particular world-view”. For Aspinwall, “Reality is always a little more complex”⁶. Another historian, Owen Dudley Edwards, also finds much to criticise in the current debate, viewing James MacMillan’s “catalogue of grievances ... as bitter as it is archaic”. To Edwards, MacMillan’s Festival speech – drawing as it did on the arguments of Reilly – looked “like the launch of a lobby, and a pretty solipsistic, self-centred one at that”⁷. This directly links the MacMillan debate – and much of the current literature on religious division – to contemporary political events. The establishment of the Scottish Parliament has redrawn the political map and brought certain issues of concern to the Churches – most obviously Catholic education – under the control of

² Lynch (2000:253); Reilly (2000:30)

³ Reilly (2000:33)

⁴ M. Mitchell (1998)

⁵ Aspinwall (2000a:105)

⁶ Aspinwall (2000b:65);(2000a:105)

⁷ O.D.Edwards (2000:5,12)

Scottish politicians. What is interesting is that the launching of a political lobby – if it amounted to such – by certain Catholic figures, largely to protect the present system of Catholic schools, was a failure. MacMillan may have provoked debate over ‘sectarianism’ in Scotland, but it was a short-lived and unfocused debate, unable to sustain itself. Notably there was, and is, no identifiably ‘Protestant’ or ‘secular’ lobby in opposition to, or in competition with, this Catholic caucus. Indeed, this might be extended to the academic debate more generally. Whilst it is possible to discern a ‘Catholic’ perspective in research on Scotland’s religious divisions, it is much more difficult to identify ‘Protestant’ or ‘non-religious’ perspectives. In politics, and in the academy, there is no symmetry on this issue, whether between Protestant and Catholic, or indeed ‘religious’ and ‘secular’, perspectives.

Such were the immediate political factors surrounding the emergence of a debate on religious division. Another factor was at work, however, operating on a deeper and more subtle level. The debate on constitutional change in Scotland focused on issues of self-government, self-determination, Home Rule. The *self* and the *Home* here were national – Scottish/Scotland – and raised difficult questions. Home Rule for *whom*: who are *we*? The debate on religious division thus fed into, and off, a broader debate around Scottish national identity. Indeed MacMillan opened his speech on a deceptively positive note, immediately locating his lecture within the context of the Parliament, officially opened the previous month:

There is a palpable sense of optimism in Scotland at this time. Women and men of goodwill detect that the circumstances are ripe with opportunity and challenge. The arrival of our new devolved parliament, the latest step in the nation’s desire to slake its thirst for democracy, seems providential in its timing on the eve of the new millennium.

Further, MacMillan argued that: “If Scotland is ever to establish a genuinely pluralistic democracy where differences are not just recognised and respected but celebrated, nurtured and absorbed for the greater good, we will first have to clear a seemingly insurmountable hurdle”. This hurdle was Scotland’s “endemic” anti-Catholicism, part of “a very Scottish trait – a desire to narrow and to restrict the

definition of what it means to be Scottish”⁸. MacMillan claimed his speech was made “in the new spirit of inclusiveness, [because] no part of Scottish society should feel less than fully involved in the ‘new Scotland’”⁹.

Benedict Anderson defined the nation as “an imagined political community”: “Regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship”¹⁰. Notions of social cleavage – whether on religious lines or otherwise – might imply defects in, or limitations to, this comradeship¹¹. Indeed much of the debate around social inclusion stems in part to who shares in the comradeship of the nation. Central to ideas, to imaginings, of the nation is belonging: but who belongs, who is other? National identity represents a *claim* about belonging, whether of oneself or of another, dependent upon “identity markers”:

those characteristics of an individual that they might present to others to support their national identity claim [and] those characteristics that people use to *attribute* national identity to others, and to *receive* claims and attributions made by others.¹²

Kiely *et al* found that such claims, attributions and receipts in terms of Scottish (and English) identity “are usually based on various combinations of the basic markers of birth, ancestry, residence, upbringing and commitment, backed up by other markers”¹³. Here the alleged ‘Scottish equation’ noted in Chapter One is important, as it implies that religion (Protestant = Scot; Catholic = Irish = alien) was an important marker for Scottish identity. The evidence presented in Chapter Three – that self-claimed Scottish national identity is equally high amongst Catholics, Protestants and the non-religious – suggests that religion is no longer a salient national identity marker in Scotland. This highlights that identity claims, attributions and receipts are historically fluid and dependent on their context. In a Scotland where those of all religions and none are likely to claim a Scottish identity, and where

