

**The New Scottish Politics of Information:  
Governance and Information Technology in the  
Devolved Scotland.**

**Paul Griffin.**

**A Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of  
Napier University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.**

**June 2002.**

**BEST COPY AVAILABLE.**

**VARIABLE PRINT QUALITY**

**PAGE NUMBERS VERY  
FEINT/DIFFICULT TO READ**

## **Acknowledgement**

I am grateful to the following for their help and support. To my supervisors Professor Norman Bonney, Dr Alistair Duff, Professor Margaret Grieco, and Howard Wollman. Their encouragement was invaluable. Colleagues within the Department of Psychology and Sociology at Napier University also receive my thanks. I am also grateful to the International Teledemocracy Centre at Napier University, and BT Scotland for research support. My thanks also to Genevieve and Josh.....for putting up with me.



## **Table of Contents**

<b>Abstract</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Chapter One – Introduction: Governing Themes</b>	
1.1 Introduction	3
1.2.1 Political impulses from Scottish civil society	5
1.2.2 The re-wiring of the United Kingdom: Political Pressures from the centre	7
1.2.3 Governmentality: the cognitive policing of Scottish civil society	10
1.2.4 The tension between entrepreneurial governance and the democratic potential of informatisation	14
1.2.5 From technocracy to institution: an index of governance in Scotland	15
1.3.1 Dynamic Conservatism: informatisation and Reinforcement Politics	22
1.4.1 The New Political Process of Scottish Politics: a problem of order and legitimacy	24
1.4.2 The derivation of New Politics: the blueprint for a new set of ideals and institutions	29
1.4.3 The idealist – institutionalist dimension: a Scottish vision of new political reason	30
1.4.4 Alternative forms of citizen participation. Alternative democratic mechanisms and new politics	36
1.4.5 Alternative democratic mechanisms: problems of policy making in an informatised environment	37
1.4.6 Political responses to democratic pressures and deficits: New Institutionalism and the Scottish Parliament	40
1.4.7 Political technologies and the institutionalist perspective	43
1.5.1 Conclusion	47
1.6.1 The lexicon of New Politics: a summary of forthcoming chapters	49

## **Chapter Two: Shifts in the balance of Scottish democracy: from the far side of the historical circumference towards a new information union**

<b>2.1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>2.2.1</b>	<b>From the far side of the historical circumference, towards a new information union</b>	<b>59</b>
2.2.2	The emergence of the Scottish technocratic system	66
2.2.3	Organisation and power: the relations between technocracy and elite government	68
2.2.4	Scottish reactions to technocracy: the origins of an alternative political agenda	69
2.2.5	An alternative Scottish political agenda	72
2.2.6	Culture against technocracy: Scottish civil society and political journalism	72
2.2.7	A register of Scottish politics since the post war era	74
2.2.8	The immediate Post-War era: developments and phases (1945 - 1955)	77
2.2.9	Affluence versus decline: the degeneration of the Scottish economy (1955 – 1964)	78
2.2.10	Scottish industrial decline and the emergence of an economic- political deficit (1960 – 1970)	80
<b>2.3.1</b>	<b>The 'Generation' of North Sea Oil. Political dissent and the decline of the all – political British system (1970 – 1974)</b>	<b>82</b>
2.3.2	Changing democratic access: the referendum of 1979 (1974 – 1979)	83
2.3.3	Scotland's relations with the two Unions: the United Kingdom and the European Union (the 1980s)	88
2.3.4	The reinvention of government, the Scottish Parliament, the Scottish media and symbolic politics	91
2.3.5	A new commitment to devolution. The transformation of Scottish politics (the 1990s)	93
2.3.6	The Third Way: a political philosophy for the Information Age	96
<b>2.4.1</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>102</b>

## **Chapter Three: A theory of Transformational Politics**

<b>3.1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>3.2.1</b>	<b>Research design and research methods</b>	<b>109</b>
<b>3.2.2</b>	<b>Five case studies: the theoretical background and preliminary empirical findings</b>	<b>120</b>
<b>3.2.3</b>	<b>Background to Case Study 1 and 2: The Cross Party group in the Scottish Parliament on Information Knowledge and Enlightenment (SPIKE) plus additional MSPs</b>	<b>125</b>
<b>3.2.4</b>	<b>Background to Case Study 3: The Scottish Parliament's Public Petitions Committee</b>	<b>128</b>
<b>3.2.5</b>	<b>Background to Case Study 4: Scottish based constituency Members of the European Parliament</b>	<b>129</b>
<b>3.2.6</b>	<b>Background to Case Study 5: Scottish civil society: Electronic interactions with the Scottish Parliament</b>	<b>130</b>
<b>3.3.1</b>	<b>The thematic framework: posing key questions</b>	<b>131</b>
<b>3.3.2</b>	<b>MSPs and informatisation: key themes and their distribution</b>	<b>132</b>
<b>3.4.1</b>	<b>Informatisation: government to governance</b>	<b>147</b>
<b>3.4.2</b>	<b>The origins of the informatisation process</b>	<b>148</b>
<b>3.4.3</b>	<b>The dialectics of the science-informatisation relationship</b>	<b>149</b>
<b>3.4.4</b>	<b>The Scottish democratic deficit and informatisation</b>	<b>155</b>
<b>3.5.1</b>	<b>Informatisation and the extension of democracy</b>	<b>160</b>
<b>3.5.2</b>	<b>A theory of democratic informatisation and direct democracy: referendums and initiatives</b>	<b>162</b>
<b>3.5.3</b>	<b>Informatisation, Political Computing and Political Geography</b>	<b>171</b>
<b>3.5.4</b>	<b>Informatisation as a control technology</b>	<b>176</b>
<b>3.6.1</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>178</b>

## **Chapter Four: Scottish Parliamentary Elites and Political Computing**

<b>4.1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>179</b>
<b>4.2.1</b>	<b>Political elites and the research schema</b>	<b>182</b>
<b>4.2.2</b>	<b>MSPs, Informatisation and the capacity for action</b>	<b>184</b>
<b>4.2.3</b>	<b>MSPs and the establishment of a model of Scottish democracy</b>	<b>185</b>
<b>4.2.4</b>	<b>Political computing: the gathering of information, or a precondition for participation?</b>	<b>189</b>
<b>4.2.5</b>	<b>Social exclusion, ICTs and the public provision of information</b>	<b>193</b>
<b>4.2.6</b>	<b>An empirical analysis of the social-economic utilisation of informatisation within the Scottish Parliament</b>	<b>195</b>
<b>4.3.1</b>	<b>MSPs and political practice: the displacement of politics from the centre?</b>	<b>199</b>
<b>4.3.2</b>	<b>The political independence of time and place: towards a virtual political establishment?</b>	<b>203</b>
<b>4.3.3</b>	<b>The future practice of politics: Primary evidence of changing attitudes from MSPs</b>	<b>205</b>
<b>4.3.4</b>	<b>The support for online voting set alongside traditional methods</b>	<b>210</b>
<b>4.4.1</b>	<b>A critical evaluation of electronic democracy: Scottish civil society and its interactions with the Scottish Parliament</b>	<b>215</b>
<b>4.5.1</b>	<b>ICTs to support democracy: future political tensions</b>	<b>223</b>
<b>4.5.2</b>	<b>Informatisation and the movement from monocentric government: towards a rapid response democracy</b>	<b>225</b>
<b>4.5.3</b>	<b>Qualitative expressions of informatised political Interactivity</b>	<b>230</b>
<b>4.5.4</b>	<b>Democratic informatisation and direct democracy: referendums and initiatives</b>	<b>232</b>
<b>4.5.5</b>	<b>Support for electronic referenda: MSPs and MEPs</b>	<b>235</b>
<b>4.5.6</b>	<b>The superior capacity of representative democracy over direct democracy</b>	<b>242</b>
<b>4.6.1</b>	<b>Reinforcement Politics and MSPs: qualitative accounts of Reinforcement theory</b>	<b>248</b>
<b>4.7.1</b>	<b>Conclusion: Competitive elitist democracy: a hierarchical top-down model of Scottish politics and informatisation</b>	<b>256</b>

## **Chapter Five: The New Politics of Agency and Institution: Sub-Politics and Participation. An audit of participatory democracy in Scotland**

<b>5.1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>261</b>
<b>5.2.1</b>	<b>Citizenship and new forms of democratic participation</b>	<b>265</b>
<b>5.2.2</b>	<b>Reflexive responsibility: Scottish post-modern governance</b>	<b>268</b>
<b>5.3.1</b>	<b>From citizens to consumers: the economy of democracy</b>	<b>275</b>
<b>5.3.2</b>	<b>The political vacuum and sub-politics</b>	<b>280</b>
<b>5.3.3</b>	<b>The new politics of expression and negotiation: The re-programming of institutions</b>	<b>281</b>
<b>5.3.4</b>	<b>The democratisation of critique: informatisation and reflexivity</b>	<b>283</b>
<b>5.3.5</b>	<b>The transformation of political agency: sub - politics and the Scottish Parliament</b>	<b>285</b>
<b>5.4.1</b>	<b>Public Petitions and the Scottish political system</b>	<b>288</b>
<b>5.4.2</b>	<b>Public Petitions as a democratic audit of Scottish governance</b>	<b>289</b>
<b>5.5.1</b>	<b>The Scottish Parliament: an informatised democracy or economic laboratory?</b>	<b>298</b>
<b>5.5.2</b>	<b>An audit approach to public petitions and the Scottish Parliament</b>	<b>302</b>
<b>5.6.1</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>308</b>

## **Chapter Six: A new Information Settlement: Wiring up the Union**

<b>6.1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>310</b>
<b>6.2.1</b>	<b>The re-composition of devolution: the pursuit of centrist Ambitions via Informatisation</b>	<b>322</b>
<b>6.2.2</b>	<b>The strategic implications of the centralising strategy</b>	<b>326</b>
<b>6.2.3</b>	<b>Integrated infrastructures and the standardisation of information systems</b>	<b>328</b>
<b>6.2.4</b>	<b>The reaction against governance and New Institutionalism: towards the development of the Infocracy</b>	<b>329</b>
<b>6.2.5</b>	<b>The re-alignment of the centre: the authority of the mainframe</b>	<b>335</b>
<b>6.2.6</b>	<b>The flight from orthodox politics: the developing Information Union</b>	<b>338</b>
<b>6.3.1</b>	<b>Globalisation and the re-distribution of political power: the flow of power through information networks</b>	<b>342</b>
<b>6.3.2</b>	<b>Classical political technologies: the development of control</b>	<b>346</b>
<b>6.4.1</b>	<b>A theory of Union: synthesis versus devolved power arrangements</b>	<b>349</b>
<b>6.4.2</b>	<b>A new Information Union: Information Age Government in Scotland</b>	<b>354</b>
<b>6.5.1</b>	<b>The New Politics of surveillance: The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (Scotland) 2000</b>	<b>362</b>
<b>6.5.2</b>	<b>Political reflexivity and political computing: the formation of new electronic power relations</b>	<b>369</b>
<b>6.6.1</b>	<b>The work of Michel Foucault: Infomatisation and the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000</b>	<b>372</b>
<b>6.7.1</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>381</b>

## **Chapter Seven: Conclusion**

<b>7.1 From Technocracy to Teledemocracy?</b>	<b>383</b>
<b>Timeline</b>	<b>394</b>
<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>421</b>

## List of Tables and Figures

<b>Chapter One:</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	
Figure 1.1	The Scottish model of information politics	13
Figure 1.2	Relations between reflexive responsibility, moral governance, and the New Politics	18
<b>Chapter Two:</b>	<b>Shifts in the balance of Scottish democracy: from the far side of the historical circumference towards a new information union</b>	
Figure 2.1	The historical curve of Scottish post-war politics	57
Table 2.1	The Scottish post-war model of political-bureaucratic transition	75
Figure 2.2	The Scottish political system, its units and sub-units	105
<b>Chapter Three:</b>	<b>A theory of Transformational Politics</b>	
Table 3.1	The Research Matrix	114
Table 3.2	Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs)	127
Table 3.3	MSPs and informatisation: the employment of a survey method	132
Table 3.3.1	Scottish based constituency Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and informatisation: the employment of a survey method	140
Table 3.3.2	Scottish Civil Society: Electronic interactions with the Scottish Parliament	145
Table 3.3.3	Political computing: informatisation and the concept of the Scottish democratic deficit. Interviews with MSPs (conducted between November 2000 and March 2001: Question 25a)	158
Figure 3.1	A methodology of Transformational Politics	143
Table 3.3.4	The Scottish political system and its reaction towards electronic democratisation. Electronic referendums as a measurement of democracy. Support for their introduction within their Scottish political dimension	165
Table 3.3.5	The axis of political computing	169
Table 3.6	Political computing: informatisation and the demise of the Scottish democratic deficit. Interviews with MSPs (conducted between January – August 2001)	146



Table 3.7	The Scottish political system and its reaction towards electronic democratisation. Electronic referendums as a measurement of democracy. Support for their introduction within their Scottish political dimension	154
Figure 3.2	Building theory: from stasis to reflexivity. A model of organisational control and the dynamics of tension	
<b>Chapter Four:</b>	<b>Scottish parliamentary elites and political computing</b>	
Figure 4.1	The SPIKE research pyramid	184
Table 4.1	Informatisation and the potential democratic Impact of ICTs	190
Table 4.2	The Scottish Parliament and the informatisation emphasis by Political Party. An issue based analysis: ICTs and written Questions/Answers to the Scottish Executive	196
Table 4.3	The Scottish Parliament and the possibility of a virtual politics: qualitative expressions	206
Table 4.4	Scottish based constituency members of the European Parliament (MEPs) Opinions on a virtual politics	209
Table 4.5	MSPs and citizens ability to vote online as a Future democratic possibility	212
Table 4.6	An evaluation of electronic democracy: Scottish civil society and its interactions with the Scottish Parliament	216
Table 4.7	The Democratic Deficit, ICTs and the quality of Scottish Democracy: opinions from Scottish civil society	217
Table 4.8	The Scottish Parliament and the increased provision of political information to citizens as expressed by MSPs	222
Table 4.9	Political interactivity, informatisation and the Scottish Parliament	229
Table 4.10	Informatisation and interactivity: the registrational capacities of political computing within the Scottish Parliament	231
Table 4.11	Electronic referendums as a measurement of democracy. Support for their introduction within the Scottish political dimension	238
Table 4.12	Scottish based MEPs and the internet as a tool with which to conduct referendums	241
Figure 4.2	The Spatial-architectural feature of the New Politics	246
Table 4.13	Scottish Parliamentary conducted issues and Informatisation	252

Table 4.14	MSPs and the Reinforcement Politics position: Political Computing and the Scottish Parliament	255
Table 4.15	Prospects for Scottish informatisation: a summary of the positions of MSPs	258

**Chapter Five:      The New Politics of Agency and Institution: Sub-Politics and Participation. An audit of participatory democracy in Scotland**

Table 5.1	The transition of European political culture: 1960s – 1990s	275
Table 5.2	Models of citizenship and participation	279
Table 5.3	Access to the internet from home by class: Figures for Scotland	290
Table 5.4	Electronically submitted public petitions	291
Table 5.5	(a) Sub-Politics and the PPC: Electronic Petitions	295
	(b) Sub-Politics and the PPC: Electronic Petitions: a qualitative expression	296
Table 5.6	Informatisation and Plenary debates	299
Table 5.7	A classification of Public Petitions submitted to the Scottish Parliament via the PPC	303
Table 5.8	The Scottish Parliament, Public Petitions and their Committee based destinations	305
Table 5.9	Generative Politics: outcomes and means to ends	307

**Chapter Six:      A new Information Settlement: Wiring up the Union**

Figure 6.1	The Union of Macro and Micro	315
Figure 6.2	An intra-systemic model of the Information Union: Its information architecture	324
Table 6.1	The Transformation of the European State	332
Table 6.2	The Information Union: strategy and outcomes	355
Figure 6.3	A Security Framework for U.K Information Age Government	340
Table 6.3	A new interoperability framework: the commonality of the U.K project	360
Table 6.4	The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (Scotland) 2000	366
Figure 6.4	Governmentality: the internet and the RIP Act 2000	376

**Timeline**

Table T1	Historical dimensions of the Scottish political system	417
----------	--	-----

## ***Abstract***

This thesis provides an analysis of the new Scottish politics of information. It examines the implications of information communication technologies (ICTs) for the reformation of Scottish politics within the new historical Scottish moment of devolution. This is related to the advent of ICTs and the possibilities they afford for a further extension of democracy in contemporary Scotland. This in turn is set amidst the concept of informatisation. This term denotes the ability of ICTs to produce new information networks, and the thesis explores the likely outcomes of such conditions within their Scottish context.

We begin with an exploration of the tensions existing within a specific frame of reference (Scottish post-war politics), and end with an account of the new context and circumstances of the informatised political system. As such, the thesis details the post-war technocratic era, and traces the movement *into* democratic deficit<sup>1</sup>, and *outwards* into the new Scottish historical moment: the devolution arrangements of 1999, and onwards. The associating theme throughout is the search for a new politics of settlement. The future of this settlement is however, finely balanced and lies somewhere between a set of

---

<sup>1</sup> The term 'democratic deficit' entered the political vocabulary during 1974 amidst debates about further European integration. The transfer of power from national institutions to supra-national institutions raises the context of the issue within the Anglo-Scottish dimension (Coombes 1999). The perception of the term as it relates to Scottish politics was of a Conservative Party with a minimum of electoral support, and no popular mandate, to use their Westminster based majority to enforce radical policies upon them.

contradictory and oppositional political forces. The connecting principle is provided by the informatisation process, and electronic governance.

These political technologies are a pivotal feature of the new Scottish politics of information, and the thesis illustrates their centrality within contemporary governance. The positioning of distributed technologies, and distributed informatisation, is a central component of the thesis. In turn, it is contrasted with the development of a centralised form of political computing: given expression throughout the thesis as the new Information Union.

Put simply, the thesis explores the implications of information and communication technologies (ICTs) for the reformation of Scottish politics within the new historical Scottish moment. It does so in the context of an opposition between two prevailing theories of the impact of information communication technologies on political life – the theories can be labelled Transformational Politics (Schwerin 1995) and Reinforcement Politics (Danziger et al 1982). The thrust of Transformational Politics is that there are new forms of interactivity which enable new forms of governance characterised by more widely distributed discourse, and new institutional forms such as social-political partnerships between government and community. The thrust of Reinforcement Politics is that the new technical forms of communication are used to further concentrate and control power by existing elites. Both these potentials are visible in the new Scottish Politics and this thesis charts the struggle between these tensions.

## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction: Governing Themes**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

The central theme of this thesis is an analysis of the '*new Scottish politics of information*'. within the newly established Scottish political system. The devolution of Scotland and the advent of extensive communication networking technologies are contemporaneous: the interaction between the current political structure and the latest political technology has not yet been documented. It is the goal of this thesis to chart and assess the connections between the emergent polity and the new technical tools involved in its elaboration. Put simply, the thesis explores the implications of information and communication technologies (ICTs) for the reformation of Scottish politics within the new historical Scottish moment. It does so in the context of an opposition between two prevailing theories of the impact of information communication technologies on political life – the theories can be labelled Transformational Politics (Schwerin 1995) and Reinforcement Politics (Danziger et al 1982). The thrust of Transformational Politics is that there are new forms of interactivity which enable new forms of governance, characterised by more widely distributed discourse, and new institutional forms such as social-political partnerships between government and community. The thrust of Reinforcement Politics is that the new technical forms of communication are used to further concentrate and control power by existing elites. Both these potentials are visible in the new Scottish Politics and this thesis charts the struggle between these tensions.

The new historical moment within Scottish politics, the birth of the '*new politics*', concerns the re-establishment of parliamentary democracy after three hundred years of political union within the framework of the United Kingdom.

The new Scottish Parliament offers the promise of political resolution to a twentieth century problem that has served to confirm the status of Scottish politics as subsidiary. In other words, that politics in Scotland were the product of arrangements made from outwith the country's borders, from England, and administered from a public administration that was representative of a *democracy denied*. This set of (largely negative) arrangements came to be known within Scottish political culture as the '*democratic deficit*'.

The thesis explores this term in considerable detail in forthcoming chapters. It serves as a reference point for the birth of the new historical moment and the death of a previous era. The thesis examines the relationship between the modernisation of government, the use of ICTs to develop new forms of governance, and new models of public administration. The focus is upon the transformation of the Scottish tier<sup>1</sup> of politics and the condition of its evolution. The thesis argues, and evidences, that Scottish parliamentary democracy is conditioned by a series of political pressures and impulses.

---

<sup>1</sup>The Scottish tier of political life refers to the series of political reforms and developments during the post-war era. For example, despite the emergence of a geo-political system in the form of a unitary state, a distinctive Scottish political administration was evident in the form of the Scottish Office. This reflected increasing demands for more distinctly Scottish political expressions. As such, the Scottish Office acted as a defence mechanism for Scottish interests, and for the development of state intervention within Scotland. However, the post war consensus, particularly regarding the welfare state and its expansion, was challenged via Thatcherism in the 1980s. Strong resistance towards neo-liberalism and a perception that a set of political impositions were unrepresentative of Scottish interests, forged a political tension in the form of the democratic deficit. Moreover, Scottish political culture, civil society, and Scottish political journalism began to promote an alternative political agenda in which the Scottish Office's purpose was increasingly called into question. It was seen by many as a tier

There are sets of tensions operating between politics and technology at a range of distinct and differing levels of state - society interactions in the reshaping of Scottish governance. The following sections outline these tensions. Later in the introduction we will consider forthcoming themes and the structure of chapter development.

### **1.2.1 Political impulses from Scottish civil society**

There are emerging political pressures which illustrate the possible future trajectory of Scottish politics, these serve as pointers towards the democratic possibilities and limitations introduced by new ICTs. In the first instance, the hypothesis is that Scottish parliamentary democracy will be increasingly pressured from below by new ascending forms of direct democracy, and direct democratic initiatives. A set of tensions emerge around the designs and processes of informatisation. Informatisation is an evolving concept within social, political and computer science. It refers towards the systems and networks of computing that are becoming increasingly integral to government, public administration, and civil society. In its original form it signified the 'telematique' fusion of the economy with information as an economic resource (Nora and Minc 1981). However, it can be identified in other ways. For instance, through the idea that ICTs contain a reflexive capacity as a component in their own right. By this means, information that once would have been lost or deemed superfluous, is effectively recycled and acted upon. The concept will be developed throughout, particularly within an understanding of the term from a democratic perspective.

In this sense, informatisation is a process that permits new forms of democratic access and discourse. However, in doing so it also creates another set of consequences that have not yet been taken account of.

In other words, as the new institution builds close informatised links with Scottish civil society, it is left vulnerable to new forms of political participation and demands. There is evidence to suggest that issues formerly confined to sub-politics<sup>3</sup> have been advanced by the new means and methods of participative politics into the realms of mainstream politics.

For instance, the Section 2A<sup>4</sup> debate in Scotland used a form of citizen initiated referenda to pressure the Scottish Parliament. With ICTs gaining strength as a distributed political technology (and situating, in turn, new sites of political practice: Little et al 2001), it is likely that this will be a recurring feature within Scottish politics. In this way the opening up of new political sites, and new ideas about, political engagement, will encourage other, and perhaps increasingly sophisticated, developments along similar lines: there will be a demonstration effect.

---

<sup>3</sup> This description refers to a new politics of participation (Beck 1997). Here, the scope of politics shifts to include issues formerly removed from the orthodoxy of politics. Environmental issues for example or animal welfare. For instance, as Rose (1999 p2) notes: *'A new ethical politics has taken shape – of the environment, of animal rights, of reproduction, of health, of everyday life itself – which refuses the idea that politics is a matter of state, parliament, election and party programme'*. The systems (initial) reluctance, or inability, to provide mechanisms to deal with such issues has brought about new social movements and a search for new alternatives. The Scottish Parliament's ban on the hunting of foxes through the 'Hunting of Wild Mammals Act 2002' is evidential of some elements of the new politics to which Rose refers. These ideas are developed further in chapter five: *'Scottish Political Informatisation and Participation'*.

<sup>4</sup> The Section 2A debate concerned the repeal by the Scottish Parliament of an Act passed in 1986 by the Conservative government at Westminster. The Act forbade the 'promotion' of homosexuality in schools. The issue became part of a wider set of events surrounding the context of morality within Scottish life and culture. Additionally, it became associated with an attempt by certain members of the Scottish media to deny the legitimacy of the new Parliament, by suggestions that it was at odds with the true sentiments of the Scottish people (Bradbury and Mitchell (2001)). It also offered an example of a pressure groups usage of a democratic citizens-initiative. The 'Keep the Clause' campaign attempted to conduct a self-styled referenda upon the issue. This is explored in chapter two.



In essence it is a tension that I argue will undermine the legitimacy of an institution that has shifted the terms (and structure) of political agency away from the political technologies associated with representative democracy, and out instead towards more direct and participative models and strategies. With these notions in mind the thesis will explore the relations between the electronic democratisation of the Scottish Parliament, the centralist state plans to ensure a high degree of political continuity (despite devolution), and those more direct electronic political initiatives that style themselves as teledemocratic<sup>5</sup>.

### **1.2.2 The re-wiring of the United Kingdom: Political pressures from the centre**

In addition to the political pressure which operates from the level of distributed (or sub) politics there is evidence of a counter reaction by the state against the centrifugal forces associated with teledemocracy . These are situated within their United Kingdom representation as a series of 'Information Age Government' (IAG)<sup>6</sup> initiatives, designed to defend the political integrity of the British state in an increasingly globalised world (where, arguably, the nation state loses the ability to retain control over its political geography<sup>7</sup>). In this context, there are moves being engineered by the state towards the

---

<sup>5</sup> 'Teledemocracy', is a form of political engagement that has aspirations towards direct, electronic political relationships. For instance, electronic referenda, or citizen led initiatives. 'Electronic democratisation' on the other hand refers to the informatisation of representative institutions. Within this model power relations are not radically altered through a by-passing of such institutions, they do not seek to undermine them, but rather to assist them.

<sup>6</sup> See for example chapter five of the United Kingdom government White Paper 'Modernising Government' <http://www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/moderngov/1999/whitepaper/cover.htm>

<sup>7</sup> As Rose (1999 p2) notes, *'the global flows of information, finance products and ideas, challenges and disrupts the 'images of spatialization and communication that underpinned conventional notions of nation states, their territorial unity and governability...'*

development of an 'infocracy'<sup>8</sup> (Zuurmond 1998). The infocracy is an ideal type, and effectively offers up a model of political and bureaucratic control through state based developments within informatisation. Such a process is evidenced in the Scottish context, where attempts are being made to synthesise the devolved Scottish Parliament into a wider U.K frame of reference.

The thesis expands upon these ideas to argue that this project is an integral component of the British informatisation scheme. This theory is advanced on two specific fronts: the macro and the micro. Firstly, the political technologies of informatisation are being used within the concept of the Infocracy. This is a re-positioning of the Weberian model (Weber, 1978a) of bureaucracy<sup>9</sup>. It also usefully adopts the concept of bureaucracy as a historically located technology. This allows the thesis to make the appropriate and relevant linkages between history and the new Scottish political moment and in particular the tensions resident within an increasingly informatised society and its interactions with an informatised polity.

---

<sup>8</sup> The theory of infocracy (or Infocratisation) operates at the following levels. In the first instance, the term refers to an information architecture used to strengthen the bureaucratic power of public administration. The extension of this idea in this thesis examines Scottish devolution as a political technology in its own right. To this end the thesis observes the construction and implementation of these technologies from the perspective accounted for by both Michel Foucault (1991b) and Goran Therborn.(1978) In this sense the devolution of power made tangible through the establishment of the Scottish Parliament flows through a specific political technology. However, this devolution of power, and the abilities afforded by ICTs to fragment and de-centralise hierarchy, by partial dissolution of the centre for instance, are positioned against a set of arguments that suggest the opposite. Namely, that ICTs are a political technology currently being used to re-confirm the powers once taken for granted by the centre over the periphery.

<sup>9</sup> Weber understood the concept of bureaucracy as a means of creating a uniform application of bureaucratic rationalities across the governed territory (Weber 1978a). In this sense it has particular relevance to the thesis.

For example, the electronic democratisation<sup>10</sup> of the Scottish Parliament stands in some respects at odds with an increasingly teledemocratic society. For instance, although direct democratic forms are unlikely to replace parliamentary institutions in the foreseeable future, they nevertheless exert certain degrees of political pressure upon the system. In other words, citizen groups conducting their own independent referenda (such as the 'Keep the Clause' campaign in relation to Section 2A) or other similar devices to highlight particular issues<sup>11</sup>, will arguably seek to do so by the use of ICTs as a condition of future political action.

The tensions existent between democracy and bureaucracy are well documented (Giddens 1972, Etzioni-Halevy 1983). However, within their Scottish dimensions they exhibit new tendencies. An informatised bureaucratic structure is being developed across the UK. This evidences the thesis presented here: that this new political technology has an ambition to re-confirm and re-configure the United Kingdom project. It aims to offset, and to limit, the Parliamentary processes associated with devolution<sup>12</sup>. Accordingly, it

---

<sup>10</sup> Electronic democratisation refers to the wiring up of the polity, or government *structures*, to increase their efficiency (however measured). The term 'electronic democracy' on the other hand suggests a very different condition, one which moves towards teledemocracy. In this instance, voters may process their political preferences via electronic referenda. In closing the gap as it were between citizen and politician, there is an implicit risk that the logic of representation is increasingly called into question. In this sense the admittance of sub-politics into the Scottish political system (via the Public Petitions Committee for instance) is an attempt to institutionalise such new political impulses.

<sup>11</sup> As Kerevan ( 'The Scotsman' 4/1/2002 p 14) notes, the experience of Scandinavian politics in recent years is one of populist anti-tax movements. These coalitions are anti-establishment, and populist in tone. largely based around discontent with the structural decline in public services, such movements point towards a trend of the new politics. This trend may choose to adopt ICTs to further its remit. This would be in keeping with other political-social communities who are advancing their positions via new technologies (Little et al 2001 *ibid.*) .

<sup>12</sup> In this way it can be seen as an extension from within the political technology concept. For instance, the creation of the Scottish Parliament can be seen as a method for the security of the UK. For example: 'The Union will be strengthened by recognising the claims of Scotland ... The Government's devolution proposals, by meeting those aspirations, will

seeks to produce a new set of macro political relations. To govern effectively requires a set of discursive technologies that set out a frame of reference<sup>13</sup> for the area to be governed. It must be produced, disseminated and understood as a component of power relations set within bounded forms. As Rose puts it (1999 p33):

*'This is a matter of defining boundaries, rendering them visible, assembling information about that which is included and devising techniques to mobilise the forces and entities thus revealed'*

However, there are additional components of political technology that operate at the micro-level. To explain these ideas means understanding the concept of 'Governmentality' and their application within the new Scottish historical moment. We will now address these ideas.

### **1.2.3 Governmentality: the cognitive policing of Scottish civil society**

Governmentality (Foucault, 1991a), operates in tandem with the concept of the emerging information union<sup>14</sup>. Foucault's theory of 'Governmentality' (1991a) serves as a frame of reference for an extension of the Information Union

---

...safeguard...(and) ..enhance the Union' White Paper 'Scotland's Parliament' CM 3658, July 1997, para. 3.1'

<sup>13</sup> A diagrammatic representation of the discursive area ( a representation of the Information Union is detailed in chapter six: Figure 6.2 'An intra-systemic model of the information union, its information architecture, and its linkages with external UK social-political sub-systems'.

<sup>14</sup> This theory develops the idea that the devolutionary powers of the Scottish political system are being re-integrated into the United Kingdom project via informatisation. Political powers, having being re-distributed through the Devolution project, are being re-composed through technology. This hypothesis maintains that without the ability to extend informatisation across the UK, the devolution project would have remained dormant. As such, the idea operates at two specific levels. The first of these involves us considering the concept of an 'information union'. We examine this idea in relation to Infocratisation theory (Zuurmond 1998). This allows us to consider the impact of informatisation upon the devolution settlement in an entirely different way. The second hypothesis argues that in order for the state to extend its

hypothesis developed within forthcoming chapters. It provides the link between institutional change and a set of associated developments within civil society. For instance, for Foucault one of the essential properties of power is that it should operate (within the realms of government) in:

*'both an upwards and a downwards direction'* (1991a: p91).

The Information Union theory extends the conception of power through informatisation from government towards citizens via the law and through surveillance strategies. The thesis produces and evidences the connection between the macro concerns of the state and those elements which operate at the level of the micro, (or the social actors themselves) within Scottish civil society. The power of the state, the reproduction of the state's central authority, is relocated within the realms, practices and politics of cyber-space. Thus constraining the distributed qualities of political discourse that many authors observe (Alexander and Pal 1998, Baddeley 1998, Bellamy, Horrocks and Webb 1995, Malina 1999, Grieco, 2001).

These restrictive conditions are explored under the controlling aspirations of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000<sup>15</sup> (see

---

entirely different way. The second hypothesis argues that in order for the state to extend its informatisation powers it must also operate at the micro-level of social relations. We will explore this idea in relation to the work of Michel Foucault as we discussed above in terms of the connections between political structures and their control over individual agents. Thus the Act extends from institutions into the conditions of everyday life itself, in doing so, it completes the circuitry between state and citizen and imposes limitations upon distributed discourse.

<sup>15</sup> The main purpose of the Act is to update and regulate the use of surveillance strategies in the information age. The pace of developments within electronic communications have outstripped the states powers of scrutiny. Therefore the Scottish Act (like its U.K. counterpart) are up –dated versions of the Police Act of 1997. The Act is in four parts; part one deals with the interception of communications and details provisions for the disclosure of communications data. Part two regulates for surveillance and covert human intelligence. Part

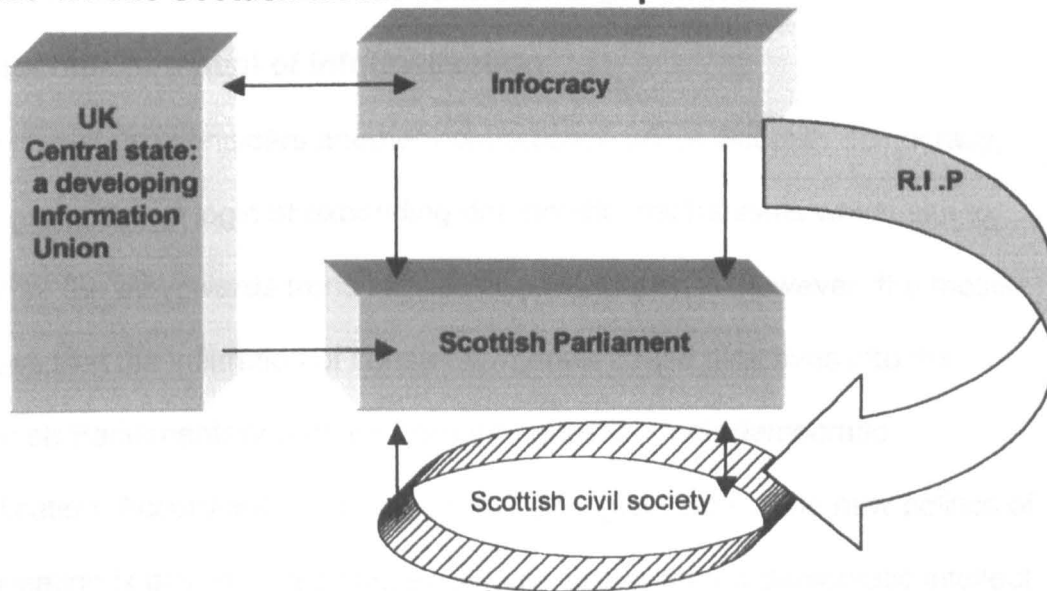
The Act operates to limit the alternative political forces that use the internet as a means of disseminating information and strategies. The Act also offers a means of policing the Internet, and is able to do so through both legal sanctions which affect the use of electronic communications, and also I argue through a type of 'cognitive policing'<sup>16</sup>. Michel Foucault's theory of Governmentality (1991a) is the key theoretical link. It forms the relations between macro and micro that are an essential component of the thesis. It is illustrated in diagrammatic form below (in Figure 1.1). The model illustrates the connections between the principal themes of the thesis. These are the development of an information union across the U.K. (with special reference to its Scottish dimension), and the 'cross-fire' of political relations that the Scottish Parliament will increasingly find as part of its political framework. Taken together these suggest a model of the new Scottish politics of information.

---

three legislates for the investigation of encrypted electronic data. Part four makes the necessary arrangements for such jurisdictions.

<sup>16</sup> By 'cognitive policing' I am making reference towards a metaphorical informatised Panopticon. In this sense Bentham's prison based ideal type is to be re-located within information and surveillance politics of the type contained in the RIP Act. It is my assertion that social actors will adapt their informational relations in accordance with their (relative) understandings of the power of the State to survey them, and to punish them.

**Figure 1.1 The Scottish model of information politics.**



**Source: Griffin 2002 (adapted from Zuurmond 1998)**

The Figure illustrates the insertion of Scottish civil society within the new Information Union. Those arrows that proceed in *both* directions show the capacity that ICTs enable for two way communications. These are taken to be suggestive of new styles of political (and democratic) practices. Discourse is interactive. Those arrows that flow in *one* direction only, are representations of an institutional power largely beyond the control of civil society and democratic control. Scottish civil society is rendered transparent via the RIP Act.

As such, the Figure observes the re-configuration of electronic dialogue in ways that benefit the state, rather than civil society. This is a calculation of force premised upon informatisation. It offers therefore, a critical contradiction to those claims made for the expansion of devolutionary - democratic initiatives within the confines of the historical Scottish moment. Other tensions also present themselves for analysis. It is to these that we now turn.

## **1.2.4 The tension between entrepreneurial governance and the democratic potential of informatisation**

The thesis also considers another contradiction within Scottish democracy, that of the stated logic of expanding democratic mechanisms which aim to reverse the downwards trend in political participation<sup>17</sup>. However, the thesis argues that the infiltration of consumer/market based directives into the Scottish Parliamentary process calls into question their democratic application. Accordingly, it is argued that a tangible side of the new politics of information is driven by a commercial logic, rather than a democratic intellect. In addition to these points of evident tension, there are two further sets of critical relations that the thesis investigates. In the first instance, the modernisation of Scottish government offers with it the declared objectives of devolution, and the democratic potentials of informatisation. Both these issues are substantiated as a central form of the new Scottish politics (Consultative Steering Group on Scottish Parliament, 1998). The expressions of a democracy denied, clash with the efficient delivery of public services, and the conceptions of entrepreneurial governance<sup>18</sup>. This model observes the economic advantages of ICTs and the possibility of new technological regeneration. However, these ideas are not naturally correlative with the extension of political participation and social-political inclusion. In this sense then 'entrepreneurial governance' is at odds with the new politics of

---

<sup>17</sup> See for example, the Consultative Steering Group on the Scottish Parliament (1998) document. This report established the framework for the Scottish Parliament and in particular examined the development of strategies to widen political participation. For example, *'The Scottish Parliament is committed to providing an information service aimed at ensuring that the Parliament is open, accessible and as participative as possible'* (Annex F, p142).

<sup>18</sup> 'Entrepreneurial governance' is a term which I use to suggest a change in the character and culture of public administration. It is inclusive of a new interface between the politics of fiscal prudence and the interpretation of the citizen as a 'consumer'. Political explanations and political administration uses a model of market based competition as its guiding frame of action.



participation. The activities of the Scottish Parliament are empirically examined to reveal such a tension. In doing so they reveal that the informatisation process in Scotland is driven primarily by economic forces.

I will argue that this is at the expense of democratic informatisation. This theme is substantiated by the concept of the democratic deficit. It is this feature that provides the bridge between the recent past and the contemporary Scottish historical moment. As such, the concept of the democratic deficit runs through the thesis. It serves as a linking theme between these ideas, and in its new condition is established around informatisation. It also offers a base measurement of Scottish post war democracy in that it is a defining theme against which Scottish democratic ambitions can be judged. The next section establishes some of these conditions in greater detail.

#### **1.2.5 From technocracy to institution: an index of governance in Scotland**

The historical transformation of democratic ambitions, from technocratic control via the Scottish Office, to the development of the Parliament in its own right, serves as an index of governance in Scotland. The Scottish political system can be seen within a series of shifts which move from its former position as a technocratic administration (premised upon strictly controlled hierarchical values), towards a new set of arrangements which determines its future democratic title in terms of the ideas and reference points associated with governance.' Governance' implies a new politics of social contract based

upon accountability and a degree of interdependence between institutions. It rests upon an understanding that previous models of government have to varying degrees failed<sup>19</sup>.

In this sense the Scottish political system shifts from its former position as a technocratic administration, premised and structured upon strictly controlled hierarchical values, towards its new political life as an '*institution*'. In this manner then an organisation moves away from a goal oriented, technical-rational model within which elites determine policy, and more towards a system of governance and the creation of a new set of political values.

These developments centre around the infusion into the system of ideals which extend beyond political immediacies (Dorbeck-Jung 1998). Incorporated into governance are a new set of institutional values and ambitions. These are attempts to locate the Scottish model of governance within the social fabric of Scottish life. This represents the logical democratic conclusion to a society long used to realising the effects and implications of technocratic power (wielded from the Scottish Office) relatively closed to democratic persuasion. It is a shift therefore from the management of public administration, to a system

---

<sup>19</sup>For instance in terms of the state interventionist crises of the 1970s, and in turn the replacement forms ushered in by Thatcherism (Jessop 2000). As a response then, 'governance' has a strong association with contemporary Third Way political theory (and in turn its connections to Scottish politics). The term is weighted with a host of additional meanings as Rhodes (1997 p53) notes. Its importance can be observed within the information technology focus of this thesis, in that governance utilises *networks* to perform its tasks. Increasingly these networks are electronically contracted and steered by the state. However, I have adopted Rhodes model as a base upon which to explore other related areas. It is inclusive of the following themes; 1, interdependence between institutions, it covers bodies existing outwith the state such as the private and voluntary sectors; 2, Interactions between network based actors are common place, resources are shared by the participants involved; 3, these are facilitated by trust based interactions, shared rules and negotiated politics; 4, governance also involves a degree of autonomy from the state itself. Institutions/actors are self organising, yet responsive to shifts in state steering mechanisms.

which effectively uplifts the community into its political orbit<sup>20</sup>. It does so within the theoretical concept of informatisation, whereby ICTs are used to engender new systems, processes, and institutions. The Scottish Parliament is a new institution which, for example, seeks to create for itself a moral dimension at the internal and external branches of its dealings with citizens. Its *internal* dimensions can be said to exist in the form of a political integrity located around a set of principles and value-standards<sup>21</sup>. *Externally*, the Scottish Parliament aims at the establishment of a new style and practice of governance:

*'characterised by partnership, participation and the management of uncertainty, in which government is smart, preventive, flexible and only one of many actors'* (Leicester and Mackay, 1999 p1).

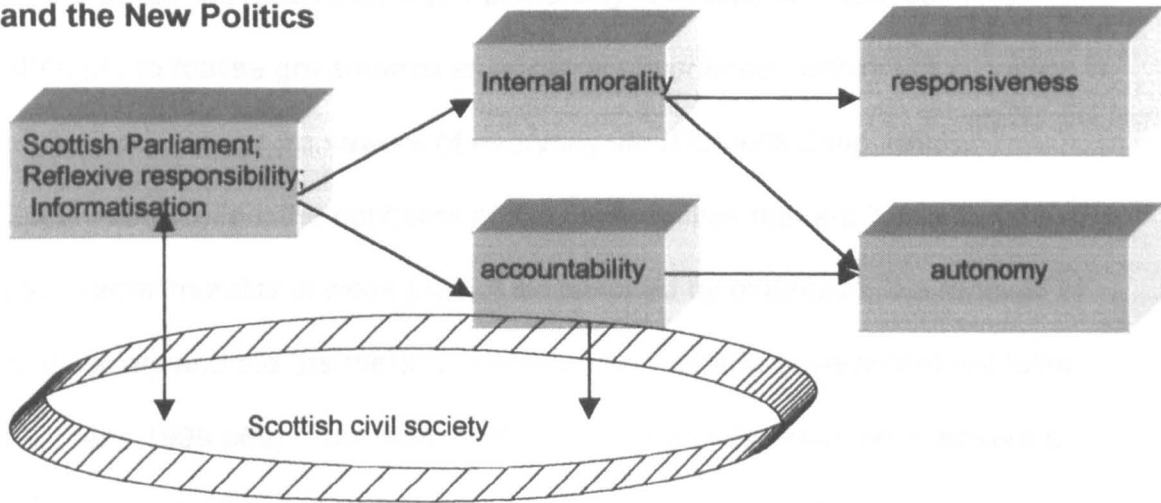
The following Figure (Figure 1.2) produces a graphical account of how these values interact with each other, and the informatised processes that link up Scottish civil society with the Parliament, and its attendant new political ideals and institutions.

---

<sup>20</sup> For example, *'while management suggests rational, efficiency-minded, goal driven organisations, 'governance' rather implies a focus on values, objectives and principles'* (Dorbeck-Jung ibid. p47)

<sup>21</sup> For instance through the (now abandoned) concept of equal gender balance within the Parliament. Other value standards were established via the creation of an 'Equal Opportunities' Committee. There was also to be a form of political re – distribution in that the Parliamentary Committee system will on occasions meet outwith Edinburgh. Externally, the concept of value standards (for example the notion of 'accountability') is established through a new *'democratic architecture'* (H McLeish, former First Minister for Scotland: 'The Scotsman' 15/11/2000), this is achieved by an information strategy that seeks to provide opportunities for citizens to both engage with and monitor the Scottish mode of governance. For example, via ICTs which aim to ensure that *'citizens can maximise the opportunities which this presents for individuals and organisations to contribute to the democratic process'* (Consultative Steering Group Report 1999 Para.1 basic objective)

**Figure1.2 Relations between reflexive responsibility, moral governance and the New Politics**



**Source: Griffin 2002 (adapted from Dorbeck-Jung, 1998 p50)**

The Figure illustrates the relationship(s) between the new Scottish politics and New Institutionalism<sup>22</sup> (Kooiman 1993, Foster and Plowden 1996). As read from left to right the idea firstly of *reflexive responsibility* refers to the notion that all established concepts of governance are open to amendment and re-evaluation, particularly of their normative underpinning values, and the production of desired outcomes (Foster and Plowden *ibid.* Jessop 2000).

As such, the reformation of government in Scotland is inclusive of :

*'a wider process of modernising the constitution ensuring that government is brought closer to the people and that decisions are made in an open and accountable forum'* (McConnell 1999@ [www.scotland.gov.uk/c21g/c21g.asp](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/c21g/c21g.asp))

<sup>22</sup> New Institutionalism refers to the idea that institutions go beyond the functions of government. Rather, New Institutionalists argue that political structures define a methodology of symbolic guidance for society. They (institutions) stand for specific values about how political life should be organised. In this sense political institutions are not only the result of their environments, but create them at the same time. Political institutions affect the power of political actors, and therefore political results also. For instance, political institutions affect political behaviour and outcomes. This is achieved in three specific ways; 1) they become partially autonomous political actors; 2) they create options for societal actors in their choice of allies and arena's; 3) they induce changes in domestic policies and institutions (Sandholtz 1996)

In this sense the idea of an '*internal morality*' can also be explored. This theme attempts to realise governance as a '*moral experience*' within which politics is embedded into the framework of everyday life (Dorbeck-Jung 1998).

Core values reflect the concerns of the communities that are being served. If the *internal morality* is weak then, it is reasoned by extension, the renewal of civil society and the '*partnership*' between society and government will falter (Giddens 1998 p69). This feature of political theory is designed to ensure a type of responsiveness between political structures and civil society.

A new politics of orientation, which recognises the aspirations of communities, must be recognised and acted upon (Jessop 2000).

This replaces previously held established government practices which were essentially hierarchical in scope and design of outcome. For instance, previous models of Scottish government (such as the Scottish Office) were technocratic in their provision. They viewed the task of public administration as one of '*management*', i.e. of planning and paternalism. Much of this management operated within an informal and closed system (Brown et al., 1996). However, the new politics of governance takes on a normative stance in that it is focused upon key values, clearly defined objectives, and a set of guiding principles that reflect another of the important qualities composed within the Figure: that of accountability<sup>23</sup>.

---

<sup>23</sup> Accountability is one of the key Principles of the Scottish Parliament. For example, '*The Scottish Executive should be accountable to the Scottish Parliament and the Parliament and executive should be accountable to the people of Scotland; the Scottish Parliament should be accessible, open, responsive and develop procedures which make possible a participative approach to the development, consideration and scrutiny of policy and legislation. The Scottish Parliament in its operation and its appointments should recognise the need to promote equal opportunities for all*'. (Consultative Steering Group: shaping Scotland's Parliament' 1998, section two p3: '*The Key principles: Putting them into practice*').