⁸ MacMillan (2000a:13,15,16)

⁹ MacMillan (2000b:265)

¹⁰ Anderson (1991:6-7)

¹¹ See, for example, Bruce (1993)

¹² Kiely *et al* (2000:1.4)

¹³ Kiely *et al* (2000:6.1). See also McCrone *et al* (1998)

Scottishness is assigned primarily on the basis of birth and residency, the 'Scottish equation' ceases to make sense. Crucially, the 'imagining' of the nation posited by Anderson is not fixed, it is a constantly evolving process in which 'identity markers' – the boundaries of the imagined community – are adopted and discarded. The 'Scottish equation' may have made sense in an era when Scotland was a relatively comfortable part of an Imperial Britain which was, by contrast to 'Catholic' France, 'Protestant'¹⁴, but by the latter twentieth century the meaning of Scottishness had changed. The defining political question of late twentieth century Scotland has not been Scotland's position within the British Imperial project but of Scotland's position within the United Kingdom. That, and the fact that Scotland and Britain have undergone sharp secularisation since the 1960s, has rendered the 'Scottish equation' meaningless. 'Scottishness' has long represented a claim to distinctiveness within the United Kingdom, particularly in relation to Englishness. Over the course of the twentieth century, new forms of Scottishness – largely and increasingly secular and pluralistic – have emerged and developed. To a large degree, 'Scottishness' is a claim to distinctiveness and an implicit demand that this distinctiveness take political or institutional form. For Peter Worsley: "Cultural traits are not absolutes or simply intellectual categories, but are invoked to provide identities which legitimise claims to rights. They are strategies or weapons in competitions over scarce resources"¹⁵.

The debate over religious division can be seen as stimulated by the broader debate over what it means, at the end of the twentieth century and at a watershed in Scottish history, to *be* Scottish. It is not surprising that at a decisive historic moment Scots have turned inwards, simultaneously beset by doubts and enlivened by confidence, to contemplate their Scottishness and Britishness, and, for some, their Irishness or other identities. The last years of the twentieth century have propelled the Scots into uncharted territory. Such moments are bound to provoke self-contemplation and a gazing into, in Gellner's phrase, the historical 'navel' of the nation¹⁶. In his

¹⁴ See Colley (1992)

¹⁵ Quoted in McCrone (1998:30)

¹⁶ Gellner (1997:90-101)

Eighteenth Brumaire, Marx notes the tendency, at crucial historical moments, to invoke the phantoms of the past:

Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given, and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living. And just when they seem engaged in revolutionising themselves and things, in creating something that has never yet existed, precisely in such periods of revolutionary crisis they anxiously conjure up the spirits of the past to their service and borrow from them names, battlecries, and costumes in order to present the new scene of world history in this time-honoured disguise and this borrowed language. Thus Luther adopted the mask of the Apostle Paul...¹⁷

At the point of creation of “something that has never yet existed” (a democratically elected Scottish Parliament) the ghosts of a ‘sectarian’ past have been anxiously invoked. Yet in their very invocation they have been exorcised – how else can one explain the all so brief public interest in the spirits summoned up by James MacMillan? This, as this study has shown, is perfectly explicable. MacMillan’s ‘ghosts’ were, by and large, bogeymen, imaginary terrors, created in, and for, the present through a selective interpretation of the past. History here “is not a product of the past, but a response to the requirements of the present”¹⁸. Again, this is to be expected, and hardly specific to MacMillan or to Scotland: “All profound changes in consciousness, by their very nature, bring with them characteristic amnesias”¹⁹.