An example of these principles in practice is to be found in the case of former First Minister Mr Henry McLeish. The question of internal morality, that the Figure details, helps to understand these new ideas and practices. New Institutionalism is about a method of symbolic guidance for society, and serves to produce a format of moral action and social ethics which focus upon principles such as accountability, openness and transparency of action. With such ideas in mind, McLeish's actions<sup>24</sup> can be considered as culpable under such terms. He was held accountable to (in theory) Scottish civil society. There are further dimensions which should be considered within the extension and application of these principles. In other words, there are political externalities which produce a host of uncertainties that can be associated with reflexive democracy<sup>25</sup>. For example, the nature of political 'risk'<sup>26</sup> begins to

---

<sup>24</sup> Mr McLeish resigned his post as First Minister in November 2001 after questions were raised concerning the legality and protocol of sub-letting an office already financed from his parliamentary expenses during his time as a Westminster MP.

<sup>25</sup> 'Reflexive democracy' occupies a new position within studies of governance, and as a concept in its own right. The terminology profiles the interrogation of democratic practices and institutions by government. It suggests a new model of politics that examines new methods and older concepts within a critical light. It links with the conditions of governance in other ways also in that it suggests: '*the employment of local reasoning and reconfirmation to link academe, government and citizens*' (Foster and Plowden, 1996 p5). The locality of politics then is expressed via devolution and the new Scottish Parliament.

<sup>26</sup> 'Risk' can be defined in a variety of ways. Firstly, as '*the probabilities of physical harm due to given technological or other processes*' (Lash et al, 1996 p4). However, I choose to broaden this concept into the realm of politics. Risk is a component of both politics and reflexive modernity. For instance, Giddens (1994 p80) defines reflexive modernity/modernisation as the collection of impacts that are producing social change and uncertainty. For instance, in the shape of globalisation and its consequences for once relatively contained states. However, I posit that politics is in conjunction with informatisation in another important regard. In particular the manufacture of uncertainty and risk. In this sense political existence is itself open to radical change through intervention. For example, as Giddens (ibid. p4) puts it: '*Manufactured risk is a result of human intervention into the conditions of social life the uncertainties (and opportunities) it creates are largely new. They cannot be dealt with by age-old remedies: but neither do they respond to the Enlightenment prescription of more knowledge, more control*'. The increasing number of risks that societies must face include, not only the natural side effects of environmental decay that are usually cited, but other less recognised risk patterns that are concerned with both an expansion of new political forms, such as direct democracy, but with informatisation and political computing as a new variable. These political technologies are designed (paradoxically) to both extend and to control power. For instance, informatisation equates with both integration (in the shape of the Information Union thesis that we attend to in chapter six) and distribution (in the shape of distributed technologies and their attendant distributed discourses that we deal with in chapter five). As such, it is being argued here that an increase in presumed

rise in relation to raised political expectations, this is evidenced by the McLeish case in that the establishment of an open system also poses the question of its theoretical limits and boundaries. How far should the system offer admissible communications from civil society, and what problems might be produced in the process of deciding these limits?

This brings into consideration the content of a theme which prevails throughout this thesis. Namely, the extension and interaction between democracy and informatisation, and its attendant problems. As such, a precise understanding of the New Politics should look at more than the definitions provided by government in order to explain their actions, but also at the understandings of informatisation that they hold whilst in office (this is examined in chapter four). In addition, we should examine the *observable political behaviour* of key actors who attempt to control resources within changing modes of governance. This is accessed via an account of the informatisation process by those who are likely to oversee its development in Scotland: those MSPs with a direct input in such matters. With such ideas in place we now enter a new set of related themes which comes under the terms of *Reinforcement Politics* (Danziger et al 1982). Within this theory the application of ICTs within government (or public administration) serves to

---

knowledge, an increase in the presumption of control, need not mean a concomitant increase in the volume of power that centralised dominion may wield. For example, as Ciborra (2000 p48) notes: 'In the age of high modernity and globalisation, however, more knowledge may...lead to more unpredictability, more uncertainty and less controllability'. Here the political dimensions of increased informatisation may produce a further demand for 'political reconstruction...as well as widespread disaffection with orthodox political mechanisms' (Giddens 1994 p6). I argue that the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (Scotland) 2000, is an attempt to introduce another control technology into the equation of informatised politics. there is then a degree of 'Risk' present in association with informatisation. It is rarely recognised.

consolidate, or reinforce, the positions of already established power blocs. It is argued that information technology:

*'reinforces the power and influence of those who already have the most resources to influence organisational decisions'* (Danziger et al ibid. p15).

The following section examines in more detail these ideas, and their relationship towards the new Scottish politics.

### **1.3.1 Dynamic Conservatism: Informatisation and Reinforcement Politics**

The thesis develops a model of Reinforcement Politics from within a conception of the new politics of governance in Scotland. It draws theoretical strength from the idea of *'dynamic conservatism'* (Hood, 2000 p199) whereby new technologies are selected and used to supplement existing power relations, rather than shifting their terms and location(s). As such, informatisation processes are considered from a perspective that offers elite factions, and institutions, a chance to co-ordinate and invigorate their power through ICTs. This theme is developed throughout as a theory of some value in its own right, but in particular it is considered empirically from the position of Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) involved in the decision making processes associated with informatisation.

These consist of an elite cross-party information technology group of MSP's known as the *'Scottish Parliamentary group on Information, Knowledge and Enlightenment'* (SPIKE). By gaining access to such a faction the thesis tests



the Reinforcement Politics perspective from a unique position. Additionally, this perspective is given further pronunciation from a series of interviews conducted with their Scottish constituency based counterparts, within the European Parliament (M.E.Ps).

Furthermore, the flow of interactivity between civil society and political institutions, as an index of governance, is also determined in relation to specific groups operating from within Scottish civil society. The research focuses upon the perception of informatisation and control from a position then of the political institution within Scotland, and from those elements of civil society who are involved in governance based interactions. Governance as a term then takes on additional meaning, one which denotes the series of patterns that emerge from the combination of all these interactions. These patterns shape the emerging outcomes of policy, and day to day modes of governance itself. As such, governance can be considered as a continuous process of interaction between private/public concerns as well as individuals and civil society itself (Kooiman, 1993). However, these patterns of interaction produce consequences that offer potential difficulties for established authorities.

An increasingly informatised society may develop a specific political will, a will that is at odds with an informatised polity in terms of the direction of politics. In this sense, the concept of governance encourages a shift away from traditional patterns of government (which was hierarchical and one way) towards more lateral, interactive conditions premised around notions of partnership and negotiation.

This means that the boundaries between state and society shift and change, and become more permeable. Moreover, as an added circumstance, within a theory of governance there is an implicit recognition that government has lost its expert/power knowledge variable in that no one single actor dominates: informatisation co-ordinated networks are taken to be at the centre of socio - political relations<sup>27</sup> (Castells, 1997).

Accordingly, the directives of power are open to conflict and/or negotiation, and are taken to be less hierarchical than bureaucratic power relations for instance. This invites us to consider the nature of the new political process in Scotland, and some of the reasoning behind the transformational qualities applied towards it.

#### **1.4.1 The New Political Process of Scottish Politics: a problem of order and legitimacy**

We will now examine the new emergent pattern of Scottish politics and its origins. This involves a consideration of the reasoning behind the re-invention of government and the development of governance as the prevailing political concept within Scottish democracy. This section then examines the interaction

---

<sup>27</sup> The issue of policy networks is fraught with theoretical and methodological difficulties (see Mills and Saward 1994 for instance). However, the term 'network' denotes the interconnections and some degree of mutual interaction and dependency between actors within a given responsibility. Within these associations however, there are other variables. For instance, Rhodes (1997 p36) identifies a specific framework which in turn contains five variables considered to denote a network. These are as follows: A) *'Any organisation is dependent upon other organisations for resources.* B)*in order to achieve their goals, the organisations have to exchange resources.* C) *Although decision making within the organisation is constrained by other organisations, the dominant coalition retains some discretion. The appreciative system of the dominant coalition influences which relationships are seen as a problem and which resources will be sought.* D) *The dominant coalition employs strategies within known rules of the game to regulate the process of exchange.* E) *Variations in the degree of discretion are a product of the goals and the relative power potential of interacting organisations. This relative power potential is a product of the resources of each organisation, of the rules of the game and of the process of exchange between organisations'.*

between informatisation and its position within a new politics, and a new political system. There is a fusion between a number of themes. For example, those that are concerned with the institutional dimensions of Scottish politics, and those theories which stress the need for a new politics of idealism. Informatisation is the key link here, in that it represents both of these positions.

It does so via the tensions evident within its potential to extend democratic debate, and surrounding policy environments, to new sites and locations. The perimeters of such territories are being challenged. Quite how far such challenges extend is a central feature of the new politics of information in the devolved Scotland. Indeed the terminology of the 'new' (or the contemporary), are charged with a host of political energies and symbolic properties.

For instance, the term 'New Politics'<sup>28</sup> has come to act as a leitmotif within recent Scottish political culture<sup>29</sup>. Despite linguistic associations which suggest a distinct break with a previous political era, its precise etymology and focus has, until now, been ignored. This research reveals that it signifies a series of issues and agendas, and cuts across different elements of the political, social and informational fabric of contemporary Scotland. In so doing it captures the aspirations of politicians (and other elite groups) and their desire to forge a

---

<sup>28</sup> As becomes evident the concept of 'new' politics is used to signify a significant change in the balance of power, or the centrality of previously dominant forces. For example, Habermas (1971) discusses the concept within a historical shift from Machiavellian based political designs, towards those contained within the Enlightenment. Similarly, Claus Offe (1996) observes the term and structural conditions evident within the collapse of the old Soviet order. It is in other words, a historical constant used to promote the idea of fundamental change. It contains also the promise of difference and vitality, a new politics which has supposedly learnt from past errors of judgement, action and alternatives. In Scotland it comes to signify an end to the democratic deficit of the post-war era.

<sup>29</sup> I use Dahl's (1989) definition of political culture as a set of principles throughout. For example, he cites '*beliefs, attitudes, and pre-dispositions form a political culture, or perhaps several political subcultures*'. In addition, there is the definition offered by Kavanagh (1972

new political settlement, much of it concerned with, or based around the concept of '*wired government*' or '*intelligent administration*'<sup>30</sup> (Grieco 2000). The concept (of the New Politics) also has associations with the problems of legitimation that late twentieth century Western governments have been forced to attend to (Habermas 1976, Lyotard 1994, Nora and Minc 1981). In other words, there has existed a series of legitimation crises<sup>31</sup> which in turn have revolved around a number of issues<sup>32</sup>. One of the ways that governments have dealt with the problem of legitimacy has been to fuse science into political ideology and practice. In this way, science is applied to a given set of issues or problems. The claims of scientific advances (including ICTs/political computing) offer a 'solution' to the problem of disorder, and a resolution of the crisis. This technical-scientific political paradigm is not in itself new, it has been a common theme within the literature surrounding technocracy (rule, or administration, by experts: see Bell 1973, Touraine 1974) and computerised – bureaucratic administration (Habermas 1971, Weber 1978, Dutton et al 1996).

---

p10) who describes it as an expression which denotes the '*environment within which the political system operates*'.

<sup>30</sup> In this sense ICTs enter (in theory) into a form of partnership between government and citizen. Operating from a base measure of democracy, the notion is that what has stifled both political interaction and efficient public administration has been a communications gap. This, it is argued, has the potential to be filled, thereby resolving what is declared as being the solution to an age old question within politics: how to bring citizen and democratic institutions into a tighter fit.

<sup>31</sup> The concept of 'crisis' is important. It bears multiple, contentious definitions. For instance, Claus Offe (1984) maintains that the primacy of the state is threatened by its significant associations with capitalism. When capitalist production becomes itself 'contradictory' then the state too suffers. This is similar to Habermas (1976) who in 'Legitimation Crisis' draws similar conclusions. However, Raab (1975) provides a further set of distinctions. For instance, he contends that the term 'crisis' must be regarded as something short-lived, perhaps in a historical sense two decades, not centuries. Moreover, a 'crisis' cannot be simply distinctive, it must be worse than its qualitative or quantitative predecessor. Nevertheless, the term has become shorthand for an intensity of some or other proportion.

<sup>32</sup> Perhaps the most important of these was the effects felt by the Western world by the 1973 oil crisis. In retaliation against the American government's military support for Israel during the seven day war of 1973, the Arabian oil producing nations imposed an oil embargo against the USA. In addition, the OPEC increased the price of oil dramatically. This in turn brought about the most serious economic downturn since the 1930's (Keylor 2001)

However, contemporary manifestations of political computing emerge as the solution to the problem of legitimisation that many Western governments face. This problem is attended to via the use of ICTs: they are seen as the means with which to '*re-invent government*' (Osborne and Gaebler 1992) or which might aid in the modernisation of government (see for instance; <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/cru/resfinds/grf01-00.htm>). These contextual points help qualify the ambitions of governments and their enthusiasm for ICTs. There are other issues which explain why late twentieth century governments have explored the concept of electronic democracy/government. These consist of shifts in the economic financing and structures of public administration (Aicholzer and Schmutzer 1999). These variations in the direction of organisational efficiency are a result of both macro political-economic changes, (essentially the adoption of monetarist doctrines by Western governments during the 1980s and 1990s), and the implementation of private sector managerial notions directly into the public sector itself in the form of New Public Management/Business Process Re-engineering and their new approaches towards public sector reform and institutional transformation<sup>33</sup>.

This new politics of transformation and public sector reformation has particular relevance to Scotland which, according to some theorists (Brown et al 1999 McCrone 1992, Paterson 1994) has traditionally maintained and developed a stronger public sector ethos than other parts of the UK. This meant the introduction of alien elements into the voter-defined system.

---

<sup>33</sup> The changing values of these new economic philosophies coincided with informatisation to produce the promise of savings to the taxpayer/citizen and increased quality of service. Hence the urgency for change (Taylor et al 1997).

Moreover, the central direction (from London via the Scottish Office) of a Scottish electorate which consistently voted against Conservative policies during the 1980s (and the Conservative party's complete exclusion of any form of Scottish devolution<sup>34</sup>), produced a tension within the UK as a whole (Hirst , 1989).

As such, it raised the profile of those arguments that demanded a more responsive policy system for Scotland, one specifically able to cater for Scottish concerns. Moreover, monetarist economics became strongly associated with de – industrialisation, and the use of oil revenues to consolidate southern English based finance capital at perceived Scottish expense (Nairn 1981). This perception harmed the social and political fabric of Scotland and in turn contributed to the developing 'democratic deficit'.

Popular and academic expressions began to coincide, in that they looked towards the idea of a new Scottish politics and how it might be established<sup>35</sup>. The development of a new politics of democratic legitimacy are now explored further in terms of their relationship to Scottish politics.

---

<sup>34</sup> The Conservative government under Edward Heath supported the creation of an Assembly during the 1969 'Declaration of Perth' speech. However, the Thatcher administration was not prepared to make devolution an issue *'No debate took place at party conference for over a decade and the Tory devolutionists kept quiet feeling there was nothing to be gained by rocking the boat'* (Mitchell 1990 p109).

### **1.4.2 The derivation of New Politics: the blueprint for a new set of ideals and institutions**

These themes are explored in this thesis in terms of their relationship to the new political system established in Scotland in 1999. The terminology of 'New Politics' (its political lexicon) became a central feature of the campaign for a Scottish Parliament, and as such has become part of the political environment in Scotland. Those groups within Scottish political culture/civil society which campaigned for a Scottish Parliament (or a variation on that theme: an 'Assembly' for example) made much of the new direction that Scottish politics should aim to move towards. For example, the Consultative Steering Group (CSG Report.1998) were charged with uniting these aims, and developing a parliamentary strategy within which a new system could operate.

This document was the blueprint for the new political system<sup>36</sup>. The report also sought to use the new political opportunity to extend democracy in Scotland, and to create a system which might be more transparent, open, consultative and participative in its approach (ibid. p3). These key principles were to be combined with a new set of political standards (Brown 2000.) within which the 'new politics' would be realised. These can be considered in terms of two aspects: *idealist and institutional*. We will now examine these in turn.

---

<sup>35</sup> Such expressions were often raised by political journalism within the Scottish media. Both electronic and print media highlighted such a perceived need, often to the intense dislike of Conservative government's (Smith 1994).

<sup>36</sup> Crick and Millar's (1995) paper was influential in determining the content of the 'Report of the Consultative Steering Group' document 'Shaping Scotland's Parliament'(1998). Not only in terms of the above suggestion and its expressions of new democratic innovations per se, but also in how ICT's might open and enlarge the whole process of democratic participation within government in Scotland. It's key principles were guided by a desire to render the process of governance more open accountable and accessible, and marked a decisive shift from previous models of government in its statement of intent.

### 1.4.3 The idealist-institutionalist dimension: a Scottish vision of new political reason

The emphasis of much of the discourse surrounding the 'New Politics' focuses upon a synthesis between new forms of parliamentary practice and methods, and the transformational changes which should be encouraged within Scottish political culture<sup>37</sup>. The media's role as political interpreters of the new political system, and as the intermediaries between the new political formations taking place, is seen as a paramount issue associated with the promotion and extension of the new political culture to civil society. The themes of open government, social (and digital) inclusion, political participation and consultation between the Parliament and civil society, are strong elements of new politics discourse (Consultative Steering Group 1998). The institutionalist element of the new Scottish politics stresses the opportunities for a new model of governance based upon the instrumental requirements of devolution<sup>38</sup>. This is a component of the Transformational Politics perspective within which the process of government is facilitated towards governance<sup>39</sup>.

---

<sup>37</sup> The then Minister for Devolution, Henry McLeish (later First Minister of the Scottish Parliament) offered a summary of such thoughts: *'the Scottish Parliament offers the opportunity to put in place a new.. democracy in Scotland.....In particular.. an open, accessible Parliament.. where power is shared with the people; where people are encouraged to participate in the policy making process,. an accountable, visible parliament.. which promotes equal opportunities for all'*(McLeish H. CSG 1998.pv)

<sup>38</sup> ... *'the Parliament should adopt modern methods of working; that it would be accessible, open and responsive to the needs of the public; that participation by organisations and individuals in decision making would be encouraged; that views and advice from policy specialists would be sought as appropriate; and that Committees would play an important role in the new Parliament, able to initiate legislation, as well as to scrutinise and amend the Scottish Executive's proposals carry out wide-ranging investigative functions, and meet regularly away from Edinburgh so as to improve public access to the Parliament's work'* (CSG Report *ibid.* p1)

<sup>39</sup> A principal feature of governance is the move towards political participation: it is a move away from the concept of a passive citizen towards an active one. In this sense 'government' as a concept operates with the idea in mind of politics in action from the top –down. Governance on the other hand makes a break with this model of 'old politics' by staking a claim for a new definition of citizenship, one that works with the aim and ambition of including the citizen within the political process. This may be achieved via consultation mechanisms such as citizen juries, and civic forums, or by the enactment of consumer based methods aimed at giving incentives to citizens to become active in political life. These consist of



For example, the Consultative Steering Group Report (1998) set out a detailed format for new procedures and processes. This drew upon the Government's 'Scotland's Parliament' White Paper of July 1997 (Cm3658). This in turn had accepted as a premise of devolution, a shift within the terms of a government for Scotland. The transformation from a '*command and control bureaucracy*' (Moran, 2001 p20), in the shape of the Scottish Office, towards *governance* was a central feature of the Scottish Constitutional Convention<sup>40</sup>, and a mirror image of developments elsewhere in Europe (Vermeulen 1998).

New institutions in this instance include the creation of the Parliament itself and its accompanying and supporting structures. The changes executed in terms of the institutions would, it was argued by supporters of devolution, alter the terms of the political process itself (Wright 1997)<sup>41</sup>. It was assumed that there was an underlying consensus in Scottish politics which was frustrated by

---

complaints-suggestion schemes for instance, service-satisfaction enquiries which attempt to bring individual experiences into the equation (Wilson 1999)

<sup>40</sup>The Scottish Constitutional Convention was established after the demise of the Campaign for a Scottish Assembly in 1987. A cross party initiative, it set out a mandate against continued centralisation of the UK state, and the establishment of a parliament in Scotland. It included components of Scottish civil society (such as trade unions, church, and cultural bodies) as well as the main political parties in Scotland. This did not include the Conservatives. Latterly, the SNP withdrew on the grounds that it would undermine a movement towards complete independence. The 1980 'Campaign for a Scottish Assembly' group and their thoughts concerning the future of Scottish politics was to continue to provide an influential base of ideas. For example, it was they who presented the Scottish Office with a declaration that further establishes the context of the democratic deficit: '*We, symbolically representing the members of a Scottish Assembly, do bring to the notice of Her Majesty's Government that a question of democracy is at stake, and we must ask the question 'When are you going to fulfil the constitutional wish of the Scottish people to have a democratically elected Assembly?' (Wright 1997 p43). Similarly, as Mitchell (ibid. p613/614) observes in relation to the 1990's campaign for a Scottish Parliament; 'the notions of Scots as citizens rather than subjects had played a powerful part in the deliberations of the Constitutional Convention Greater participation and the involvement of active citizens were key themes in the rhetoric of the campaign'.*

<sup>41</sup> For example: 'that new institutions would create new procedures which would break Scotland free of old-style, elitist, confrontational politics centred on the House of Commons' (Mitchell 2000 p605).

old institutions and practices, and that new institutions and routines could create a new consensual political culture<sup>42</sup> (Mitchell 2000).

An accompanying feature of the new institutional arrangements to be effected for Scotland was a desire to encourage *new processes*. This was proclaimed by advocates of the new political arrangements in Scotland, as necessary in order to maximise public participation, and to forge a new Scottish conception of citizenship, one based largely upon a conception of both social and political *inclusion* (CSG 1998 p1). This in turn was based upon the notion of popular sovereignty, expressed by the Scottish Constitutional Convention.

These features are related to those opinions, prevalent within Scotland's public sector, its universities and civil society, which asserted that Scotland's democracy had been undermined through democratic deficit: the perception felt by many Scots that the '*post war Scottish consensus*' (Marr, 1992 p168)<sup>43</sup> was being undermined by Thatcherist economic and social policy. It was this undermining of the established consensus that accelerated the feeling of political deficit (McCarthy and Newlands 1999).

However, as we relate these ideas to emerging new political solutions, other issues and problems are presented, specifically within the context of citizen empowerment and state- citizen based relations. This is important because the conditions of governance are established around *inclusive priorities*. If the democratic deficit undermined the constitutional elements of the U.K. then it also called into question the abilities of Scottish political parties as a way to

---

<sup>42</sup>With the exception of the Scottish Conservative Party, there was a broad – but by no means complete- cross party consensus on the establishment of a Scottish Parliament (Brown et al 1999).

<sup>43</sup> The post war Scottish Consensus was that in many respects Scotland was special. Its higher than UK average industrial base and its proportion of nationalised industries, and their

express political agency. This dimension of the new politics is rarely examined. It also gives rise to ideas that are explored later in the thesis regarding new emerging forms of distributed discourse that move largely beyond orthodox politics per se and into support for alternative political actions and ideas.

For instance, the era of the political party as an organisation capable of mobilising and integrating the mass public into the democratic process has declined dramatically (Wolinetz 1990)<sup>44</sup>. Its position as an agent of relative political decline goes hand in hand, not only with the emergence of new types of political parties ('cartel parties'<sup>45</sup>) for instance (Mair 1998), but with new forms of political activism, such as new social movements and other forms of collective and distributed political behaviour (Greene et al 2001).

Within their Scottish context, new conceptions of citizenship began to emerge during the era of post war Scottish politics (Paterson, 1994). In particular, new ideas concerning the nature of the social contract between citizen and state were called into question, and a challenge to the unionist orthodoxy became populist rather than culturally elitist (Brand 1978).

---

supportive employment structure, meant that it was challenged by any withdrawal of a commitment towards them in a number of socio-economic, as well as political, ways.

<sup>44</sup> As Mair (1998) notes, the idea that parties are suffering from 'disintermediation' in that they no longer act as the sole or primary link between governed and government, is one that has gained common currency since the 1960's. This links in with the ICT frame of reference in that new teledemocratic power blocs may emerge as an alternative political force(s).

<sup>45</sup> The emergence of the cartel party is characterised by Mair (1998, *ibid.*) as a new form of political party that effectively embraces the machinery of state. In doing so it uses state resources for its own purposes and ends. The political party and the state then effectively fuse together to form an interdependent alliance of interests.

New political philosophies surfaced and began to question the generality of the state-citizen relationship. That there was a political existence beyond the state is (ironically within its Scottish dimension) fuelled by Thatcherism and its emphatic embrace of the individual and 'free-association'.

This re-arranged the post war social contract, by a form of negotiation as it were, in those regions of England that voted for such a settlement, yet by imposition upon Scotland, which did not. The conditions of social contract built between citizens and state are premised upon the Lockean idea:

*'that will, not force, is the basis of government'* (Barker, 1960 pviii),

thus re-enforcing the concept of the democratic deficit within a strident populist conception of legitimacy. The re-composition of political life then, established a field of relations relative to structural change, which asserted the primacy of citizenship outwith orthodox political institutions, it established the basic premises for an alternative politics of participation. This aspect of political culture is now evidential within the contemporary nature of Scottish politics. Issues such as Section 2A, and citizen initiatives aimed at its resolution, have their roots within the new conditions of the citizen-state axis<sup>46</sup>. It is in this sense that Snellen's contention (2001, p45) that citizens are becoming more inclined towards: *'direct democratic arrangements'*

begins to highlight the legitimization problems of a democratic society that moves progressively towards more partnership based forms of governance.

---

<sup>46</sup> For example, the movement during the last ten to fifteen years from a more collectively inclined state, towards a model stressing privatism and the primacy of the individual' (see chapter six Table 6.1 p328 for example)

For example, problems may arise from the conditions of extended democracy itself. A system that can be engineered, via informatisation and with the given political will, to ensure that all citizens have potentially the ability to take part in the political process, may produce additional pressures upon representative democracy. This latter point, of participation and political inclusion, is a theme which exists throughout much of the literature and political rhetoric which surrounds the new democratic arrangements in Scotland (CSG 1998, Hassan, 1999, McConnell 1999). At one level it operates in order to reverse the decline in electoral turnouts, and at another it draws attention to the risks associated with a system which seeks to extend the possibilities of an informatised - interactive civil society, to within the process of institutional politics. This can be usefully considered in light of the above notion of citizen-party dis-intermediation, by which citizens become detached from relatively stable party allegiance (Smith 1998). This, coupled with increasing non electoral participation<sup>47</sup>, highlights the possibilities for new forms of informatised political practices that may present themselves within the new political arrangements. For instance, the ability of citizens to register their political preference within public/private sites such as supermarkets and their homes, through electronic access. In this sense E-voting via the Internet is being charged as a potential boost for participation. Test schemes are being backed by the Scottish Executive in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland and are due to start in 2002 for a three year test period (Ross 2001).

---

<sup>47</sup> Turnouts for recent Scottish elections (May and June 1999), were just over half of those eligible to vote. Participation in Scottish elections is inversely related to age. The younger the voter the less likely he/she is to vote Scottish Household Survey (1999) Annual Report. This has two principal themes worthy of mention: the first is that as the older population declines, or its rate of morbidity increases, less of this ascending age group will be able to participate. Secondly, data for the cohort of younger voters (those between 18-24) shows that less than half participated in the elections for a Scottish Parliament. If this figure increases, and as the

This evidences the fact that the links between some sections of the electorate and the orthodox political process is narrow. In turn, this calls into question the ability of conventional political parties to motivate citizens in the process. Moreover, it invites attention to the detail of political alternatives. It is to this that we now turn.

#### **1.4.4 Alternative forms of citizen participation. Alternative democratic mechanisms and new politics**

The relative decline in party based politics is accompanied by new forms of activism and a new politics of participation in alternative forms of citizenship much of it of the online variety<sup>48</sup>. There are related themes here inasmuch as they offer possibilities for a new version of political conduct and expression which is formulated not only through the new Scottish parliamentary system, but which is also realisable through new forms of electronic political debate and participation (Depla and Tops, 1995; Little et al., 2001 ).

However, there are other less evident, but perhaps emergent tensions contained here. Namely the contradictions to be found within a democratic society which has potentials for a form of direct *teledemocracy*, and the nature of representative, or parliamentary democracy which by, political necessity and its *raison d'être*, must stand opposed to the extension of such possibilities. For example, Dalton and Wattenberg (2000 ) make the assertion that the expansion of citizen interest groups poses a challenge to orthodox representational party modes. The challenge comes from the fact that increasingly certain groups are gaining access to government. As such, they

---

older voters decrease, then it is possible that the legitimacy of the Parliamentary process in Scotland will tail off also.

may lobby on behalf of specific issues directly to the governmental ministers or agencies involved, by-passing as it were the political party on the way (Jones et al., 2001). This in turn raises the issue of policy making within an increasingly informatised society. The tensions of governing an informatised society become more pronounced within such ideas. This produces a further tension that we will now address.

#### **1.4.5 Alternative democratic mechanisms: problems of policy making in an informatised environment**

The themes highlighted in the previous section raise questions not only about the most appropriate mechanisms with which to involve civil society/citizens in the political process (effectively about how they might participate, that is how they might influence either the selection of governmental personnel, or indeed the actions that they take once in office: Verba et al., 1980), associated themes

also present themselves. These permit critiques of the rational – comprehensive nature of political problem solving, whereby policy is pursued in supposedly logical and normative stages<sup>49</sup> (van de Donk 1998 ). Other alternatives exist outwith these orthodox frameworks. For example, non – incrementalist forms of political action, are favoured by direct democrats (Becker and Slaton, 2000). It is informatisation that effectively allows such questions to be raised at all, and which as van de Donk (1998) notes, is arguably calling into question the established foundations of democracy.

---

<sup>49</sup>See for example 'Labour Left Briefing UK' @ <http://www.llb.labournet.org.uk>. Or, the Direct Democracy Campaign @ <http://www.homeusers.prestel.co.uk/rodmell/case.htm>).

<sup>40</sup> For instance, within the concept of incrementalism. This is a conception of policy being rationally applied in an increasingly cumulative fashion. Here the political environment is

This is an attack on two particular fronts and suggests another important dimension of the thesis. The first position we have already identified: this is evident in the assertion that more direct democratic initiatives are increasingly likely to occur in the future. However, there is another component which turns upon the opposite dimension: one that is associated with the changing technocratic remit of the state.

In this manner the arguments for intelligent government/wired government (Grieco 2000) are a reflection of the states desire to improve not only its technical efficiency, but also its political reach<sup>50</sup>.

For instance, policies which are developed according to a 'rational' incrementalism, which require changes to be made to existing older policies, are as it were 'upgraded', they are called into question by a new politics of technocratic immediacy. This is given shape within a bureaucratic format. which takes as its departure, the incrementalist analysis in favour of the more sophisticated, and often faster methods of policy development that informed governments/public administration have at their disposal.

---

steadily improved upon by the actions and ambitions of the representative system and its attendant bureaucracy (van de Donk 1998).

<sup>50</sup>'Reach' can be defined as *'the number of activities or processes actually touched by the infrastructure'* Cibarro (2000 p17). In this sense we can begin to see the importance of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (RIP) Act (Scotland) 2000 in that its reach is inclusive of all information based infrastructural components. For example, Ciborra (ibid.) provides us with a definition of these variables, which include; the IT components themselves; the human infrastructure (the social actors using the IT networks; the shared IT services; and the shared applications). These ideas are explored in chapters six when we consider the notion of surveillance and RIP. In this sense ICTs can work against democratic participation. As an example of this we are reminded, of information politics within Zuurmond's (1998 pp259-270) concept of the 'Infocracy'. For example, Zuurmond's theory maintains that increasingly control of political technology is exerted via the informatised bureaucracy of state, rather than through democratic structures such as parliaments. As such, the infocratic apparatus grows in capacity and telematic power, with a corresponding growth in its detachment from democratic arrangements. The model of the next millennium, the infocracy, (van de Donk and Snellen 1998) makes rapid advances, whilst the appropriate democratic structures lag behind. The bureaucratic infrastructure (the power of the mainframe), supersedes that of the disparate PC user. In this sense the 'reach' of the state extends into their personal domains (via the PC).



There are implications here not only for the delivery of policies, but the democratic scope of government, and their ability to 'keep up' with the information elite's within the civil service and public sector. For instance, the computerised tools available to public sector elite's (such as Geographic information Systems: GIS, relational databases, and data-coupling: Bekkers and Duivenboden, 1995 p213<sup>51</sup>) enable them to produce economic/social/political models which are technocratically sophisticated, and have the legitimacy of 'neutrality' about them also (Snellen, 2001). The point is that as these models appear more suited to goal attainment, it is therefore less easy for politicians to negotiate alternatives when confronted by technical 'experts' (Snellen *ibid.*). We can observe then, *two contrasting points of tension* within the issues of incrementalism. There are pressures upon democracy emanating from an informatised civil society and possible variations on the theme of direct democracy. Here a non incrementalist version of politics can be observed in policies enacted via direct democratic methods from *below* (van de Donk, 1998). Moreover, another electronic dimension within public administration exists to exert pressure from *above*. The new technocratic scheme is another critical tension within twenty first century politics and

---

<sup>51</sup> As Bekkers and van Duivenboden (1995) note, inter-sectoral information systems facilitate the trend towards an overall inter-connection of the different information resources that are used in the different stages of the policy making process; Initiation; information; consideration; decision; implementation; evaluation; termination. These are a division of political and administrative labour. In policy areas where informatisation is a strong feature, the collection of data ensures a relatively continuous feedback system. Informatisation then allows the evaluation and monitoring of data leading towards overall policy outcomes. Informatisation parallels the network character of policy domains. Relationships between bureaucratic agencies and their societal environment are supported by an infrastructure of common databases, communication facilities and rules and procedures for information handling and communication. The integration and the standardisation of information management in this regard is as important as the movement towards greater interactivity and accessibility in the use of that information. Moreover, standardisation and integration now move beyond existing organisational borders. For example, data-coupling is concerned not only with the technical level of intra and inter organisational data bases, but also regards the 'hyperlinks' that are established between different levels.

government. In this way, informatisation brings with it channels of influence which flow from bureaucracies themselves, *around* democratic mechanisms designed to keep them checked, and from citizen based distributed initiatives that can operate to challenge established forms. This invites a discussion of how political institutions might attempt to utilise informatisation to avoid such possibilities, and as a means of tightening the existing democratic fit between citizens and state. Moreover, we must consider the nature of informatisation within its Scottish context, and its wider remit of European Union direction. This is necessary due to the initiation of a European wide information policy proposals which, as we shall see (in chapter two), have specific implications for Scotland. In the first instance however, we will address other methods aimed at deepening and extending democracy in the Scottish context.

#### **1.4.6 Political responses to democratic pressures and deficits:**

##### **New Institutionalism and the Scottish Parliament**

The institutionalist element of informatisation<sup>52</sup> operates in contrast to both of the above models of future politics, it stresses the opportunity for a new type of governance which is established via new innovative methods and procedural arrangements (including in the case of the Scottish Parliament) the adoption of an electronic information infrastructure. These include arrangements for electronic on-line voting for MSPs within the plenary itself.

---

<sup>52</sup> In this manner informatisation is used, in theory, to move a political system in a transformational direction. In this sense the conception of the post war Scottish political system as a technocratic organisation is an important starting point for the thesis (this is outlined in detail in chapter two). The importance is to be found within the designs which have been laid down in the CSG Report of 1998. This was established to act as a blue-print for transformation. As Dorbeck - Jung notes (1998), an '*organisation*' operates independently of civil society. An '*institution*' on the other hand strives to become part of the social fabric of a society. This is a key component of Transformational Politics, which establishes a method of arriving at preferred futures. This is explored in detail in forthcoming chapters, in particular in chapter three: Theory and Methodology.

An analysis of how the MSPs voted via the new electronic voting system is available as a web-site feature to citizens ([www.scottish.parliament.uk](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk)). Developments in electronic governance such as these, it is maintained (CSG 1998), will encourage greater dialogue between citizens and governing institutions inasmuch as the voting patterns of MSPs are now available in electronic form, and supposedly equates with those elements of transparency<sup>53</sup> that are deemed central to the new Scottish governmental model. (CSG, @<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/news/2000/03/se0928.asp>)

Additionally, the informatisation of communities and localised agencies (including local government and civil society) is seen as a necessary precursor, without which transformational strategies are unlikely to succeed (Hall 2000)<sup>54</sup>. The informatisation of community is seen as a collaborative approach towards governance, as a mechanism for involving Scottish civil society in the affairs of the polity, and as a means of undermining social/political and geographical exclusion ('Social justice Annual Report for Scotland 2000: Social Inclusion partnership Areas'. See [www.scotland.gov.uk/library3/social/sjm-03.asp](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library3/social/sjm-03.asp)).

New governmental practices, new social partnerships in the form of collaboration with the private sector and with voluntary organisations, are a component of the new system (Corry et al., 1997).

---

<sup>53</sup> 'Transparency' is used to denote certain aspects of the new politics in Scotland. For example, the ability of citizens to scan the activities of their political representatives. This is seen as central to the success of democratic systems. Accordingly, the citizens become closer to the system itself, traditional barriers are theoretically broken down. Public access to information in turn encourages MSPs to become more open in respect of their political behaviour. (van de Donk, Snellen & Tops, 1995; Maes, 1998; Reichard, 1998) ,

<sup>54</sup> The Labour administrations commitment to social inclusion is evident as a relevant strategy in this respect. It is operative at a number of perspectives, including a special unit (at both UK and Scottish layers of government). Termed the 'action zone philosophy'

The aim is to unite plans to modernise the centralised machinery of government, alongside its devolved counterpart, in order to formulate new improvements in the delivery, and successful implementation of, government policy via new ways of thinking about governance itself, and the technological infrastructure deemed necessary to bring about a new politics of institutions. In this sense plans such as these are evidence of the existence of Transformational Politics within its Scottish context.

These are related to events taking place in Scotland in the shape of plans by the Scottish Executive to advance developments in the business of the digital infrastructure, and '21-st Century Government for Scotland'(McConnell, @<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/c21g/c21g.asp>) Including the capacity of the new Parliament to utilise ICTs in order to further the idea of citizen accessibility (Malina and MacIntosh 2000, Burns 1999<sup>55</sup>). Moreover, within the concept of social exclusion<sup>56</sup> there is a further communications dimension. For example, as Carter and Grieco note (2000pp,1735-1749) the new ICTs permit new forms of social relations. Hinged upon the deliverance of access, whether it be to services (or potential services) or to knowledge (and with it in

---

(Painter, 1999 p109). This statement of intent includes a commitment towards the reduction of exclusion

<sup>55</sup> These ideas and policy proposals themselves flow from European based directives, and in doing so alert us to the inter-connections between the various realms of government which now exist in Europe, and are made increasingly possible by new ICTs. For example, the European Social Charter as a component of the 1999 Amsterdam treaty (see Article 30: The right to protection against poverty and social exclusion) produced an overall strategy aimed at the development of a new philosophy of rights.

These edicts themselves are at the core of the Scottish Parliament's 'Social Inclusion, Housing and Voluntary Sector Committee' (@[www.scottish.parliament.uk](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk)).

<sup>56</sup> As Grieco ( 2001) notes ICTs have the capacity to enable those who are marginalised within communities to access each other and external policy agencies. The mixture of these virtual environments and a relatively low cost technology encourages the possibility of social inclusion and transformation.

a Foucauldian sense, power<sup>57</sup>) the authors point towards the transformational capabilities of the new collective technologies, social capital<sup>58</sup>, and labour contracts based upon exchange of services rather than the cash nexus. Accordingly, tele-access to sites of knowledge are dominant themes which go some way to reformulating social inclusion-exclusion and assist in the re-formulation of social relations(ibid. p1740). As such, the new politics has positions both inside and outwith organised political contexts. However, the next section examines the conventional machinery of government, and the new politics of collective political representation in relation to their orthodox formations.

#### **1.4.7 Political technologies and the institutionalist perspective**

Aside from the ICT based, informed components of the new politics other areas are worthy of mention. For instance, the institutional distinctions associated with the New Politics include the introduction in 1999 of proportional representation (rather than the previously dominant UK electoral '*first past the post*' system). There also emerged (following on from the CSG Report 1998, and the work of Crick and Millar, 1995) recommendations for a new set of Parliamentary procedures and mechanisms. Many of the dominant themes have a concern to ensure that the Scottish Parliament does not simply emulate Westminster in its working designs and its political-cultural characteristics (Mitchell 2000, Brown 2000).

---

<sup>57</sup> As we will observe, in chapter six, the positioning of informatised power is seen as a challenged concept. Power is fluid and constantly re-negotiated (Foucault, 1991a). This is increasingly achievable via ICTs and what he refers to as the 'micro-physics of power'. In this sense Foucault's ideas are re-positioned within their Scottish context, and in particular as they manifest the conditions of power through ICT networks themselves.

<sup>58</sup> Social Capital refers to the process of Associative Democracy (Hirst, 1994). Associations are built up from below, rather than the top down methodology of the state. In addition, the concept implies a wealth of social remuneration between contractually obliged individuals.

The use of proportional representation is part of the UK wide, New Labour initiated process of 'Modernising Government', as the following quote illustrates:

*'devolution and electoral reform are close partners in the modernisation of government and politics'* (McAllister, 2000,592).

The arrangements for a new electoral system incorporate what is termed as the additional members system feature<sup>59</sup> This form of voting arrangement invites the likelihood of coalition or 'consensual' government/governance. Moreover, proportional representation also offered an opportunity to help prevent the overall majority that would have been possible under the 'first past the post' arrangements. Thus ensuring that the SNP are unlikely to have such a capacity, even if it meant that under these new conditions the Labour party, who implemented them in the form of the Scotland Act (1998(<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk>), would have themselves to share power (Bonney 1999, Mitchell 2000), institutional change was also enacted in the form of a cross party committee system: the Parliamentary committees were considered as a central part of the development and enactment of policy. They were taken to be capable of offering an effective form of checks and balances in relation to the power of the Executive (Burns 1999). However, the new Scottish political arrangements are regulated by the over-riding powers contained within the Executive branch of Scottish

---

<sup>59</sup> Or as Mair (1998 p200) describes it in his account of the history of party systems, (and the competition for government that such systems are able or likely to produce) a '*working multiparty system*' whereby there is, or appears to be, a broad degree of consensus, and little 'ideological distance'. Similarly, the new electoral system in turn was thought unlikely to produce a majority government. This would lead, its proponents argued, to new forms of

Government<sup>60</sup>. It for instance, has the power to supersede the wishes of the Parliament and the Committees themselves. That this is possible is evidenced from the past conduct of the Executive<sup>61</sup>. The limitations and ambitions of government can be attributed to discourse. So far we have observed the discourse of 'openness, accountability transparency' as attributes of intent cast within Scottish politics. However, it should be noted that the new political settlement within Scotland plays upon the semantics of *symbolic politics* (Fox and Miller 1995). For example, by manipulating political symbols a position can be developed and advanced. For the presentation of a logical political entity, and for the sake of political consistency, it will be necessary to define, or re-interpret a given situation through narrative. When we consider the logic of the 'Information Union' (in chapter six) we are in effect thinking about a political strategy aimed at developing a consistency of steering mechanisms and procedures.

The devolution settlement has upset previous normative designs and integrative mechanisms. Therefore, new techniques are needed to re-align and reform such processes in a united fashion with the rest of the U.K.

---

consensus and negotiation within government, and a more consultative approach towards political decisions and processes (SPICE Research Paper. 1999. *ibid.* p14).

<sup>60</sup>The Executive branch of Scottish government is the group of senior ministers. These can be defined further as: the First Minister; other Ministers appointed by the First Minister; two law officers consisting of the Lord Advocate and the Solicitor General for Scotland (SPICE Research Note RN 99/54, 9/12/1999).

<sup>61</sup>For example, on 8/3/2001 the Executive refused to accept defeat by a Parliamentary majority. The ruling labour-liberal Democrat Executive did not accept the decision. Indeed, the 'expressions' of the Parliament are not a binding force over the executive themselves. They are able to make an overarching decision themselves. In this sense the Parliament can be seen as something akin to an advisory agency. With a range of powers such as these, the informatisation process can be further considered in terms of the reinforcement of politics thesis that we develop in chapter three. Expressed simply, this position maintains that political technologies (specifically informatisation/political computing programmes) are designed and implemented to further the interests of controlling elite factions within institutions. The analogy is evidenced by the development of orthodox political technologies which support existing power relations. Institutions have primacy over ideals.

The New Scottish Politics of Information is also concerned, I argue, with the 'struggle for meaning capture' (Fox and Miller *ibid.* p66). This can be located within Scottish politics, and has found expression within a *new semantic union*. For example, in chapter two we examine the shifts in the balance of Scottish democracy, and the transition from technocracy towards democracy. As such we look at the existence and function of the Scottish Office. A contemporary strategy has emerged which also seeks to use the administrative and organisational features of Scottish public administration within new semantic-political forms. These forms are suggestive of another type of information union: that between the Scottish executive branch of government and Scottish public administration.

This thesis evidences this fact as a way of explaining the context within which the information union is set. It is a semantic strategy established to suggest a new institutionalism. For example, within the United Kingdom as a whole the terminology of 'government' is used to signify the entire executive branch of government (in other words ministers themselves) and the administrative complex i.e. (officials and the civil service: the political bureaucracy).

The Scottish executive branch of government adopted this terminology on 29/6/2001 (*'The Scottish Executive: a new name for a new era'*: Scottish Executive press release no. 1363/99).

The difference between the two branches of political power resides in the usage of the term '*The*'. For instance, 'the' Scottish Executive is the statutory term used to signify those senior ministers within the devolved Scottish government. On the other hand 'Scottish Executive' is the name chosen by the



government as a descriptive term for the devolved administrative organisation.

This term has been chosen *'in preference to the statutory term 'Scottish Administration'* (SPICE Research Note no. 99/54). These seemingly minor distinctions in terminology rest upon a definition co-incidence which is designed to present a shared conceptual idea: that of union.

As Fox and Miler (1995 p99) note:

*'Bureaucracy is not a neutral sign in the market place of ideas. Signs guide us in framing what we perceive and already imply a judgement of.....the sign bureaucracy enjoys special status in this respect.....it serves as a vehicle for the control and distribution of many other ideas'*

These developing notions should be asserted within the context of symbolic politics. These unified terms suggest an aggregation of identity and purpose that the thesis argues is similarly represented by the developing information union.

### **1.5.1 Conclusion**

This chapter has examined the new political process of Scottish politics, including the problem of order and the need for a new legitimacy.

The principal features of the new politics were established within the context of *ideals* and *institutions*. The idealist dimension offered a vision of new political reason which sought to reverse the old politics of deficit and decline and the demise of the social contract. We also observed the development of alternative forms of citizen participation and problems of policy making in an informatised environment. Critical tensions were highlighted as evident, and

were established as political responses to democratic pressures and deficits. Future implications for democratic informatisation in a new Scottish democracy were established and premised. Now however, we turn to an account of Scottish politics since the post war era. In the following chapter we will observe shifts in the balance of Scottish democracy. In particular, we trace the outlines of the post war period and the emergence of a number of key themes and issues. This includes the initial development of the Scottish technocratic system during the post war years. This has particular relevance to the thesis and its hypotheses concerning the new politics of infocratisation that is being developed across the U.K. The technocratic remit is being re-established and informatised. As such, technocracy is re-engineered through informatisation policies and practices.

Moreover, the following chapter illustrates further the historical moment of Scottish politics in relation to a series of key themes which have a dialectical relationship. For instance, Scottish economic decline is established as a point of tension in terms of the emergence of an economic surplus. This occurs in direct contrast with the generation of North Sea Oil during the mid 1970s. However, economic surplus is not automatically translated into democratic power. As such we witness the development of an alternative political agenda in Scotland. The following section offers a summary of the forthcoming chapters and the themes that they contain. It helps to establish a summary of this chapter in its own right, and the relevance of its arguments as they may be considered in terms of other emergent themes.

### **1.6.1 The lexicon of New Politics: a summary of forthcoming chapters**

#### **Chapter Two: Shifts in the balance of Scottish democracy: from the far side of the historical circumference towards a new information union**

This provides a detailed account of the evolution of the post war Scottish political environment. It establishes the conditions under which one of the principal thesis themes is examined: the expression of a democracy denied its full political ambitions. This chapter accounts for the principle mechanisms which give rise to this phenomena. An account of the changing nature of Scottish political culture provides us with a perspective on the present, which is in turn firmly located in the recent past. This is a necessary precondition for an exploration of the developing historical moment. It sets down the influential themes which we then develop in greater methodological reflection in chapter three.