Also in the *Eighteenth Brumaire*, Marx remarked that important moments of history repeat themselves “the first time as tragedy, the second as farce”²⁰. This study has not followed a chronological structure, and began by noting the farce, MacMillan’s 1999 speech, and closed with the tragedy, the spasm of sectarian hysteria in 1930s Edinburgh. Drawing parallels between MacMillan and John Cormack may seem far-fetched (and, perhaps, odious) given that Cormack sought to build a political movement through virulent anti-Catholicism, but there are interesting points of

¹⁷ Marx (1852:300)

¹⁸ McCrone (1998:44)

¹⁹ Anderson (1991:204)

²⁰ Marx (1852:300)

comparison. Both appealed to a sense of religious grievance resting upon myth and exaggeration, and both found that such an appeal had little staying power. Whilst Cormack's tragedy spawned a localised political movement, street protests and violence; MacMillan's farce produced a brief flurry of letters to the *Herald* and a collection of academic essays. Cormack's momentum collapsed within four years, while the publication of *Scotland's Shame?* failed to reinvigorate the *Herald's* letters' pages only months after MacMillan's speech. Both men depended on the invocation of the 'Other' – for Cormack the Other was the politically rapacious Papist beast, whilst for MacMillan the Other was personalised in the figure of Donald Findlay. Both were criticised for living in a distant past, of attempting to revive a dead history. Whilst MacMillan's complaints were criticised as "archaic", the Edinburgh press attacked Cormack for attempting to revive conflicts from "the far past"²¹. To Aspinwall, the Kirk's Disgrace of the 1920s was "a dying kick of a fading mentality", Cormack "a prisoner of history – like some of his opponents"²². Much of the current debate around sectarianism has proved imprisoned in an *imagined* history, invoking exaggerated terrors at the outset of a new era for Scotland. History need not feast "like a nightmare on the brain of the living", for it "is not the dead weight of the past on the present, but the very means whereby identity is shaped in an active and ongoing fashion"²³. The shaping of Scotland's identity could do no better than to follow the advice of poet Edwin Morgan as to our past:

Go from the grave. The shrill flutes
are silent, the march dispersed.
Deplore what is to be deplored,
and then find out the rest.²⁴

²¹ O.D.Edwards (2000:5); *EN* editorial 19/04/35

²² Aspinwall (1989:79, 82)

²³ McCrone (1998:63)

²⁴ 'King Billy' (1968). Morgan (2000:29-30)

APPENDIX ONE:
DENOMINATIONAL COMPOSITION OF THE SCOTTISH
ELECTION SURVEYS

CLAIMED RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION:

	1974	1979	1992	1997	1997R	1999
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND	530	319	442	365	295	521
CATHOLIC	137	88	148	126	105	201
OTHER RELIGION	193	98	127	110	75	161
<i>Christian - no denomination</i>	-	1	49	52	28	58
<i>Episcopalian/Anglican</i>	75	38	35	27	25	30
<i>Other Presbyterian</i>	78	35	1	2	2	3
<i>Baptist</i>	12	-	6	8	4	11
<i>Methodist</i>	6	-	3	-	1	-
<i>Brethren</i>	-	-	4	2	1	3
<i>Congregational/URC</i>	10	-	5	-	2	5
<i>"sects"</i>	-	4	-	-	-	-
<i>Other Protestant</i>	-	17	15	11	5	22
<i>Other Christian</i>	12	-	-	-	1	6
<i>Other, Non-Christian</i>	-	3	9	8	6	17
NO RELIGION	304	218	235	270	200	594
Don't Know	-	1	-	-	-	-
Refused/Not Answered	3	5	5	11	1	11
TOTAL	1167	729	957	882	676	1482

APPENDIX TWO:
LOGISTIC REGRESSION MODELS

Notes:

Reference category (where applicable) in brackets;
significant results are highlighted in **bold**, with direction of effect given in last column;

'n.s.' denotes no significant effect at .05 level.

CHAPTER 2 - PERCEPTIONS OF RELIGIOUS CONFLICT, 1997:

Dependent variable: **Believing religious conflict to be 'very' or 'fairly serious'**

Independent variables: age; church attendance; class identity; gender; occupational class (non-manual or manual, according to Registrar General classification); region; religion; religiosity.