#### **Chapter Three: a theory of Transformational Politics**

This chapter develops a theoretical account of Transformational Politics. The emergence of a new political settlement in Scotland is set amongst those theories which support the process of organisational change. The movement towards a New Politics in Scotland involves the rhetoric of political-institutional change. We consider the nature of such positions within a supporting theoretical perspective. In addition, the symbolic nature of Scottish politics is explored. This is then contrasted with a set of empirically oriented theories, which generate ideas concerning the place of informatisation in the Scottish political framework. In addition, the research methodology and accounts of the empirical and evidential base is submitted.

## **Chapter four: Scottish Parliamentary Elites and Political Computing**

This chapter submits the attitudes and concerns associated with political computing, and its position within the new Scottish politics of information, from the perspective of those charged with its development. Information technology elite's from within the Scottish Parliamentary Cross Party Group on Information, Knowledge and Enlightenment (SPIKE) provide the empirical base for this approach.

Accordingly, this chapter examines the relations between changing political practices and political computing. Informatisation as a concept is presented within a series of contexts that ensures the engagement of its democratic benefit in contrast with the conditions of Reinforcement Politics. The informatisation process is established as the technical infrastructure of the new institutionalism, and then detailed within its parliamentary feature of social and political exclusion. In this way a model of informatisation is presented and future theoretical understandings of informatisation evaluated as credible, or otherwise, political technologies. Previously introduced themes are extended from a unique account of the MSPs and the interpretation of political practice and the new model of informatisation encountered within the Scottish political system. One of the overarching themes therefore is the potency of informatisation as it relates to sub-politics and the possibility of a displacement of politics from the centre. Moreover, the political independence of time and place (a key feature of informatisation politics) is examined as a concept. This provides evidence for the possibilities of virtual politics within the Scottish context. In addition, the concepts of political reformation or reinforcement (already established within the thesis in chapter three) are measured against a political theory of the Scottish parliament and elite groups within it.

## **Chapter five: The new politics of agency and institution: sub – politics and participation, an audit of Parliamentary democracy in Scotland**

This chapter provides an account of the new politics of modernisation and informatisation. Here we examine the extension of political technologies, computing and the informatisation of community. These issues serve as specific terms of reference towards the notions that surround electronic government and electronic politics. We also consider particular models of communication and their positioning within the political system. Additionally, this chapter examines a theory of Scottish political informatisation and participation. Thematic continuities are extended in terms of a new politics of agency and institution, and in particular the work of Ulrich Beck and his theory of sub-politics and participation. This is considered within its Scottish context.

We also produce a theory of political participation which considers the possibilities for a displacement of centralised power: this is achieved within an understanding of the contemporary origins of the citizen participation debate. Citizenship and new forms of democratic participation are scrutinised within the empirical context of Sub-politics and the Scottish Parliament's Public Petitions Committee. This highlights the relations between political technologies and the opportunities of alternative politics within the Scottish setting. The displacement of power theme is then considered within the opportunities to use informatisation as a means of re-consolidating and centralising power.

## **Chapter six: a new information settlement: wiring up the Union**

This chapter pursues the thesis' main contention: that informatisation within its Scottish context is a means of re-establishing a new politics of the United Kingdom. This re-confirmation of centralised power is examined through the potentialities of informatisation to locate power at the centre, and to simultaneously undermine the political strategies of the Scottish Parliament, and those sub-systems within civil society that seek to use ICTs as a tool of political development. This chapter considers the strategic implications of a centralising strategy currently being developed through integrated infrastructures and the standardisation of information systems across the UK. In this manner it highlights a further set of tensions within the new Scottish politics of information. It explores themes encountered within a different guise in preceding chapters: the re-invention/modernisation of government by re-engineering the machinery of state. As such, this chapter details the reaction against governance and partnership politics, and the development of the UK infocracy. Infocratisation theory is positioned around the decline of the nation state in a globalised world and the strengthening of bureaucracy (as a means of countering such tendencies) via political computing.

This theoretical perspective is comprehended through its positioning as a technology of the centre: it stresses the authority of the mainframe in terms of its micro relations with the PC. To this end the chapter examines the fusion of technology and the imposition of the law upon the practices of cyber-space. We examine the imperatives of state control in relation to the new

political citizen based technologies of political interaction. These controlling state exercises are evidenced and presented empirically in relation to the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (Scotland) 2000

### **Chapter seven: Conclusion: From Technocracy to Teledemocracy?**

This chapter produces a concluding account of the 'New Scottish Politics of Information'. It details the links between informatisation and the tension between distributed technologies/distributed discourse, and those political forces that seek to use informatisation to re-wire, or consolidate, the United Kingdom. These political forces are a pivotal feature of the new Scottish politics of information, and the concluding chapter highlights their centrality within contemporary governance and Scottish civil society.

We offer an account of informatisation and political computing in its relation to political struggle and change.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Shifts in the balance of Scottish democracy: from the far side of the historical circumference towards a new Information Union**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter will act as an introduction to the development and history of governmental reform within Scotland during the post war era. It provides a detailed account of the evolution of the Scottish political environment during this time. It observes the political tensions evident in post war Scotland from the perspective of technocratic administration (in the form of the Scottish Office<sup>1</sup>), at odds with political culture. Accordingly, it establishes the conditions under which one of the principle thesis themes is examined: the expression of a democracy denied a measure of its full political ambition. This is a theme which gathers pace and momentum within Scottish civil society during this time scale, and gathers an equal measure of movement as the chapter develops. Moreover, we consider the changing nature of Scottish

---

<sup>1</sup> The Scottish Office occupies an important role within any understanding of politics North of the Border. Its position is important for the following reasons.

Firstly, it is an administrative body that effectively symbolises what is arguably the high point of the technocratic era, the twentieth century. This is the age of the expert and of a belief in scientific advancement through rationality. Established in 1939 the new organisation advanced its position largely after the last war. It did so in relation to its effective delivery of the new post war welfare state. As such, it created the conditions for its legitimacy, and indeed the legitimacy of administrative politics within the Scottish frame of reference. However, with a decline in the technocratic context (aided by attacks from both the 'New Left' and the 'New Right') its position became increasingly questionable. Furthermore, it contained an in-built tension which resonated throughout the latter part of twentieth century politics in Scotland. For instance the Westminster Parliamentary system observed a right of decision over the choice of Scottish Secretary of state (effectively a type of pro-consular position: Kellas 1992). Therefore, despite long associations with Scottish interests, and close working relations with much of Scottish civil society, the election of a radical Conservative party under Margaret Thatcher in 1979 broke the correlation between democracy and technocracy. In other words, a previous synthesis between political control and advocacy of Scottish interests declined rapidly. As the right wing agenda of the government pressed on with policies for which there was no popular Scottish mandate, the logic of neutrality previously applied to the Scottish Office, gradually dissolved (Brown et al 1996, McCrone 1992).



society from its previously peripheral position to, and its relations with, the European Union (EU). This set of political and economic conditions have emerged from a number of circumstances, and in particular, a declining Scottish faith in the ability of the United Kingdom to generate wealth, or to ensure the survival of the welfare state system in Scotland<sup>2</sup>. This effectively produced a counter – movement in Scotland which looked towards a Europe of the regions<sup>3</sup>. It sought to strengthen Scotland's position within the EU by aligning itself with more sympathetic European policies, in particular those initiatives aimed at including the more peripheral areas of Europe amidst a new set of opportunities (Harvie, 1992). This can be usefully contrasted with the relative post-war decline of the UK. Effectively, there has been a major shift in the polarities of Scottish political geography from a strong Scotland - UK dynamic, to one much more closely aligned with the European Union<sup>4</sup>.

---

<sup>2</sup> The failure to create the conditions for a vibrant economy, or to off-set lack of success by a welfare state, established a duality of opposition from within Scottish political culture. The application of monetarist economic policies under the Thatcher (and latterly that of the Major) administration was not well received in Scotland. The government would not acknowledge these differences in its Scottish based political agenda, or for that matter within its social policy framework for Scotland. This duality was combined with another: the disaffection of two classes. Both the middle classes and the working classes were effectively undermined by Thatcherist economic policies. The Scottish middle class had a set of vested interests to protect, many of whom were disproportionately employed within a public sector coming under increasing attack (Paterson 1994). The working classes also felt the full force of de-industrialisation and the re-structuring of the economy. This was especially so during the early 1980s when the impact of such conditions began to be realised. It is this context that gives rise to a re-consideration of the United Kingdom project within Scottish political culture. It is increasingly called into question in terms of the benefits and advantages that it once offered.

<sup>3</sup> For instance, the issue of European economic disparity received attention from the (then) European Community from 1972 onwards. The EC established a European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) to produce closer economic harmonisation throughout member states (George and Brache 2001).

<sup>4</sup> For instance, the former peripheral nature of Scotland in relation to the European Union has developed to a condition of centrality. The realisation from within (some elements) of Scottish politics is that the position of Europe has superseded that of the United Kingdom in terms of its future scale and relations of influence. This is what could be termed as the '*political economy of accession*' (Mayhew 1998 p200). In this sense the balance of advantage in terms of transition to expanded markets and so on has shifted towards the EU. With its integrative policies and subsidies, it is seen as more advantageous. In addition, there is the constitutional and cultural climate of the EU. This provides a further set of positive considerations for a small nation such as Scotland. The EU grants a stable political base within which to pursue the conditions of subsidiarity (subsidiarity implies that the process of decision making occurs at the lowest position within the democratic scheme of things), that has appeal to a Scotland

This shift has been made possible through a series of interactions between politics and technology. For example, the plans that have been established to commit Europe to a joint 'Information Society' initiative<sup>5</sup>, have moved Europe towards a set of guiding principles that stress an overall information based strategy. These policies establish the foundations for a revival of the Scottish economy and a re-positioning of its political interface with Europe. Both conditions revolve around the establishment of a set of electronic connections between Scotland and the EU. For example, the European Union structural funding project<sup>6</sup> has established a set of policy lines that offer the possibility of a *new inclusive* vision for a united and informatised Europe. Its economic ambitions offer a new potential for member states and regions to re-vitalise their economies through the development of public policy objectives, e-commerce and enterprise<sup>7</sup>. This attaches credence to their position within Scotland, and in turn forges a new association for her identification with Europe. For example, the European Commission's (1996) 'Action Plan' (Europe's way to the Information Society: COM. 1996) proposed a number of

---

long used to the application of a centralised state (Brown et al 1996). The cultural position is accompanied by the revival of European sentiments. These can be related to the progressive modernisation of European politics, especially when contrasted with the narrow definitions of Europe supplied by the English media (and the traditional Scottish antagonism to their largely insular accounts of alternative political-cultural scenarios. Brown et al 1996, McCrone 1992, Paterson 1999).

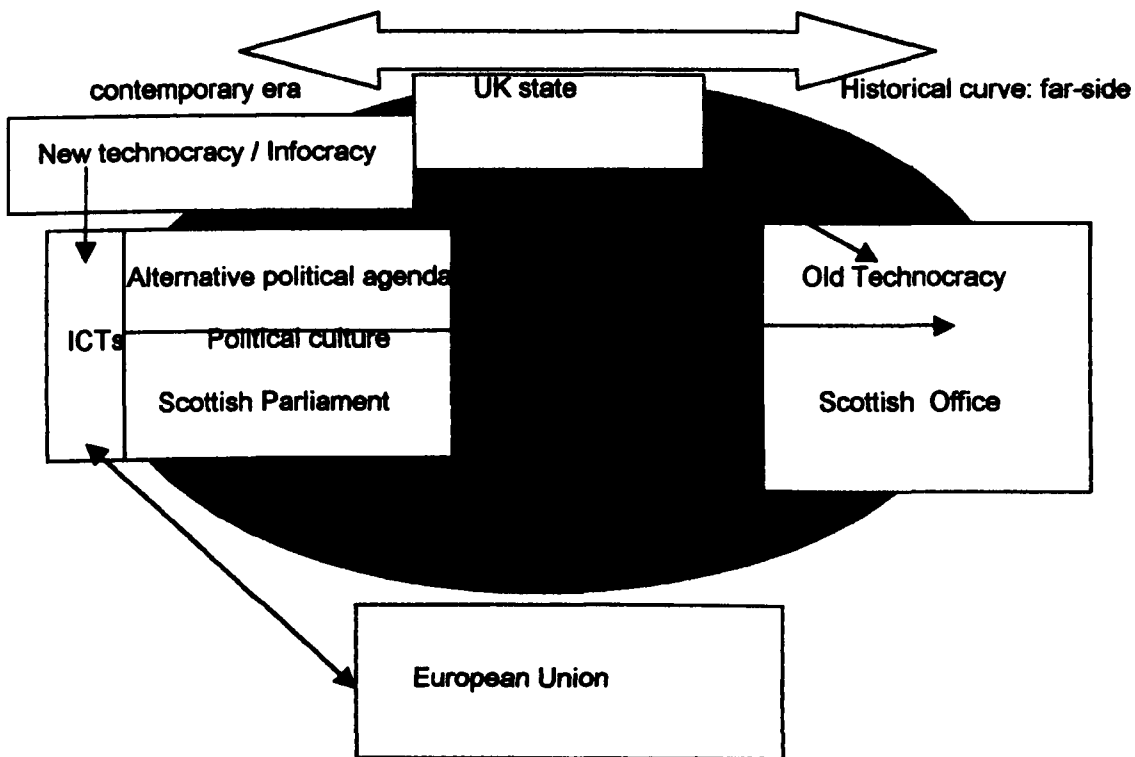
<sup>5</sup> See for instance 'Europe and the Global Information Society: Recommendations to the European Council' @ [www.ispo.cec.be/infosoc/backg/bangemann.html](http://www.ispo.cec.be/infosoc/backg/bangemann.html).

<sup>6</sup> Structural funding was developed as a component of the EU's development. Its function is to promote cohesion and to '*signify the importance of promoting the development of the poorer regions and countries of the EU*' (Allen, 2000, p244).

<sup>7</sup> E-commerce in the EU has grown from £6bn in 1999, to a figure approaching £120bn by 2003 (source: European Survey of Information Society ([www.ispo.cec.be/esis/](http://www.ispo.cec.be/esis/))). Scotland has benefited from such funding: '*The European structural funds support and complement important policy objectives (in the Scottish Parliament)...in particular (they are ) in line with European and UK priorities, in complementing our policy objectives in enterprise and work related training...structural funds also support new technologies and the development of the information society....the allocation for the Scottish operational programme amounts to some £480 million (between) 2000 to 2006*'. Former Minister for Finance in the Scottish Parliament (Mr Jack McConnell:28/10/1999. Scottish Parliament Official Parliament @ [www.scottish.parliament.uk/official\\_report/session99-00/or30202.htm](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/official_report/session99-00/or30202.htm)).

social security, social policy programmes and initiatives<sup>8</sup>. The distribution of such programmes is disseminated increasingly through information architecture. In this way information technologies have begun to re-position the Scottish political system<sup>9</sup>. The role of the EU therefore has both social and constitutional concerns for Scotland. All of which are represented in figurative form below, (see Figure 2.1).

**Figure 2.1 The historical curve of Scottish Post war politics**



<sup>8</sup> These include: 'improving the business environment; enhancing Europe's knowledge base by investing in research, education and learning; working for more integrated policy with a view to social and security issues; and meeting the global challenge by promoting the information society on a global scale' (Antirroko 2000 p 32).

<sup>9</sup> They have reconfigured the role of a nation without a state (McCrone 1992) within the impact of an expanding Europe of the regions at one level, and as a supra-national entity in its own right. The formerly narrow political distribution of small countries such as Scotland take on a new perspective when seen through the lens of an expanding European Union.

This is an example of how Scotland has been granted a new set of potential power relations within the European context. The Figure illustrates the designs of the chapter within the wider dimensions of the thesis. It offers a model of the changing set of relations between Scotland, the UK and the EU. Scotland occupies the central shaded area with the U.K state over-arching its political-social environment. The interface between Scotland's political future is determined by the wider political and cultural arrangements, and their positioning by turn, around informatisation (represented in the Figure as 'ICTs'). As such, the Figure illustrates the 'historical curve' that the distribution of an alternative Scottish political agenda has established. The re-alignment of this new culture is marked by a number of features: the establishment of the Scottish Parliament, and the demise of the old technocratic administration (the Scottish Office). Yet these designs for autonomy and devolution are tempered by the emergence of the infocracy, and the information union. The European Union therefore is to be viewed as an additional dimension in the interface between Scotland and the U.K. The connection between these two variables depends on the ability of Scotland to position itself within the new European logic/enterprise. This final point is represented by the two – way arrowed flow between ICTs and the E.U and the possibilities that this affords for Scotland.

The Figure is a design on the unfolding history that this chapter details. It offers a configuration of politics which starts at the outset of the post war era and ends at the start of the twenty first century. The uniting themes are that the United Kingdom is re-making the Union through information technologies, off -setting the political technology of the Scottish Parliament in the process. We will now develop these themes.

## **2.21 From the far side of the historical circumference, towards a new information union**

The thesis argues that the UK project is being re-asserted via informatisation. As such, it considers the strategic implications of the centralising strategy<sup>10</sup>.

This chapter charts what is essentially the historical movement towards these developments. It defines the historical moment within Scottish political culture in a manner akin to a circumference. Put simply, this refers to the hypothesis that the United Kingdom is being re-made through information technologies, that it is being 're-wired' through a new means of union. This can be considered in relation to the strengthening of the centre over both the periphery, and the distributed. For instance, voting patterns have shown a movement away from the strong unionist affiliations of the early post war era (McCrone 1992). Secondly, the position offered by ICTs affords a further diffusion from the centre, out into the context of networks and distributed technologies (Greene et al 2001, Little et al 2001). However, control technologies are able, it is argued, to reverse such trends. Further moves towards the creation of an information union are evident (in their reasoning) in terms of post-war Anglo-Scottish political divergence (Paterson 1994).

---

<sup>10</sup> This includes an account of Integrated infrastructures and the standardisation of information systems at the UK level. It also examines informatisation as the dominant form of the information age. This focuses on the issues that are raised throughout chapter two, namely, the route towards devolution at the level of the United Kingdom and political developments therein, and the relative decline of the nation state. To this end the strengthening of bureaucracy via political computing is a tool with which to offset the political technologies of devolved governance, and the supra-national gravities of the EU. As such, it is a project aimed at countering the devolving effects of governance, and re-confirming the power of the centre. Within Zuurmonds infocracy (1998 *ibid.*) the informatisation process renders bureaucracy effectively invisible. Formalisation and standardisation are removed from the surface and displaced into the information architecture itself. The information union uses the maxim of increased service delivery and cost effectiveness to the tax payer-citizen to further the project.. These informatised relations regenerate the possibilities of the nation state, they renew the primacy of space and territory and give a new dimension to those elements of political geography placed under threat by globalisation and post-modernisation, de-territorialisation and virtualisation.

For instance, formerly strong Scottish inclinations to attach the country onto a powerful English neighbour are less evident than before<sup>11</sup>. However, the abilities afforded by ICTs to break down national barriers, are capable also of reconstituting them also. This is the nature of the re-wiring of the UK project. In order to comprehend the reasoning behind this we must examine the far side of the historical circumference. This is the aim of this chapter. It presents an account of the changing nature of Scottish political culture, and provides us with a perspective on the present, which is located in the recent past. This is a necessary precondition for an exploration of the developing historical moment. It sets down the influential themes (which we then develop in greater methodological detail in chapter three). However, we must address some of the sub-currents that have developed within Scottish politics during the post war period. The necessary associations are made clearer via an understanding of the connections between these currents and their methods

---

<sup>11</sup> For example, within the case study of Scotland the consistent failings of those who ruled after 1955 to be accorded, or to manufacture a common shared identity, is consistent with the decline in standing of the Westminster system, and a corresponding growth in the terminology of the exclusion/inclusion debate. The co-incidence of a growing Scottish cultural distinctiveness, and a set of economic indices which also indicated its failing position within the UK project, combined together to create an alternative political agenda from that of the rest of Britain, within which Scots could consider themselves excluded from the relevant political levers (Mitchell 1990, McCrone 1992). Scottishness shifted between a cultural identity which asserted its difference in terms of the distinctions rooted within Scottish civil society, and a later political form evident within the 1980s. This moment saw a new variety of Scottishness emerge, based upon social rights and their relationship towards community and citizenship, it established a critique of the existing administrative structures, and figured a new form of legitimacy within the idea that policy was being imposed upon it from outwith, and which had created a type of 'democratic deficit' in need of remedy. The administrative context of the Scottish Office was seen as a point of tension, it acted as a focal point for constitutional modernisation and reform (Paterson 1994). For example, that alternative forms of political representation were needed, and that the Scottish Office did not equate with a responsible form of democracy, and that its original administrative context had been overtaken, superseded by a new civil politics which sought a new structural framework. For instance, the administrative composition of the Scottish Office was not designed to cater to specifically Scottish requirements, nor to initiate policy (Fry 1987). Rather it was a mechanism designed to implement technical conservatism by way of: *'British 'plans and programmes within a Scottish setting'* (Mitchell *ibid*, p127). The decline of the Unionist party vote in Scotland has collapsed since the 1955 general election. At this moment it collected some 50.4% of the vote. However, by 1987 this figure had halved in total to some 24%. By 1997 the Conservative and Unionist party vote in Scotland had fallen to 17.5% returning them no Scottish seats at Westminster at all (Source: McCrone 1992, Brown et al 1996).

of communication, in particular the role of political journalism and the development of an alternative agenda within Scottish political and public affairs. Furthermore, this chapter will make the appropriate links between the demands for political reform, evidential in terms of the demands made for the extension of Scottish democracy evident from the 1960s onwards (Paterson, 1994), and the role that new technologies play in linking up the principal themes. For instance, the reaction against a rationalised technocratic society during the 1960s invoked by what Daniel Bell (1999.p365) described as a '*participation revolution*', and the role now played by Information Communication Technologies can be regarded as a key linking moment.

For instance, the demands made during the 1960s and 70s for more extensive and more participative forms of democracy including those with a tele-democratic vision, such as Erich Fromm(1960)<sup>12</sup> with his radical political psycho-analysis within which an 'impaired' society can be remedied via a deliberative communicative democracy enabled by new social technologies, are evident today<sup>13</sup>.

---

<sup>12</sup>The relevance here resides in the contrasting political philosophy of the technocrats, their desire to control, and with those alienated by the conditions they associated with such processes. For instance, Fromm (1960) found the communications quotient to be at the heart of the modern condition. Like his Frankfurt School contemporaries he produced an analysis of alienation. The connecting theme is that these thoughts were to be found at the heart of the reaction, forthcoming in this chapter, against technocracy. Fromm develops a theory of psychological identity that locates freedom with community. This has additional relevance in the following footnote, which in turn observes the communicative aspect of the individual and his/her place in a new model of society. This is associated with communitarianism, and the techno-communitarianism that is evident in New Labour policies. Moreover, as we will observe in chapter six there are links between the individual, psychological policing (which I term as 'cognitive policing') and the law in Scotland: the 'Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (Scotland) 2000' operates at such a level. Fromm's theory is turned upon its head as it were. The cognitive policing theory operates at the level of the individual to restrict their communications ability. The Act allows for the lawful interception of all electronic communications. In its ability to penetrate the security of the individual in a number of ways it restricts his/her communications power.

For instance, the new Scottish Parliament seeks to enlarge democratic participation via a set of key principles which aim to guide its working practices and to extend participation and accessibility and of creating new links between it and the institutions of government. As such, the search for a new set of political arrangements for a new era are common currency within debates about the Scottish Parliament and the forms and possibilities that might emerge from the new system.

We will also examine the role of Scottish civil society in advancing the case for political change, and provide an account of the principal moments involved in the denial and extension of Scottish democracy. One of the of the main themes of twentieth century Scottish politics is introduced, (the concept of a democratic deficit) and explored in detail, in terms of how political actors and Scottish civil society sought to overcome these deficiencies. This is in turn related to the shortcomings of traditional democratic outlets and mechanisms of representation, it is part of a broader movement which as Hassan and Warhurst (1999, p7) note, seeks to establish democratic initiatives and new methods of consultation between citizens and democratic structures:

---

<sup>13</sup> For instance, 'Third Way' politics makes much of its commitment towards developing and reinventing social connectivity (and government itself), by using new technology to implement new sets of political relations (see the 1998 internet discussion of the Third Way @<http://www.netnexus.org/debates/3way/Default.htm>). It aims to resurrect a form of what Robins and Webster (1999 p230) describe as '*techno-communitarianism*'. This addresses the undue concentration (during later post war years) on the primacy of the individual within political practice and philosophy. Rawls (1999 p457) describes this as best exemplified by '*the notion of private society*', whereby individuals pursue private ends, and in doing so neglect the wider social bonds and energies. The premise of techno – communitarianism is that, according to Robins and Webster (ibid p227), '*Communication is supposed to promote the idea of greater social intelligibility, which in turn is supposed to enhance the general concordance among peoples. Every social problem is formulated in terms of a new communications equation, and every solution is considered in terms of a communications fix*'. As Robins and Webster (1999) also note, the re-conceptualisation of 'community' around the linked notions of ICTs and communication, are a Third Way response to the atomised society prevalent after the extensive era of neo-liberalism.



*'people (are becoming) increasingly aware of the limitations of representative democracy and look for new forms of participative democracy to reconnect politics and policy to people'.*

This is in turn related to the advent of new information communication technologies and the possibilities they afford for a further contemporary extension of democracy in Scotland. The focal point is the manner in which ICTs have been credited with a perceived ability to enhance democracy in the Parliament itself, and to facilitate greater inclusion, participation and access by Scottish civil society (CSG Report. 1998. p173) (Gray and Smith , 1999). This has been a feature of the debate since 1995<sup>14</sup> and offers insight into the relative lack of political fit between Scottish political culture and its political administration. Accordingly, the demands for democratic reform made throughout the previous decades are viewed as an ongoing evolving feature. Scottish society, and Scottish political culture is involved in the process of resolving the remnants of past democratic deficiencies. However, new deficits emerge and present themselves within new conditions associated with change. For example, we evidence in forthcoming chapters that the Scottish Parliament's concerns at promoting engagement with new technologies is primarily economic in its focus.

This ensures the development of a new form of democratic deficit, one that reflects a key note of the mid 1970s: the use of an economic surplus (in the

---

<sup>14</sup> For example, in the work of Crick and Millar (1995) which set out to provide a draft model of information based arrangements for a future Parliament. The logic behind such ideas was to offer an information service which would, it was argued; *'(be) an important part of fulfilling the Scottish Constitutional Convention's aim to encourage an open, accessible and democratically accountable government and a participatory*

form of North Sea Oil) without reciprocal political representation. This is mirrored by the development of ICTs which are economic, rather than political-democratic, in their focus and application. The thesis evidences this fact and makes the argument that the economic drive behind the establishment of e-commerce is at odds with the democratic potential of informatisation.

In addition, within the political history of post war Scotland, we can observe another associated theme. The discussion, and the theoretical account of what constitutes 'good' or 'effective' government, is a keynote element of Scottish political culture during this era. Its contemporary element takes the substance of such themes and translates them into an ICT- modernisation set of agendas. For example, the designs upon a modern innovative Scottish Parliament focus their attention upon such ideas, particularly in terms of the issue of political and administrative 'transparency'<sup>15</sup>. The new ICTs are it is claimed (Wilson 1999), capable of bringing about a new interface between government and citizen. The notion of transparency takes as its starting point the possibility of a resurrection between these connections. This is one principal measurement of what equates with good governance. This is an address to the defining political issue of post war Scotland: the 'democratic deficit'. Or, as Taylor and Burt (2001 p58) style this political (and social) feature:

*'the phenomenon of citizen disengagement with conventional politics, or the*

---

*democracy which will bring Parliament and people closer together in determining what is best for Scotland'* (Crick and Millar, 1995.p29).

<sup>15</sup> To re-iterate from the previous chapter, the operations of government are open to citizen inspection for example (Raab 1998). This provides citizen inspection and therefore (it is argued) generated trust in governance.

*democratic deficit*'.

With this definition in place, we can observe an extension of the concept to include an association with the present. As such, the issue of modernising political institutions in order to produce economic efficiencies, rather than a new democratic order, is worthy of examination. This feature gives us further insights into the origins behind the formation of the New Scottish Politics. And in particular the role played by civil society in bringing about political and social change, when the system was largely unresponsive to its demands (during the 1980s and early 1990s for instance), and those contemporary desires and designs aimed at encouraging the reversal of those who do not currently participate in the political system (CSG report 1998. p9).

Additionally, there are more generalised international developments and shifts in the direction of post-modern<sup>16</sup> politics, which interact within the Scottish dimension<sup>17</sup>. The association is the process of modernising government in accordance with new informatised government rationalities:

*'While modernisation can be seen as a relatively linear process of differentiation, post-modernisation ... represents a shift towards de-*

---

<sup>16</sup> I adopt here Margetts (1999 P183) account of the most appropriate way to define this ambiguous term. She describes its characteristics as coming under the term of 'ante-postmodernism': (this term) *is intended to reject modernism without embracing the rather confusing philosophical associations of postmodernism*'. What the term does is give primacy to those arguments that suggest that we have entered into a new era, new times, without necessarily embracing the attacks on meta-narratives and support for relativism that accompanies other areas within post-modern theory.

<sup>17</sup> We should take these into account when making reference to a New Politics. Postmodernism as a term represents a mass of political and cultural configurations. However, to isolate a few of them illustrates the relative points of political departure between modern and post-modern. The formation of a new world order within which there exists an increasingly internationalised system of economic and political conformity is but one dimension. For example, we have the idea that the classical modern concept of the nation state as considered within a Westphalian model, whereby the relatively sovereign, territorially discreet, political community was in charge of its own destiny, and oversaw both a comprehensive fiscal, legal and monetary system) is perhaps politically, economically, culturally and ecologically out of date ( Kearney, 1997, Giddens 1998, Paterson 1994).

*differentiation or fragmentation. The pyramidal nature of public administration increasingly changes into an archipelago of network configurations'.*  
(Frissen 1998b p123).

However, in order to chart the encounter with these issues and their position in Scottish politics, it is necessary to examine the expansion of the state and its technocratic ambitions in post war Scotland.

### **2.2.2 The emergence of the Scottish technocratic system**

The condition of technocracy in its Scottish context is relative to the expansion of the Scottish Office. The expansion of the state during the post war period (until 1979, and the election of Margaret Thatcher) gave rise to arguments which set out a strong case for increased state intervention in the day to day running of social-economic and political life in Scotland (Brown et al 1996). These technocratic currents maintained that political problems and issues could be resolved through essentially technical methods of government and state-craft. This ruling model had political associations with science (both social and natural) and management-planning, and the expansion of the welfare state systems during the aftermath of the last war (Paterson 1994). Moreover, the technocratic system fused within its ranks certain elements of Scottish civil society. Engaging 'expert' advice and skills, meant consultation and deliberation with the professional classes (Bell 1999). This in turn assisted in attaching legitimacy to the system (Paterson 1994).

An engagement with technocracy in Scotland should also take into account the British perspective regarding the utilisation of North Sea Oil in the 1970s. In this sense, the responsibility for its revenue allocation was deemed to be

not a matter for Scottish concern (Kellas 1992). This in turn called into question the legitimacy of Scottish political organisation itself.

The Scottish Office increasingly became associated with British, rather than Scottish, interests. By contrast, the symbolism of the *new politics* has in turn centred around the use of a new set of legitimising practices and themes which place ideological distance between the past and the present.

The changing title of *the* Scottish Office (to simply 'Scottish Executive') is noteworthy in this regard. With a new name, it is assumed that a new principle of political process and institution will be clarified<sup>18</sup>.

For instance, the movement from a condition and context of technocracy to a more 'new institutionalist' approach should be further explored. We now turn towards an understanding of some of the reactions against technocracy that new institutionalism encompasses, and its composite ideological features.

---

<sup>18</sup> This approach is a component of the theoretical field of relations within governance. It is known as the 'new institutionalist' approach, and has its origins within micro-level approaches, themselves associated with the perspectives and emergence of the human relations movement in the social sciences. From this perspective informal structures are an important part of administrative reality and are a link between formal legal administrations and the complexity of the real world. In informal structures the issue is one of group culture and of contacts that are not incorporated into formal organisational structures, but are constituted by the individual opinions of the staff, it is the squaring of interests, rather than the following of legal rules. New institutionalism is characterised by co-operative work at both the horizontal as well as the vertical level Clegg (1990). Institutional theory has its roots in the sociological approaches developed by Berger and Luckman (1969), they argue that where organisational structures tend to become similar, this is not the result of ecologies (this perspective maintains that organisations are akin to population species with distinct ecology's or environments), rather that conditions sustain and also inhibit particular forms of organisational existence etc. Organisations are the result of the ways in which the infusion of values are reproduced/produced by people engaging in constructing institutional reality out of the cultural fabric that is available to them.

### 2.2.3 Organisation and power: the relations between technocracy and elite government

Here we can begin to see something of the links which help us understand the lineage between past features of public administration, including the historical ideas associated with technocracy, and political control<sup>19</sup>. Behind the principles which govern *social* organisation, there lies *political* organisation and the operation and use of power to achieve certain ends. So, the rationalisation of public administration goes hand in hand with the exercise of political power. There are those from both the left and the right of the political spectrum who see in such apparatus distinctly conservative political tendencies. From the left there are those such as Marcuse (1968) and Touraine (1974) who assert that technocracy is bound up within political-economy. Power, cannot be separated from this model of social relations (Touraine 1974). The reaction against technocracy is to be found, argues

---

<sup>19</sup>The foundations of this feature, its functional abilities, are in turn situated around the development of the new 'science' of statistical technique, or '*political statistics*' (Foucault 1991a: p77) which the state assumes for itself (during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries), and which takes the form of technological calculus, and other modes of effectively operationalising government and its actions (ibid. 1991 p99). Moreover, the '*police*' of state, within which these characteristics of seventeenth and eighteenth century power and administration are established (this historical moment also witnesses the birth of the concept of the nation state: '*a bounded area over which is exercised political power*' (Webster 1996 p58) emerges as a governmental technology. Its aim is to ensure the organisational intervention of the state in those domains which it considers to be in its sphere of interest. In effect it is a technology which operates, within Hood's conception of the apparatus of state, as a form of detecting tool (Hood 1983), with which it gauges the strength of its own operations, and those of other states, via political intelligence (Foucault ibid).

Similarly, scientific-rationality and kudos has long been associated with modernist twentieth century attempts at political reformation, and those ideologies supportive of plans to 're-invent government'. Many of these have centred upon the notion of 'efficiency' whether measured or defined in an economic or technical-administrative fashion. Some have focussed upon radical changes within the personnel of public administration as a means of executing the appropriate shifts, whilst others have sought technical solutions to perceived problems (Kavanagh, 1990.p7). For example, Kavanagh draws our attention to the feature of historical continuity present within these debates at the end of the nineteenth, and at periodic moments within the twentieth (1990.p7). He notes: '*At the beginning of the twentieth century...critics demanded 'National Efficiency', and in the 1960s, 'Modernisation' or 'Re-modernisation'. The thematic similarities between demands made by opinion formers in these two cases is remarkable and in both cases transcended party lines. For example, the main complaints of both were addressed to Britain's economic weakness, international decline, and the alleged amateurism and lack of expertise among administrative and economic elites*'.

Touraine, within the broad based counter-cultural movement of the late sixties which asserted the opposition between rule by specialist elites, and the will of the masses (Zijderveld 1972). Similar approaches come from the right and include the work of Noveak (1991). However, the links between contemporary developments and the recent Scottish technocratic era should be clarified further, particularly in terms of their relation to forthcoming themes. This is now addressed immediately below. The movement away from technocracy is the key to understanding its re-assembly at the dawn of the twenty first century via the new emergent information union.

#### **2.2.4 Scottish reactions to technocracy: the origins of an alternative political agenda**

We can find evidence of the reaction against technocratic administration within the realms of Scottish political history and culture. For instance, much of the campaign for a Scottish Parliament from the 1960s onwards focussed upon very similar thoughts. The political aspirations of many, centred around the notion of democratising the state. As Paterson notes:

*'From the 1960s onwards the campaign for home rule became entwined with a campaign to open up the system of consultation.. the state was...too powerful and had to be democratised.'*(Paterson 1999, p34).

However, there are other elements which correspond with the themes of power, organisation, rationalisation and technocracy which we need to examine also. They will act as a means of uncovering what lies beneath the

surface of power, technology and government. These will serve as a means of highlighting exploratory reactions against technocracy, and a more pronounced drive by citizens towards increasingly direct forms of democratic engagement. This is characterised by what is now termed as the new politics of participation<sup>20</sup>. In other words, contemporary use of the term has its roots within earlier political impulses and philosophies.

For instance, we can determine here some moments which are inclusive of the move away from technocracy, which Paterson cites as a result of a changing political environment during the late 60s early 70s (ibid.1994). We can observe new forms of politics, and new ideals about the conduct, direction and purpose of politics, which begin to emerge as a reaction to these previously held ideas. For instance, within Scottish politics and its political undercurrents:

---

<sup>20</sup> There is increasing evidence for a decline in citizen participation in conventional political engagement (Dalton and Wattenberg, 2000a; Taylor and Burt, 2001). Is there any evidence to suggest however that political parties are losing their role in the formation of democratic governance? (Smith1998). The question then arises then as to whether new social movements or interest groups are taking the place of political parties, or whether citizens are simply choosing to disengage from politics per se: a retreat into an increasingly privatised lifestyle. A brief recent history helps to clarify this debate: the perceived decline in the democratic link between citizens and parties can be located back to the early 1960s (as illustrated by the work of Almond and Verba1963). The authors suggested that political parties as vessels of political participation were diminishing in their authority, questioning Duverger's (1974) contention that mass parties signified the dominant means of political organisation and political participation (Scarrow 2000). However, if political parties are being dis-intermediated, then there is room to suggest that their place and position has been undermined by the 'participation revolution' of the 1960s and the additional components of sub-politics. These moments saw the rise of alternative political demands and forms of action. In addition, the concept of class de-alignment and class affiliation with political parties has, it is argued, weakened their role as mediators between citizen and state (Nash 2000a, 2000b). In addition, the perception held by some citizens that political parties pursue partisan group interests rather than the 'public' interest, has weakened the proportion of those who identify with political parties (Smith, ibid.). The contemporary context of the participatory citizen can be regarded as a: '*producer of social surplus*' (Maes 1998 p115). This notion develops the idea that the citizen has a series of network relations that can be developed for his/her own benefit (in place of the gaps left for instance by public sector reform) and for the overall good of their (chosen) community.



*'There was another strand to reflection at this time, which raised questions about what politics is. This was the thinking that is now loosely referred to as 1960s radicalism'. (Paterson 1994, p8).*

Nairn (1981) presents evidence of similar currents of thought, particularly in terms of a reaction against post war political crisis, orthodoxy, and a disaffection with the lack of a radical political agenda. Nairn suggests that the left-leaning intellectual political classes of the late sixties and early seventies, sought means whereby the workers might fuse with them, and thereby bring about a political reconstruction, a re-ordering of society. The student movement was to have been the catalyst for such developments, that somehow they were to provide the critical unrefined materials which could be translated into the dialogue of political change:

*'The student movement of the later 1960s was....the chosen vehicle for this outlook – the place where for a moment philosophy appeared to have discovered its own mass movement, capable of directly modifying social structures.'* (Nairn 1981 p 367).

This describes further elements which can be related to the development of an alternative political agenda. Let us now clarify this in greater detail, and make the appropriate linkages between the shape of this agenda and the directions it laid out for a new Scottish politics.

### **2.2.5 An alternative Scottish political agenda**

The concern with the pursuit of an alternative political agenda is evident also during the eighties and early nineties (McCrone 1992), and stems from these preceding years. It provides another foundation for an exploration of the origins of the forms associated with the new politics and the:

*'social environment of values which generated devolution' (Bonney, 1999)*

This quote illustrates the specifically Scottish social-political axis which, called into question the tenets and practices of Thatcherism, and its increasing connections with a dying British identity in Scotland (McCrone 1992). The notion of a democratic deficit came to epitomise this moment, and within Scottish politics is a common feature of criticism during the era. This has a recent historical form, and is to be located within the attempts to resolve the legitimisation problem afforded by consecutive 1980s English Conservative party parliamentary majorities, legitimate in England, and *constitutionally legitimate* in Scotland, but certainly not describable as government by consent. However, we should note other related areas of political life beyond the constitutional. An examination of Scottish civil society and its reactions, and the refracted forms of its expressions are worthwhile. It is to this that we now turn.

### **2.2.6 Culture against technocracy: Scottish civil society and political journalism**

As suggested above, there developed a commonly held notion that the Conservative government did not have a legitimate political mandate to govern in Scotland (Midwinter et al 1991).

The result was a broad based movement determined to formulate a new political settlement in Scotland via a devolved parliament. A new political and social context emerged within Scottish civil society and Scottish political culture, fuelled in part by the media's interpretation of the existing political deficiencies (Holliday 1992, Paterson 1994, Smith 1994). By pointing out the limitations of the existing structures of government, and their inability to apply a legitimate democratic force, Scottish political journalism promulgated an alternative political agenda to that of Thatcherism (Hutchinson 1987, Smith 1994). Indeed, as Holliday (1992 pp448-460) notes, the factors which assisted Scotland in resisting/limiting Thatcherism were largely cultural as opposed to institutional<sup>21</sup>. It is argued here that the Scottish political environment was best defined and measured in terms of its:

*'political culture and opinion (including the media) than by formal institutions'* (ibid. p459).

Moreover, the political boundaries of the existing institutional features are consistently called into question. There is a sustained scepticism regarding the democratic legitimacy of the Scottish Office, as McCrone (1992) notes there emerges during the latter stages of the twentieth century increasing demands for more direct democratic forms of control over the policy and practice of the Scottish Office<sup>22</sup>.

---

<sup>21</sup> The derivation of New Politics has been highlighted in chapter one in relation to the contrasting principles of ideals against institution. The blueprint for a new set of ideals and institutions is carried by a series of documents that promote a fusion of both: see CSG Report 1998 for instance. It sets out an idealist dimension in terms of a vision of new political reason, and the template for a new system.

<sup>22</sup> In other words, there existed within Scotland a set of political and economic tensions which emerged as a general feature of the post-war economic and military decline of the U.K as a

However, we will now establish the emergent stages of the post war political settlement, this will provide a political framework with which to explore these other theoretical issues in forthcoming chapters. This part of the chapter details the principle political, social and economic issues of the post war era, and their impact upon the contemporary. This is addressed below.

### **2.2.7 A register of Scottish politics since the post war era**

Scottish politics since the immediate post war era can be divide into five phases which allow for a changing political architecture<sup>23</sup>. These phases are inclusive of the period between 1945-1999, and taken as a whole suggest the course of Scottish political culture during the era in question. They are the essence, as it were, of the defining political issues and agendas during the post war years (up until the moment of the new Information Union which is not included within this depiction), the principal moments can be represented in Table form below (Table 2. 1).

---

whole, the collapse of the post war consensus, political divergence as manifested by political behaviour, and as a more precise effect of the Thatcher administrations pursuit of monetarist macro economic policies and their perceived assault on a more public sector dependant Scottish society (McCrone1992).

<sup>23</sup> I have adopted these temporal phases from the schema used by Miller (1981).

**Table 2.1**

**The Scottish post-war model of political-bureaucratic transition**

<b>Traditional models of public administration</b>	<b>New models of governance</b>
Traditional principles of 'old' public administration: Scottish technocracy within United Kingdom	Emergent principles of 'new' public management, entrepreneurial governance and new institutionalism. An EU synthesis.
Uniformity of provision: the administration (or equity principle). Citizen cast within a collective notion of social contract.	Targeted provision in search of economy, efficiency and effectiveness: the business principle within administration. Citizen as possessing individual interests.
Hierarchical structure in bureaucratic organisation: the top-down control principle (Weberian). State is provider of services.  Nationalised industries.	Effector principles: network management, performance stressed over procedure.  Public/Private partnerships. State is regulator/purchaser.
Relative sovereignty of the nation-state.  Public service broadcasting.	Informatisation policies and the integrative principle. Trans-national flows of communication and information.
Paternalistic relationships to clients etc:  the professional principle. Determination of policy by technocratic elite's.	Responsive relationships to customers and citizens: a reflexive principle. Determination of policy by consultation and accountability mechanisms. New Democratic Accountability (NDA) within the Scottish Parliament.
<div> <div></div> <div>←</div> <div>Counterpart European Union synthesis</div> <div>→</div> <div></div> </div>	
Macro policies determined by technocracy: Economic, Informatisation, Political.    Supra-national hierarchy.	Governance as related to social rights: European Social Chapter as confirmation of citizen based welfare rights.   Subsidiarity principle.

The Table should be read from left to right. This traces the nature of the political transformations undergone within Scottish politics. It also makes the connection between the contrasting thematic principles of legitimacy that evolve over time. These move from a process associated with science and centralisation (this also encompasses the role of the expert in that such knowledge is withheld and non-devolved), towards a more participatory democracy. The themes which unify these processes and political developments, and connect them with the present, are science as a means of legitimation for the practice of government (Habermas 1971), and new forms of democratic participation, which Bell (1999 p12) describes as the :

*'axial principle of the modern polity'.*

The Scottish example of new forms of democratic participation are evident in a number of important ways. In the first instance, there are two referendums (1979 and 1997) during the period in question, and one large scale petition (1949), both can be seen as evidence of such principles in action. However, before considering these an evolutionary history is necessary. The post-war era sees the decline both of empire (and thus much of the reasoning behind the Union) and of economic power. These two themes are linking points within the immediate stages of the following historical route towards the new politics of the late twentieth century. The next section then develops our major themes within their finer points of detail. It enlarges on them in terms of five phases of Scottish post war political history.

## **2.2.8 The immediate Post – War era: developments and phases**

**(1944-55)**

The first of the five phases mentioned above, from 1945-55, provides evidence of a degree of concern with the issue of post war planning, the role of the welfare state (itself a re-invention of the role and scope of government) and state involvement in the economy, via nationalisation and various economic steering mechanisms, increases <sup>24</sup>. This was a UK wide issue and not exclusive in respect of Scottish politics per se, although we find that the Scottish Office's move from London to Edinburgh in 1939 arguably gave stronger focus to what its new political-geography might achieve for Scotland. According to Brown et al (1996) there was an emergent expectation that the site of the new administration might give further scope for Scottish centred political developments. Moreover, Kellas (1992) and Breuilly (1993) both note the emergence of new forms of democratic action within Scottish civil society, and as such new forms of participation emerge that have a distinct relation to the contemporary era. In 1949 for instance (although they disagree upon the amount of signatures added to this particular petition: the former suggests perhaps two million, the latter over 1 million), a campaign was launched by the extra-parliamentary organisation the '*Scottish Convention*' to secure what

---

<sup>24</sup> As Blair (1999. P1) notes whilst outlining contemporary New Labour political philosophy and the concept of the 'Third Way': *The Labour government elected in 1945 was shaped by the legacy of wartime conditions of pre-war depression and poverty...it proceeded to nationalise industry, manage demand, direct economic activity and expand health and social services*. Blair is making the historical connections between previous Labour administrations and their contemporaries in government today.

was then termed as '*Home Rule*' for Scotland within the political framework of the United Kingdom (Devine 1999 p565)<sup>25</sup>.

These immediate post war years are characterised by Western states as a whole committing themselves towards expansive bureaucracies, in turn they drew legitimacy from the prevailing social and economic management that resulted, i.e. technocratic administration<sup>26</sup>. Nevertheless, rational administrative designs concerning the economy did not stop Scotland from entering a period of economic decline. This became a significant issue both structurally and symbolically. This gradual subsidence of a previously industrialised economy gathered pace in the following era.

### **2.2.9 Affluence versus decline: the degeneration of the Scottish economy (1955-64)**

The key issue in this era was Scotland's relative economic decline vis a vis the less heavily industrialised southern points of the UK. Moreover, economic austerities were a component of the then Labour Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir Stafford Cripps) before the return of a Conservative government in 1959.

---

<sup>25</sup> There was a reaction, or response, to the mass petition formulated by the Scottish Covenant in the form of the Balfour Commission on Scottish Affairs (1952-4) which according to James Kellas (1992 p310) made some '*minor administrative changes*' in relation to the latent expressions and possibility of intent which the petition signified.