Source: *Scottish Election Survey, 1997*

Number of cases in model: 805

<i>Variables</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>Exp (B)</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Effect</i>
Constant	.35	.32			.2664	
Age	-.03	.00	-.17	.97	.0000	negative
Area (Rural)			.19		.0000	
West Central Scotland	1.21	.25	.14	3.36	.0000	positive
East Central/North East Scotland	.29	.25	.00	1.33	.2545	n.s.
Occupational class (manual)						
Non-manual	-.44	.15	-.08	.64	.0040	negative

CHAPTER 2 - PERCEPTIONS OF RELIGIOUS CONFLICT, 1999:

Dependent variable: **Believing religious conflict to be 'very' or 'fairly serious'**

Independent variables: age; attitude to separate Catholic schools; church attendance; class identity; gender; occupational class (by Goldthorpe-Heath grouped classification); perception of Scots-English conflict; religion.

Source: *Scottish Parliamentary Election Survey, 1999*

Number of cases in model: 1289

<i>Variables</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>Exp (B)</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Effect</i>
Constant	-.95	.39			.0152	
Age	-.01	.00	.04	.99	.0287	negative
Male	.32	.13	.05	1.38	.0105	positive
Scots-English (no conflict)			.30		.0000	
Very serious conflict	2.92	.37	.18	18.54	.0000	positive
Fairly serious conflict	2.25	.32	.16	9.48	.0000	positive
Not very serious conflict	.91	.31	.06	2.48	.0035	positive
Catholic schools (Govt. definitely should not maintain)			.09		.0002	
Definitely should	-.16	.26	.00	.85	.5513	n.s
Probably should	-.60	.20	-.06	.55	.0029	negative
Doesn't matter	-.80	.20	-.09	.45	.0001	negative
Probably should not	-.39	.15	-.05	.68	.0097	negative

CHAPTER 2 - NORTHERN IRELAND, 1997:

Dependent variable: **Believing Northern Ireland should remain in UK.**

Independent variables: age; church attendance; class identity; gender; occupational class (non-manual or manual by Registrar General classification); region; religion; religiosity.

Source: *Scottish Election Survey, 1997*

Number of cases in model: 803

<i>Variables</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>Exp (B)</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Effect</i>
Constant	-0.89	.23			.0001	
Religion (Other religion)			.21		.0000	
Church of Scotland	-0.68	.26	-0.07	.51	.0102	negative
Catholic	-1.06	.34	-0.09	.35	.0017	negative
No Religion	.43	.24	.03	1.54	.0755	n.s
Male	.40	.16	.06	1.49	.0149	positive

NB – this model was re-run adding in party identification as an additional independent variable. There was no substantial difference between the models, and party identification was not found to be a significant predictor of wishing NI to remain within the UK.

CHAPTER 2 - MAINTAINING SEPARATE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS, 1999:

Dependent variable: **Believing that the Government definitely/probably should maintain separate Catholic schools.**

Independent variables: age; church attendance; gender; occupational class (by Goldthorpe-Heath grouped classification); perception of religious conflict; religion.

Source: *Scottish Parliamentary Election Survey, 1999*

Number of cases in model: 1145

<i>Variables</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>Exp (B)</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Effect</i>
Constant	-1.89	.26			.0000	
Religion (Other religion)			.27		.0000	
Church of Scotland	.21	.29	.00	1.23	.4777	n.s
Catholic	1.68	.30	1.63	5.38	.0000	positive
No Religion	-0.06	.30	.00	.94	.8411	n.s

CHAPTER 2 - NOT MAINTAINING CATHOLIC SCHOOLS, 1999:

Dependent variable: **Believing that the Government definitely/probably should NOT maintain separate Catholic schools.**

Independent variables: age; church attendance; gender; occupational class (by Goldthorpe-Heath grouped classification); perception of religious conflict; religion.

Source: *Scottish Parliamentary Election Survey*, 1999

Number of cases in model: 1145

<i>Variables</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>Exp (B)</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Effect</i>
Constant	.61	.28			.0291	
Religion (Other religion)			.18		.0000	
Church of Scotland	.08	.22	.00	1.08	.7229	n.s.
Catholic	-1.15	.25	-.12	.32	.0000	negative
No Religion	.03	.23	.00	1.03	.8828	n.s.
Protestant-Catholic (no conflict)			.05		.0248	
Very serious conflict	.65	.28	.05	1.91	.0219	positive
Fairly serious conflict	.47	.25	.03	1.60	.0578	n.s.
Not very serious conflict	.18	.24	.00	1.19	.4661	n.s.