<sup>26</sup> As Paterson notes (1994 p16) '*legitimacy came from the fundamental belief in science and planning*'. As Marcuse's basic thesis notes (1968) technology and science are functional in that their union operates to legitimise political power. Within the realms of these theories we find an address from the state which utilises scientific 'logic' to legitimate its knowledge. With the expansion of scientific enquiry, and technocratic administration, there are increases in the amount and degree of 'control', as it were, over society. It is, as Lyotard (1994 p46) contends, a discourse of power that is used to '*constitute a legitimation*'. In other words, science can be observed as a set of discourses which attempt to further the powers of controlling political and social energies (Poster 1990).



By the late 1950s, as Michael Fry (1987.P224/225) notes, a sense of decline, at a European as well as at the UK level, was evident. Of the period under consideration he makes the following comments:

*'Scotland fell behind the employment and living standards enjoyed by the rest of Britain. For a decade after 1955 she had the lowest growth rate in Europe.'*

Moreover, according to Kellas (1992) this moment sees a wave of nationalism as levels of unemployment rose and standards of living, measured here in terms of housing, schools and public utilities, fell. Taken in conjunction with the Conservative election campaign of 1959, which placed much emphasis upon the supposed affluence of British society, the Scottish electorate sought to wrest more autonomy from Westminster (in order to increase the administrative capabilities of the Scottish Office) in periodic reminders which emphasised the negotiated nature of the Union (Brown et al 1996 *ibid.*). Additionally, Kellas (1992) notes the perceived influence of the then new medium of Television, and in particular the engagement with commercial TV advertising, and Scottish society, during the 1950s, as influential:

*'The spread of television, particularly commercial television with its advertising appeals to this affluent society... emphasised the contrast. Scots knew that much of the new affluence had passed them by'* (1992 p132).

Moreover, it is this moment in the contemporary political history of the Union which will first record the political divergence of Scotland and England in

electoral terms, and therefore the starting point for an account of the developing democratic deficit:

*'The first signs of the tension with England were evident in the late 1950s, when the Unionist Party started its (Scottish) 40-year slide in the late 1950s'* (Brown et al 1996 p19)

### **2.2.10 Scottish industrial decline and the emergence of an economic-political deficit (1960-70)**

The problems experienced within the Scottish economy are characteristic of difficulties within the U.K economy as a whole, disillusionment with the then Labour administration led to advances in the political standing of the Scottish National Party (SNP), who were able to capture former Labour supporters (Bogdanor 1979, Miller 1981). However, it is the failure of planning within public administration, in terms of its macro economic designs (such as the Central Scotland Plan of 1963) which characterises the era (Miller 1981, Fry 1987).

Moreover, we should consider this within what is essentially an all encompassing post war Scottish political theme. This is the issue of what precisely entails 'good' government, and how it might be realised. This feature is important because of its centrality to political life in Scotland, and its place as the prevailing set of political principles which continue today<sup>27</sup>. It is possible to extend this question of the exercise of power, and in doing so to observe its contemporary existence in the struggle between the concept of

---

<sup>27</sup> *'The theme of good government is important because it eventually won the day for the supporters of a Scottish parliament...endorsed in the 1997 referendum.'* (Paterson, 1999 p2).

citizens as an 'electorate', whereby decisions are made on their behalf, or alternatively, within the notion that citizens are the prime movers of political agency itself, via direct democracy<sup>26</sup>. What was sought instead was a more participatory form of politics. This changing set of circumstances was initiated, from an understanding, a changing political mood within Scotland, that the political order was less governed by some political objectivity, and more by interest (Paterson 1994).

However, the modification of Scottish politics began to be fuelled by a gathering intellectual currency. This was associated with a form of underdevelopment thesis given credence within third world countries, but applied to Scottish economic and political affairs (Brown et al 1996). This theme expresses the contention that the patterns of underdevelopment are strongly associated with external control of economic-political determination. This thesis gathered popular support with the generation of North Sea Oil in the 1970s and is worth exploring in more detail. It is to this we now turn. With particular emphasis upon the idea that economic wealth can generate political dissent.

---

<sup>26</sup> There is evidence that there is a motion in the direction of such a model (Rennger 1999). It takes the form of a growing tendency towards the increasing use of what Fishkin (1991) describes as the plebiscitary model. This model is characterised by the use of referenda as a means of producing overall majoritarian decisions. ICTs, central components of the devolved nature of power in Scotland, now include opportunities to extend the sites of such power, and in doing so represent points of possible political tension between advocates of representative government, and direct democratic exponents (Moore 1999).

### **2.3.1 The 'Generation' of North Sea Oil. Political dissent and the decline of the all-British political system (1970-74)**

As Scottish politics moves into the early 70s a further set of circumstances emerge. These provide a contrast with the politics of the present. There is a Conservative government under Edward Heath which argued for Britain's membership of the European Economic Community (EEC). The issue was contentious in Scotland, and cut across party lines<sup>29</sup>. In addition, the theme of the 'democratic deficit' is recognised in another related form<sup>30</sup>.

The continued electoral success of the SNP, which had reformed and re-energised itself during this era, was to play a significant part in the direction of political change (Scott 1985). With the discovery of North Sea oil, the nationalists were able to capitalise on the potential use of the oil not only to re-vitalise the Scottish economy, but also to dispel any concerns that an independent Scotland would be able to survive in a competitive global economy. Levy (1990, p35) describes it as:

*'oil –fired nationalism'*<sup>31</sup>.

---

<sup>29</sup> According to Miller (1981) there was a fear that: *'entry into Europe threatened Scotland with the prospect of becoming a periphery within a periphery'* (ibid.). Relative hostility towards the then EEC was (in comparison to England) a current within Scottish politics, in the 1975 referendum on continuing membership of the Community, electoral results showed that Scotland was less clearly committed to the idea (Paterson 1998).

<sup>30</sup> The Secretary of State for Scotland (Gordon Campbell) was the first Secretary of the twentieth century to take up office without a conforming Scottish democratic mandate: *'Labour had a clear lead in Scots votes and a majority of Scots MP's...in short there was no real precedent for the imposed secretaryship of Gordon Campbell...his very existence testified to the power of external influences'* (Miller, ibid.p17). This was a theme which was to gather increasing political momentum some ten years or so later.

<sup>31</sup> For instance, as Kellas (ibid. p63) notes it was the rise of nationalism in Scotland, expressed via the electoral success of the SNP, which had been the prime – mover in terms of placing devolved constitutional matters onto the political agenda: *'The SNP had risen to 30 per cent of the vote and 11 MP's in October 1974. The focus of the political debate in Scotland was on the run-down nature of the economy and its potential salvation through the discovery of North Sea oil'*. Similarly, as Brand also notes with reference to the Labour administration: *'The success of the SNP in February (1974) convinced the*

To this end, the nationalists firmly aligned their political programme to the development potentials associated with an oil based economy (Brown, McCrone, Paterson Ibid). However, as Nairn (Nairn, 1981. p131) points out, there were a host of factors behind the drive for greater political autonomy during this moment in time, not least of which was :

*'The most critical, and the newest, is the incursion of the oil business....this is busy creating a new material basis for political life in Scotland. The second is the decline of the all-British political system'.*

A tangible political reaction to such a decline is to be found in the Labour government of 1974. This will now be considered in greater detail.

### **2.3.2 Changing democratic access: the referendum of 1979 (1974-79)**

The Labour party responded to the nationalist impulses which saw a return of some 11 of the 71 Scottish Parliamentary seats in the (second) 1974 election<sup>32</sup> (Devine, 1999), and began its interpretation of the 1973 Royal Commission on the UK Constitution (otherwise known as the Kilbrandon Report: Cmnd 5460)<sup>33</sup>. The appearance of the Kilbrandon Report is noteworthy in as much as although it rejected any form of federalism, its recommendations anticipated future political considerations, and ultimately

---

*National Executive of the party that more account must be taken of the demand for devolution' (Brand 1978, p58).*

<sup>32</sup> There were two elections in 1974. The Labour party could not command a significant majority and was forced to go to the country again. The second poll produced the necessary mandate.

<sup>33</sup> This had been established under a previous Labour administration during 1968 its initial (three year) remit was to: *'Examine the present functions of the central legislature and government in relation to the several countries, nations and regions of the United Kingdom, and to consider Whether any changes are desirable'* (Fry. 1987, p234).

the devolution settlement of 1997<sup>34</sup>.

Acting upon the Kilbrandon Report, the Labour government of 1974-79 published a White Paper which attempted to address the future political arrangements of the UK in November 1975 ('Our Changing Democracy': Cmnd 6348.) The guidelines expressed by the Paper proposed that responsibility for the domestic affairs of Scotland (and Wales) should effectively be handed over to elected assemblies if and when established. In the case of Scotland such powers as were deemed appropriate<sup>35</sup> were to be revoked from the Scottish Office, and given to what would have been known as the 'Scottish Assembly'.

Moreover, the White Paper made explicit reference towards the extent and location of the presiding sovereignty (Kellas 1976), it was argued that any relinquishment of Westminster's ultimate sovereignty would move the UK towards an 'unacceptable' degree of federalism. Increased financial autonomy (specifically demands for a share of the oil revenues for a future Scottish government) was likened to the effective existence of a separate Scottish state and was thus rejected by the White Paper as politically inconsistent with the concept of the United Kingdom (ibid.) The Labour administration which existed between 1974 and 1979, managed to accommodate the proposals contained within the Report and legislated for a Scottish Assembly during October 1974. However, opposition to devolution both within and outwith the

---

<sup>34</sup> For instance as, Lindsay Paterson notes: *'The publication of the Kilbrandon Report in 1973 was a key moment in the whole three decades.. the key legacy was from its scheme of legislative devolution..... On that was based not only the Labour governments reaction in the 1970s, but the 1997 Labour government's proposals.. endorsed in the referendum of 1997'*.(Paterson 1998. P17).

Labour party was evident (Lynch 1991). For instance, the government had a slim majority, and faced hostility from both Scottish local government, and the Conservatives, whose leadership under Margaret Thatcher was now (unlike the Heath government whose '*Declaration of Perth*' in 1968, had welcomed some form of 'Home rule') firmly opposed to constitutional change.

Nevertheless, the Bill was passed through Westminster and became the Scotland Act of 1978. However, a number of important amendments were made. The most significant of these was that a referendum was to be established to secure the establishment of a Scottish Parliament.

Furthermore, there existed a requirement that at least 40 per cent of the electorate should vote in favour before the assembly could be established.

The referendum is an important moment within Scottish political history, in that it confirmed the concept of referenda within UK politics (after its initial introduction in the referendum on Britain's continued membership within the European Economic Community in 1975: Perman 1980). Moreover, it is seen by many (Brown 2000, Paterson 1994) as setting the defining Scottish political agenda for the following two decades. In addition, within the wider context of political participation (or non – participation) it established what might be regarded as an anti democratic maxim within UK politics in that it ensured that the:

*'final judgement of the result would take account of those who did not vote'*

(Baur 1980, p89).

---

<sup>35</sup> The power of raising monies however, one of the essential '*tools of government*'. (Hood 1983 p5) in that it enables a degree of autonomy and responsibility within the government-society interface, was to be a restricted power held by Westminster.

On the 1st March 1979 the referendum was held in Scotland, and whilst securing a narrow majority of votes in favour, the assembly did not reach the 40 per cent mandate<sup>36</sup>.

The resulting failure of the referendum was a spur to those within Scottish civil society who still sought the establishment of a directly elected assembly.

As such the Campaign for a Scottish Assembly was launched, a '*Claim of Right for Scotland*' (1989)<sup>37</sup> was drawn up, within which the argument for an Assembly/Parliament was set inside a historical context which located the then emerging 'democratic deficit' in terms of consistent historical Anglo-Scottish political relations<sup>38</sup>.

Moreover, the 'Claim of Right' set forth a set of normative political principles to which the future proposed parliament might adhere, and which it was argued, were lacking within British democracy per se. These alert us not only to the overarching theme of the new politics, but also to the values which the now established Scottish Parliament expresses as part of its civil and political foundations (CSG 1998). Indeed, they point to some of the notions later to be found within both the Consultative Steering Group's report (Shaping Scotland's Parliament') and the 'Modernising Government' White Paper of 1999 (@ <http://www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/moderngov/1999/whitepaper/.htm>),

---

<sup>36</sup> Of those who voted 51.6% voted 'yes' and 48.4% voted 'no', The pro-Assembly votes amounted to 32.9% of the registered Scottish electorate, thereby falling foul of the 40% requirement. (source: Scottish Government Year Book, 1980: p230. Edinburgh: Paul Harris)

<sup>37</sup> See for instance Wright (1997)

<sup>38</sup> These sought to locate contemporary political grievances in a framework of constitutional design stretching back to the 'Revolutionary Settlement' of 1689-90 (and the political vacuum left by the flight of James VII to France and the ascension to power in England of William of Orange, Lynch, 1991:300) and the 1842 Claim of Right presented to Westminster in relation to the religious schisms of the established church in Scotland (Lynch *ibid.* p401). The relevant links here are those which Brown (2000: 543) describes as being consistent with; '(the) critique of an unrepresentative and unaccountable Westminster government which creates an illusion of democracy'.



which in turn addresses the feature of re-vitalising British democracy<sup>39</sup>. As such, the chief concerns of the claim were to resolve what it observed to be a series of fundamental flaws in the way that Scotland was governed. For instance, the lack of administrative and democratic accountability of the Scottish Office, is an argument which came to the fore in the 1980s. Its political geography, once considered a way of strengthening its Scottish representation, is now called into question<sup>40</sup>. Two months after the referendum the Conservatives under Margaret Thatcher came to power, thus marking out new political territory for the UK as a whole, and Scotland in particular.

However, the issue of referenda as a democratic method goes beyond the historical Anglo-Scottish dimension: it fits into some elements of the contemporary Scottish parliament's design as we shall see later<sup>41</sup>. However, the route towards a new political settlement traversed through other terrain. This crossed the boundaries of both the UK and the EU. We will now address these notions.

---

<sup>39</sup>For example, as Burns (1999, p47) expresses these ideas: *'The vision of the Constitutional Convention was based upon the idea that Scotland (and the rest of the UK) needed to enter a new political era. Scotland was seen as potentially pioneering a new modernising role, in terms of updating the UK constitution'*

<sup>40</sup> This point can be illustrated by the following quote: *'The Scottish Office can be distinguished from a Whitehall Department only in the sense that it is not physically located in Whitehall'* ('A Claim of right for Scotland', quoted in Paterson 1998. P162).

<sup>41</sup> For example, the 1999 report undertaken on behalf of the Consultative Steering Group on the Scottish Parliament by the Scottish Office (now the Scottish Executive) and the Centre for the study of Telematics and Governance at Glasgow Caledonian University, noted the use of referendums as a mechanism with which to enhance democratic legitimacy. As such, they recommended that they might be utilised as a means of increasing civic participation in policy decision making (see: SP info.@.scottish.parliament.uk). These referendums were to be established in conjunction with democratic 'initiatives': these are referendums supplied and supported by petitions submitted to an executive body. These are, as Budge (1996 p4) notes the *'nearest approach to direct democracy in the modern world'*.

### **2.3.3. Scotland's relations with the two Unions: the United Kingdom and the European Union (the 1980s)**

The 1980s are marked by a number of significant political events.

The Thatcher administration broke quite markedly with the hitherto established post war political, social and economic consensus, and in particular the concept of the welfare state. The conservatives revitalised belief in laissez- faire economics and in the primacy of market logic above all else, brought them into conflict with important aspects of Scottish society. Scotland retained a:

*'broadly social-democratic consensus. But the new government of Margaret Thatcher was radically right wing'. (Paterson.1994 p169).*

New political tensions began to emerge revolving around the axis of welfare provision, the nature of community set against Conservative arguments about the primacy of the individual (as opposed to 'society'), and the quality of human relationships based upon social community. Collective identities as a whole were being challenged by the new administration (Paterson 1994).

In addition, there were a series of debates surrounding the place of Scottish civil society in political and social decision making, and the role of the European Union as a new centre of economic and political authority (Sillars 1998). Divisions over the role of the European Union were also prominent during the 1980s, particularly within the context of Scottish support for a welfare state under attack from a right wing government. Moreover, Scottish political culture (and political identity) seemed to have re-aligned itself once more with a grand political project, in doing so it distanced itself further from

its once rooted English connections<sup>42</sup>.

In the 1983 general election a Conservative majority was returned in England. With it came an increasing advocacy of New Public Management and other radical points of departure from the post war public policy consensus (Hirst 1989). The Scottish decline of Conservatism was reflected in a decrease of seats from 22 to 21. As Marr (1992) notes, Thatcherism gave rise to a new wave of nationalism in Scotland. The momentum of such a political-national identity continued into the following election in 1987. After the 1987 general election a Conservative government was returned to overall UK office, albeit with a decreased Scottish representation/minority<sup>43</sup>.

Yet despite its lack of a Scottish electoral mandate, the government of 1987 was much more radically inclined towards Scotland than had previously been the case. When the Conservatives began to channel their political energies away from macro economic policies, and began a move into the social arenas of education and health, they began to confront resistance not only from established policy communities, whom saw it in their interests to resist radical change, but from civil society at large<sup>44</sup>.

During the 1980s the course and form of the new politics becomes perhaps clearer. There emerges in Scotland during this time a reaction to the new right

---

<sup>42</sup> *'No longer is England admired as the source of progressive ideas: that role has been taken over by Europe....to call yourself 'European' in late twentieth century Scotland has something of the same modernising connotation as ..'British' did in the eighteenth century and the middle of the twentieth'* (Brown, McCrone and Paterson. Ibid. p23)

<sup>43</sup> Twenty four per cent of the overall Scottish vote: (source: Paterson 1998. P143)

<sup>44</sup> These concerted efforts are noted by (Holliday 1992, p455) who makes particular mention of the role of the then Scottish Secretary (and advocate of Thatcherism) Michael Forsyth : *'It is true that Scottish local government, Scottish teaching unions, and the Scottish media have often been critical of Forsyth, but effective resistance to his policies has mainly been mass rather than elite'*.

policies and ideologies of the Thatcher administration. It is linked to a number of issues including the increased articulation of an alternative political agenda. This assisted in the evolution of public opinion in Scotland and ensured that it was disseminated via a number of agencies within Scottish political and cultural life including, for instance, political journalism.

It offered an alternative sense of national identity in Scotland and helped to establish an emerging Scottish frame of reference, which in turn set out the course for a future new Scottish politics (MacInnes 1992).

What we find then emerging during this era is a co-incidence of national identity and political sentiment, as various political and cultural groupings in Scotland appear to formulate a collective antagonism and political resistance towards the new right, and Mrs Thatcher in particular (Holliday 1992, McCrone 1992). The formation of the Scottish Constitutional Convention, and other factions within Scottish civil society, drew from such political impulses, and helped sustain their initiative<sup>45</sup>. This is worth exploring in greater theoretical detail and provides us with the appropriate links between the past and present tense of Scottish political culture. It is to an understanding of the symbolic relationship between the idea of an alternative frame of reference, and the contemporary conditions of what we shall term as symbolic politics, that we now turn.

---

<sup>45</sup> Moreover, the relative collapse of religion as a voting correlation became more pronounced. This was recognised as a variable by the Scottish Tories who, in 1965, displaced the religious

### **2.3.4 The reinvention of government, the Scottish Parliament, the Scottish media, and symbolic politics**

The re-invention of government has a strong theoretical and institutional momentum within Scottish politics. However, the introduction of political change may not always be determined by those who initiate it: the political realm is contested, and has a dynamic range which is difficult to bind within precise and clearly defined limits. Decisions, actions and outputs from a given polity may well have unforeseen consequences. In this sense then from a systems analysis of politics, the inputs flowing back into the system may produce new demands and new variables to contend with (Easton 1964). These are signs of the political tensions within a given system.

For example, *The Scottish Executive's* ambition to address itself as the 'Scottish Government' (The Herald 10/11/2001) carries a set of issues which go beyond semantics, and into the symbolic realm of politics.

Accordingly, we can offer a concept of politics whereby it relates to competing definitions of reality, and an understanding of Scotland as a symbolic entity. In other words, we should consider what features, political or otherwise, taken together provide social actors with a sense of what 'Scotland' actually is. How they conceive of Scotland will by extension have some political effect. To clarify this point we have to comment further upon the symbolic nature of politics.

For instance, as Du Preez (1980 p1) notes politics is chiefly concerned with:

*'maintaining, or imposing an identity system. It is concerned with the consolidation of interlocking symbols which give a sense of integrity to continuity and action'.*

If we adopt a symbolic interactionist perspective (within which meanings emerges through interaction) then we can locate this normally micro sociological account of social reality within a larger, macro, focus (Moss 1989). For instance, we can observe the concept of power as the effect of 'translation'. In other words, we can engage in various social processes as social actors, politicians, political journalists etc, in order to reinforce or reconstruct the political beliefs of an audience.

This is done by persuading others of the existence of a 'problem', we then attempt to enrol them behind a certain version of its solution, provide them with particular roles, and mobilise them to collective action as voters, readers, or citizens. As such, social actors will compete to transform the definitions of political reality via the use of symbolic political resources, contexts and meanings. We might suggest that the careful use of symbols in constructing a plausible scenario for political engagement (conflict, actions and events for example), will alter the meanings of such events themselves and may further impact upon political perceptions also. Symbolism then, is a mediated process. As it impacts upon political audiences it will produce changes in the ways in which actors consider their political surroundings and experiences.

Within a theory of informatisation a government can re-invent itself through such a process. Informatisation can be a rhetorical device used to produce a situation of apparent change within the political identity of an institution. For instance, Du Preez (1980) claims that political identities are co-ordinated in much the same way as that of, for instance, a language. This is achieved via the power of large co-ordinated institutions, such as the media or the Scottish Executive. Moreover, as the same author notes, identity is continually revised in a macro sense by collective agencies in attempts to cope with the particular exigencies that they hope to overcome. Informatisation then is a component of this identity procedure<sup>46</sup>.

What it also illustrates is the connection between political transformation and the various supportive media that offer an account of the political culture to citizens. As such, the expression of the contemporary Scottish Executive as the future 'Scottish Government' carries with it a host of political dramas waiting to unfold, all of which will be related to these themes. It is, in essence, another important moment within the reinvention of government.

### **2.3.5 A new commitment to devolution. The transformation of Scottish politics (the 1990s)**

The 1990s are synonymous with further shifts in the relationship between Scottish civil society and the British state. The original political formula was predicated upon a relatively stable constitutional base. Self governance of Scottish institutions such as law, education and so on was an integral

---

46. Put simply, informatisation is used as a symbolic resource by institutions to advance their social and political standing such as the Malaysian Multi Media Super Corridor and the new city of CyberJaya.

component of these formulas (Davies 1961). Prior to 1979, constitutional issues were not, by and large, an overarching feature of Anglo-Scottish political relations. The relative autonomy of Scottish cultural existence was the defining feature during the high point of the Union<sup>47</sup> (Paterson 1994).

However, the advent of three terms of Conservative government coupled with their near relentless desire to dissolve what they saw as state dependency, and to increase privatisation (theirs was a programme of modernisation, that looked towards liberalisation of the economy as catalyst), was not only politically unpopular in Scotland, it called into question the Union itself in a much more challenging manner than before (Devine 1999)<sup>48</sup>.

However, as these debates evolve, we can observe new political arrangements and programmes which further the concept of New Politics and provide further explanations as to its development and practices.

The Conservatives were re-elected to office in 1992. Their rejection of devolution was consistent policy, even after the downfall of Thatcher in 1990 (MacWhirter 1992). However, the John Major administration detailed plans towards making the bureaucracy in Scotland more democratically accountable by reorganising the existing system, and a re-evaluation of how Scotland might be dealt with at Westminster. This was termed by the then Prime Minister (John Major) as a method of:

---

<sup>47</sup> The immediate Post war era, for instance (McCrone 1992).

<sup>48</sup> It has been argued that during this time the Scottish middle classes began a process of gradual political detachment from the concept of the British state and Britishness as a political and cultural construction. (McCrone 1992). The erosion of their power base, as epitomised by their predominant position within the public sector (and Conservative hostility towards it), caused them to reconsider the Unionist pact, and its relative advantages. For example: '(the) institutions that held the Union together now become reasons for breaking it, if their autonomy is being eroded. Coupled with economic stagnation this could create a decay of legitimacy, in the sense that most Scottish voters would have stopped believing that their interests could be met through the UK state.....the importance given to constitutional change rose sharply after ..the 1992...general election'. (Paterson 1994.p 178).



*'taking stock of the Union'* (Major 1992 cited in Paterson 1998 p225).