CHAPTER 3 - VOTE IN GENERAL ELECTION, OCTOBER 1974:

Dependent variable: **voted Conservative**

Independent variables: age; class identity; gender; occupational class (split between ABC1a and C1bC2DE); religion.

Source: *Scottish Election Survey, 1974*

Number of cases in model: 746

<i>Variables</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>Exp (B)</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Effect</i>
Constant	-2.26	.39			.0000	
Religion (other religion)			.11		.0013	
Church of Scotland	-.00	.25	.00	1.00	.9933	n.s
Catholic	-1.08	.41	-.08	.34	.0081	negative
No religion	-.71	.30	-.07	.49	.0169	negative
Age	.03	.01	.15	1.03	.0000	positive
Class identity (none)			.13		.0002	
Middle class	.31	.28	.00	1.36	.2691	
Working class	-.88	.24	-.12	.41	.0002	negative
Middle class (ABC1a)	.85	.20	.14	2.33	.0000	positive

CHAPTER 3 - BEING AGAINST THE SNP, 1999:

Dependent variable: **Being strongly against/against the SNP**

Independent variables: age; church attendance; class identity (forced); gender; occupational class (non-manual or manual, according to Goldthorpe Heath classification); religion.

Source: *Scottish Parliamentary Election Survey, 1999*

Number of cases in model: 1149

<i>Variables</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>Exp (B)</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Effect</i>
Constant	-2.42	.24			.0000	
Non-manual occupation	.50	.14	.09	1.65	.0003	positive
Middle class identity	.40	.15	.06	1.49	.0058	positive
Age	.03	.00	.18	1.03	.0000	positive

CHAPTER 3 - BEST NATIONALITY: BRITISH, 1999:

Dependent variable: **Claiming nationality which best describes self is 'British'**
 Independent variables: age; church attendance; class identity (forced); gender; occupational class (non-manual or manual, according to Goldthorpe Heath classification); religion.

Source: *Scottish Parliamentary Election Survey, 1999*

Number of cases in model: 1149

<i>Variables</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>Exp (B)</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Effect</i>
Constant	-3.42	.40			.0000	
Non-manual occupation	.59	.25	.07	1.80	.0203	positive
Middle class identity	.70	.23	.10	2.01	.0023	positive
Religion (other religion)			.05		.0598	
Church of Scotland	.05	.34	.00	1.06	.8731	n.s
Catholic	-1.29	.59	-.06	.28	.0288	negative
No religion	.17	.34	.00	1.19	.6139	n.s
Male	.82	.23	.13	2.26	.0003	positive

CHAPTER 3 - BEST NATIONALITY: SCOTTISH, 1999:

Dependent variable: **Claiming nationality which best describes self is 'Scottish'**
 Independent variables: age; church attendance; class identity (forced); gender; occupational class (non-manual or manual, according to Goldthorpe Heath classification); religion.

Source: *Scottish Parliamentary Election Survey, 1999*

Number of cases in model: 1149

<i>Variables</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>Exp (B)</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Effect</i>
Constant	-.51	.08			.0000	
Male	-.36	.13	-.06	.70	.0043	negative

CHAPTER 3 - CLASS PREFERRED TO NATIONALITY, 1999:

Dependent variable: **More in common with an English person of the same class.**

Independent variables: age; church attendance; class identity (forced); gender; occupational class (non-manual or manual, according to Goldthorpe Heath classification); religion.

Source: *Scottish Parliamentary Election Survey*, 1999

Number of cases in model: 1149

<i>Variables</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>Exp (B)</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Effect</i>
Constant	-1.56	.11			.0000	
Male	.54	.14	.10	1.72	.0002	positive

CHAPTER 3 - NATIONALITY PREFERRED TO CLASS, 1999:

Dependent variable: **More in common with a Scottish person of opposite class.**

Independent variables: age; church attendance; class identity (forced); gender; occupational class (non-manual or manual, according to Goldthorpe Heath classification); religion.

Source: *Scottish Parliamentary Election Survey*, 1999

Number of cases in model: 1149

Note: none of the independent variables proved to be associated with preferring nationality over class.

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