This exercise in taking stock included three particular components. These illustrate a new Conservative approach to the governance of Scotland, they also offer a response to the ideological difficulties posed by Thatcherism in Scotland, and to the 'democratic deficit'. They make reference to the existence of changing political circumstances and the need for more democratic accountability, the recognition of Scotland's political distinctiveness, and Scotland's status as a nation in its own right (Ian Lang<sup>49</sup> 1998, cited in Paterson 1998). Within these three themes we have the final Scottish based political motifs of the Conservative government.

Lang's blueprint for a future Scotland is inadvertently suggestive of the changes which were to be engineered under the forthcoming Labour administration. What is evident is increasing cross party support for the initiation of a Scottish Parliament. Its future design and remit was a constant feature of the era both in political journalism, and within the academic community. For example, in 1995 Bernard Crick and David Millar prepared a publication for the John Wheatley Centre<sup>50</sup>. The document outlined proposals for a new Scottish Parliament. In doing so it launched a set of guiding principles both structural and normative in their approach<sup>51</sup>. Much of its focus was set on ensuring that the new parliament took every opportunity to be an

---

<sup>49</sup> Ian Lang was the then Secretary of State for Scotland. He replaced Michael Forsyth.

<sup>50</sup> Now the Centre for Scottish Public Policy.

<sup>51</sup> These prescriptions were to influence later policy based discussions, and indeed many of the established conditions of the Parliament itself. For example: *'A new parliament needs new ideas and adequate resources in three respects:*

*(a) effective procedures relevant to modern Scottish conditions and opinion;*

*(b) an efficient organisation and administration;*

*(c) a modern information service to both members and public.'* (Crick and

innovative political institution that contracted the gap between citizen and institution. These ideas attempted to redefine Scottish politics amidst a new vision of progress and *governance* as opposed to *government* (Hassan 1999)<sup>52</sup>. Accordingly, there is an implicit recognition that a new political system should resolve some of the features/problems associated with traditional representative government including for example; lack of citizen involvement; the relative decline of trust in perceptions of representative competence; degrees of political judgement; and the extent to which political elites respond to citizen participation (Parsons 1998). In addition, the opportunity to participate in decision making processes outwith periodical elections becomes a recognised notion within governance (Parry and Moyser 1994, Rennger 1999). This became a specific point of departure for the new Labour administration who came to power in 1997 with an agenda aimed at modernising government through a political 'Third Way'. It is to this that we now turn to in the following section.

### **2.3.6 The Third Way : a political philosophy for the Information Age**

Third Way democracy is a political philosophy which offers a rejection of previously held models of post - war democracy. Its project is to offer a new politics. It styles itself as belonging to a new political and historical era which breaks away from past political processes, policies and outcomes. It also ties in with larger, macro, issues such as globalisation, and the disintegration of previously established models of European social democracy during the late

---

Millar 1995.p1).

<sup>52</sup> As such, it sought to offer forth rules of procedure which: '(Struck) a *balance between the need to carry on responsible government.. and the rights of the electorate not merely as expressed through their elected MSP's, but by some new devices...to allow the public to express their opinions directly*'. (Crick and Millar *ibid*).

1980s and early 1990s (Giddens 1998). Moreover, its search for alternative democratic arrangements is the result of both popular electoral disillusionment with orthodox political structures, hence in its British variation there is a desire to produce both constitutional reforms, such as the Scottish Parliament/Welsh Assembly/Northern Irish devolution, and the need to address the failings of both the Old Left (classical social democracy) and the New Right's (Neo- Liberalism) social and economic policies as characterised by the Thatcher/ Reagan axis<sup>53</sup>.

There is an emphasis on democratic renewal, and in particular the means by which new ways of governance might be assisted by new electronic forms of communication (Malina 1999). Moreover, it seeks to re-invent not only ideas about government and economic management, but also hopes to resurrect some or other essence of community via a commitment to the political and sociological doctrine of Communitarianism ( Etzioni 1995, Avineri and de Shalit 1999). This term has a variety of contested meanings but can be described of as a concept which seeks to:

*'foster democracy in the procedures by which local communities regulate themselves rather than obliterate local control through either privatisation or*

---

<sup>53</sup> There is a search for a process of democratic renewal, economic reform, and new electoral success which seeks to go beyond both these ideologies and the vast range of influences from which they attracted popular support (in the form of the immediate post war consensus in one regard, and the popular support shown in the late 70s in terms of the New Right). There is a concern shown by the progressive centre parties of Europe to forge a new political campaign trail, a route map of history as it were, which for so long provided a political and intellectual grounding for the Left (described by Giddens as 'revolutionary socialism': Giddens 1994. P62), was gradually replaced within parliamentary politics by 'welfare socialism' or 'linear modernisation' (Giddens, 1994 p68), and then in turn by a new, more social market approach, now apparent within Third way political philosophy in the UK and elsewhere within the European Union. What characterises much of the political philosophy of the Third Way however, is its desire to square the circle of state intervention, found lacking in some important respects, and the requirements imposed upon the state by an increasingly globalised economy. It seeks a union between fiscal conservatism (a traditional component of

*direct assertions of central power (which ) ..will encourage the creation of a social and economic environment where citizens have a chance to thrive'*  
(Shapiro and Hacker-Cordon 1999, P8).

As such, it is a combination of political philosophy, political economy and social theory. It establishes the moral limits of individualism by the establishment of a new doctrine of community. It also sees this notion of community as assisting in the limitation of the state in much the same manner. Power, then is transferred from the individual in the relationships formed and practised under Thatcherism, upwards to the community, and in a similar fashion, power is distributed downwards from the state to the communities themselves (Brown 1994). It is a site of democracy where networks take precedence over hierarchy, and the under-representation of citizens is addressed in a new way (Phillips 1994).

As such, Third Way politics expresses the desire to modernise social democracy via uniting two previously opposed currents of political thought and practice: democratic socialism and liberalism. It seeks to occupy a new centre politics:

*' The Third Way is not the difference between Right and left. It is about traditional values in a changed world...it draws vitality from uniting the two great streams of left of centre thought - democratic socialism and liberalism' .*  
(Blair 1999,p1)

It represents itself as a repudiation of both orthodox traditional social democracy and neo-liberalism. Its proponents (Blair 1999, Giddens 1998) claim that it has replaced both classical social democracy<sup>54</sup> and neo liberalism<sup>55</sup> as the relevant political philosophy of the twenty first century. Within its mandate for reform there have been attempts to, bring about:

*'A modern government based on partnership and decentralisation, where democracy is deepened to suit the modern age'* (Blair *ibid.*)

These ideas were established as a principle of government via the Labour Party's election to power in 1997. As such, there have been major constitutional reforms in the shape of Scottish and Welsh devolution, the possibility of a stable Northern Ireland Assembly, and further political change in the shape of proportional representation in elections to the Scottish Parliament. These changes, these re-designs upon the UK state, are part of a wider pressure for constitutional transformation within Britain. These themes

---

<sup>54</sup> Classical social democracy can be thought of as a collection of features. For example, the Old Left regarded the concept of civil society (those ways in which citizens associate and conduct their affairs with each other free from immediate state interference as secondary in many regards. They rejected the classical liberal notion that there was/is an automatic separation or distinction between these two terms (Held 1998). As far as they are concerned it is the state, which through its involvement in economic and social affairs, effectively asserts its authority over what might be regarded as its sub- systems (Giddens 1998) Moreover, integral to the old left was the notion of collectivism whereby political social and economic decisions are enacted via some or other conception of the collective good and a supposedly identifiable collective rationality (Offe and Preuss 1991).

<sup>55</sup> Neo- liberalism, is a reflection of a changing post war environment, and indeed a reaction to much of the prevailing political order of the era. Whilst much of neo liberalism builds upon a structure inherited from classical conservatism there are radical points of departure. For instance, the neo liberals sought to some extent to take apart previously established economic and political structures, including of course the welfare state (which they argued should be considered as a 'safety net' only) and 'big government'. In this sense it sought to break away with the Conservatives traditional political stance on maintaining the given social order (Giddens 1994.). Furthermore, it is the predominance of a particular economic logic which pervades the political territory of the New right that is significant in some respects.

are related to Transformational Politics (Schwerin 1995) in that the set of principles contained within Third Way politics include a focus on the machinery and practice of government in the UK and a relative shift in its political culture(s) which include for example:

*'democratic decentralisation, introducing proportional representation, altering procedures, incorporating rights, it is about the transformation of a political culture'* (Osmond 1998.p1).

The new government launched its 'Modernising Government' programme and its Scottish White Paper ('Scotland's Parliament') <sup>56</sup> in 1998. Within its proposals were recommendations for a devolved Scotland and Wales. In addition, a two part referendum laid down an ability to raise the varying rate of tax. There was considerable support for both features, with 74.3% voting in favour of its establishment and a further 63% who recommended that it have limited powers of taxation (McCarthy and Newlands 1999, p4). In many respects the referendum result suggested the revival of a centre-left political spectrum within Scottish politics. This entailed the twinning of two political forms which once ordained the democratic system in the U.K.

For example, as Lindsay Paterson (1999) notes in this regard:

*'... the argument which won during the 1997 referendum was about making Scottish government responsive to civic Scotland. That is ultimately where all the talk of the 'New Politics' emanates.'* (Paterson 1999, p38)

---

<sup>56</sup> 'Scotland's Parliament' (later to become law as 'The Scotland Act: 1998. [www.scottish.parliament.uk/whats\\_happening/docs/scoact-00.htm](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/whats_happening/docs/scoact-00.htm)) for further details see 'Time-line' at end of thesis.

Similarly, again central to our discussion, is Paterson's further observation which points towards the issues between ICTs, and the use of ICTs as an extension of democratic practice within Scottish politics:

*'The theme of good government has taken account of a wide number of themes... It has encompassed new currents of political thought from feminism to the revolution in information technology, so that the scope for increased participation has increased'* (Paterson 1998. P2).

This draws our attention towards two related themes which this thesis will explore. Namely that is, to what extent should a:

*'new politics of information'* (Bellamy et al, 1995 p80)

impact upon established political systems? Or within the dimensions of a new political settlement, to what extent might this new politics create new sites of political contest and areas for negotiation between government and civil society? Will for example, the new information politics extend outwith the UK parameters, into instead those provided by the new European information society initiatives? The combination of new democratic forms and the available technology threatens to extend the boundaries of democracy in new ways. The European Union offers precisely this opportunity for a small relatively marginalised nation such as Scotland<sup>57</sup>.

---

<sup>57</sup> However, the desire to allow citizens to channel their political preferences (and for action to be forthcoming as a result) does not take fully into account the extent to which such aims might now meet, within what is essentially a newly realisable citizen-government-technological interface. For instance, technology now allows for the radical expansion of citizen access to the political machinery the ability to *'short - circuit the representative process'* (Moore 1999, p55). This might take the form of a variation on the theme of direct

### **2.4.1 Conclusion**

The new political arrangements of twenty first century Scottish politics offer intriguing prospects for a democratic future. The extension of electronic democratisation promises to transform the dimensions of politics. But in what specific directions? The possibilities of the EU, are counter-balanced by the organisational principles of a new information union between Scottish public administration and its UK parallel. In this manner the circumference of Scottish politics lacks a decisive destiny. It may move towards the EU, or a re-integration into the UK system may be the end result. On the other hand there are other possibilities along a continuum of electronic democracy.

Herein lies a political fault line. It resides in the technical opportunities, which are now available, for a potential radicalisation of the core relations at the centre of the political establishment (Budge 1996). Other principal democratic initiatives which promote the use of ICTs to extend democracy do so in an altogether different form. Effectively, they wish to disregard political institutions, and focus on the idealism of democracy which they charge as being elitist and self serving. These groupings and coalitions have ambitions to produce a politically self empowered class which employs power through rule by referendum, or plebiscitary democracy (Hacker 2000, Hagen 2000). As Keane (2000) suggests, these new social movements/groups show a higher degree of concern and interest with the production, distribution and legitimisation of knowledge and meaning than previous movements, whose interests were predominantly defined along class lines, the as yet

---

democracy in one of the following ways. For instance, citizen - initiated democracy, or the recall or referendum model.



unrecognised economic interests of classes, and specific 'scientific' ways of transferring ownership of the means of production (Therborn 1980).

These formulae occupy common ground in that they observe the latent possibilities afforded by the new ICTs to re-position the hierarchical nature of institutional politics with a more lateral version.

At this stage of the chapter a graphic summary of the overall themes encountered can be represented figuratively (see Figure 2.2).

The representation illustrates the transitional features of Scottish democracy. It has moved from democratic deficit to a transitional condition. The top left hand corner shows the relations between Scottish civil society and the pre devolutionary system of government. Power flows in one direction, or is limited in sympathetic exchange mechanisms. As such the evolution of public opinion moves the culture into the direction of sub-politics<sup>58</sup>. With the introduction of the Parliament the areas of sub - politics are partly integrated into the parliamentary system.

Civil society is given leeway to interact within the devolutionary settlement. However, to compensate for the proliferation of alternative political technologies (and their distributed nature), the Infocracy develops alongside. The synopticism between the devolved areas of the UK state is explored in greater detail in chapter six, but can be said to be a reaction to the relative loss of state autonomy experienced as a result of sub and macro-national pressures<sup>59</sup>.

---

<sup>58</sup> Sub Politics (Beck 1996, 1997) is in effect a new type of politics. It formulates itself around new political practices and philosophies, such as animal rights, feminism and ecology. It has developed as a result of un-responsive systems.

<sup>59</sup> In the past, opposition to the established power base came from organised labour and the possibilities afforded by dialectical class struggle to re-organise the state within the given parameters, or confines of, a mode of industrial production (Poulantzas 1976).

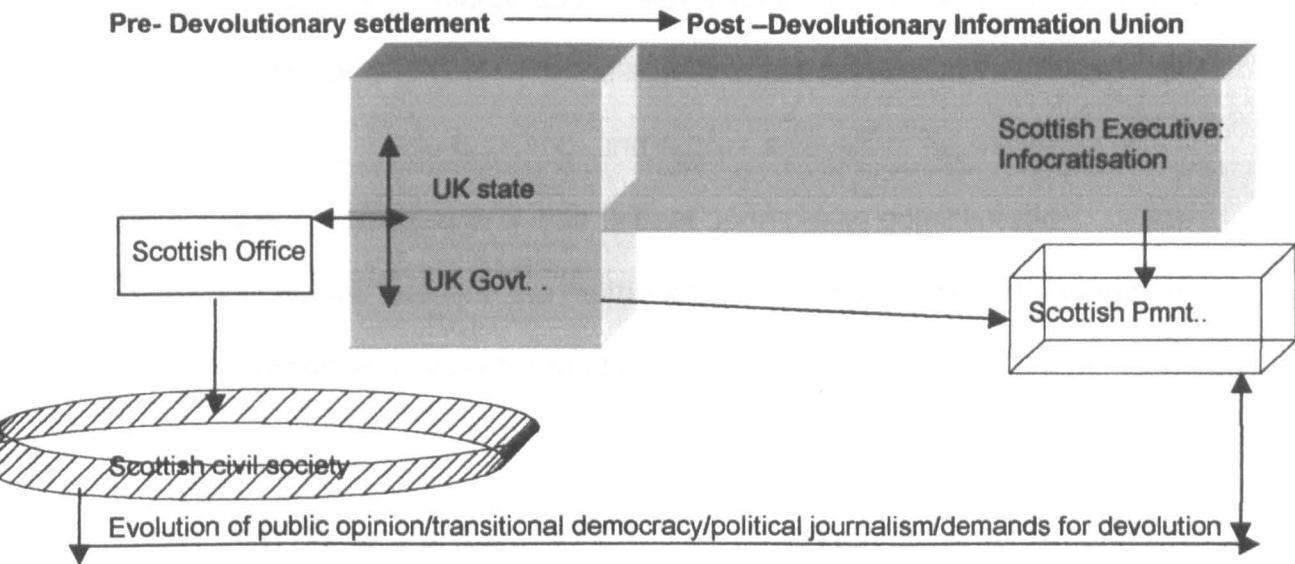
Hence the need for a new politics of integration via political computing and the regulation of alternative communication networks.

These are detailed within the following Figure (see 2.2 below).

---

However, within postmodern politics, power is situated in a variety of sites, including computer science (Lyotard 1994), opportunities now exist to reconfigure political arrangements via variations on the themes associated with direct democracy, and the new mode of information within which politics and economics are increasingly electronically formed and mediated (Poster 1990). It is the possibility of this new set of methods that now offers itself as a site of potential resistance towards the centrifugal political establishment. The new information technologies, as part of this new politics of information, increase dramatically the power of civil society, relative to the state, as a result of the diffusion of information based resources. This is but one reading, and a contentious one at that given other theorists accounts of the growth of computerised state power in relation to the expansive panoptical and surveillance powers of the electronic state (Poster 1984)

**Figure 2.2 The Scottish political System, its units and sub-units.**



The Figure illustrates the transitional formulae behind the new politics of information. It should be read from left to right. The pre-devolutionary settlement of the post war years has given way to a new, and emerging information union. The pre-devolutionary direction of Scottish politics essentially flows in one direction, through the U.K state via the Scottish Office, and has limited capacity for interaction. The emerging challenges to the established British culture (via the evolution of public opinion, and the alternative political agenda) are translated into action. The new Scottish political arrangements are represented in a transparent form. However, the over-arching, and dominant political settlement, is that of the emerging Information Union. it is highlighted within the Figure in opaque form. This represents its relative distance away from Scottish democratic influence. The emerging information union imposes a new order upon democratic and devolved advances. It in turn can be seen within its early stages as depicted in the top right side of the Figure.

The third chapter will enlarge upon these issues, and contains both theoretical and methodological accounts of the relationship between informatisation, the information polity within Scotland, and further analysis of the influence of market based ideologies and their impact upon public administration. In addition, we will examine the methodological components of the research and their design and implementation.

## Chapter Three

### A Theory of Transformational Politics

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter offers a theoretical analysis of informatisation and Transformational Politics (Schwerin 1995), by using the term Transformational Politics, the thesis draws attention to the new dimensions of widespread interactivity afforded by the new information communication technologies in reforming politics from the bottom up. Discussions of 'governance', 'political reflexivity', 'new institutionalism' and 'partnership' are the dimensions of the 'new politics' which are taken to constitute 'Transformational Politics' (Schwerin 1995). The connection between the dimensions of informatisation and Transformational Politics is examined in terms of their association with a revitalisation of democracy. This is considered in relation to the theoretical (or rhetorical<sup>1</sup>) ability of informatisation to facilitate new forms of parliamentary democracy, and administrative efficiency (Frissen et al 1992).

The modernisation and informatisation of political frameworks is said to produce a new politics of interactive governance, a wired government and a wired administration (Grieco 2000) – a set of practices which are also rolled out as components of the 'Third Way'. Political computing then, creates new opportunities for democratic institutions and practices (Frissen 1998b). Informatisation is the technical infrastructure of the new institutionalism<sup>2</sup>. Its position as a supporting mechanism, and as a medium of change,

---

<sup>1</sup> As Paul Frissen (1998a) notes ICTs are used by organisations both commercial and political in order to imply symbolic properties. These include ideas associated with efficiency, innovation, and progress. Accordingly, informatisation based strategies are often cited as a high point of political competence.

<sup>2</sup> New Institutionalism is dealt with as a theory associated with the new politics in chapter one (see 1.4.2 'The derivation of New Politics: the blueprint for a new set of ideals and institutions', and 1.4.3 The idealist-

also places it firmly alongside Transformational Politics. This concept is an amalgamation of theories from political and social science. Its principal theme is one of political-social transition and the provision of a route towards governance. Accordingly, it aims to provide a methodological framework for a new politics of governance, and seeks an interactive reciprocity between the state and civil society (Schwerin *ibid.*). These ideas extend the themes of progressive politics that were introduced in the previous chapter.

In this manner then we augment the historical Scottish moment from devolution onwards, by a theoretical-methodological consideration. The theoretical aspects are situated around the process, design, and implementation of informatisation. Moreover, this process stands as a unique methodological construction in its own right. For example, Taylor (1998) maintains that Informatisation has value as a method which enables the researcher of public administration to effectively, as he expresses it, 'X- ray' the form of the political system itself. It enables us to view the information architecture, and the values embedded within it, in a vital and novel manner. Informatisation allows us to observe the inner manifestations of information within twenty first century government. An acknowledgement of this theme permits us to think about informatisation in terms of its deeper political and social structures.

The chapter starts by examining the precise nature of the research design itself, and the reasoning behind the research approach used in the field. It then goes on to specify the experimental study components. After having established these features there is a move towards understanding the guidelines that formed such processes. We produce an account of the primary research question and themes that were addressed to the respondents. These included Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs), Scottish

---

institutionalist dimension: a Scottish vision of new political reason' for example).

constituency based Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), and elements of Scottish civil society who reported on their electronic interactions with the Scottish Parliament. The questions, responses and theoretical framework(s) surrounding these studies are attended to. However, in the first instance the research conditions and constructions are introduced.

### **3.2.1. Research design and research methods**

The thesis is primarily a theoretical reflection on political-technical tensions existing within the New Scottish Politics and the Scottish historical moment. An extensive literature, both theoretical and empirical, on the relationship between the new political, administrative and participative dimensions of Scottish politics was reviewed and critically integrated into the major arguments of the thesis. In addition, the major international literatures on changing politics in the new information age were reviewed and subjected to critical appraisal. Over six hundred works were reviewed in the course of preparing this thesis and organised into a main argument which critically appraises the tension between Transformational Politics and Reinforcement Politics in the Scottish context and in the wider global environment. A major methodological consideration was to produce an understanding of the new politics of information from the perspectives of the political elites in charge of its development and progression. Political computing is examined therefore from those accounts supplied in the shape of interviews conducted by the researcher with members of the Scottish political elite, physically and electronically. Two categories of the elite were interviewed: MSPs and a member of the Scottish Executive<sup>3</sup>.

In order to gain a deeper insight into the particular workings of the Scottish case, and after reviewing both the academic and quality Scottish press, it was decided to interview

---

<sup>3</sup> In the event the interview with the member of the Executive produced important insights into the 'wiring of the Union'.

technology aware MSPs. The object of the interviews was to gain insight rather than to arrive at a particular determination of which tendency – transformation or reinforcement - would be triumphant in the new political arena of Scottish devolution.

Identification of the appropriate MSPs for interview was the outcome of researching press files, attendance as an observer at meetings of Scottish Parliamentary debates, and by snowballing through the social networks of MSPs previously identified. The set of Parliamentary debates attended included both Plenary and Committee based (with some exceptions, such as closed door committee meetings, the Parliament allows public access to all their formal political deliberations).

In all 20 MSPs were interviewed out of the 129 which constitute the Parliament - an additional 10 had been contacted but had refused access. Initially the research concentrated on those MSPs who declared an interest in information technology<sup>4</sup>.

However, as the project gathered pace it became apparent that a cross party group with a specific interest in the development of ICTs existed, and that they could supply the required data in more elaborate forms. Accordingly, the Cross – Party Group in the Scottish Parliament on Information, Knowledge and Enlightenment (SPIKE) were chosen as the main study group.

The MSPs were interviewed about their awareness of the new information communication technologies in the Scottish context, their use of the technologies as part of their political practice, and their vision of the role of the technologies in the future political direction of Scotland. The qualitative data was supplied in the form of personal face to face open ended semi structured interviews, and via email (online computer mediated communications – CMC -). The interviews with MSPs were partially structured in that they

---

<sup>4</sup> This information was determined via a trawl of the Parliamentary web - site



sought specific quantitative data alongside the stronger qualitative responses that were expected. Accordingly, the respondents were asked questions that aimed to produce a picture of their personal dealings with informatisation, how they used ICTs in terms of their interactions within and outwith the Scottish Parliament, and how they thought it might progress as a form of political computing. Questions ranged therefore from accounts of how many email based interactions they dealt with on a weekly basis, to their positions regarding the potential of informatisation to extend democracy (in the shape of Transformational Politics), or to limit radical change (via a model of in - built conservatism, the Reinforcement Politics position). This set out the dimensions of the research from these particular perspectives. In the first instance, the research structure and purpose was detailed to the MSPs via a questionnaire. This allowed them a chance to consider the themes and issues involved. This was sent online or by standard mail. These were then followed up by the face to face interviews. The MSPs were interviewed in the Scottish Parliament administrative building itself, and each interview was subjected to detailed notes. These were then immediately transcribed (for the qualitative research aspects) and measured numerically (for the quantitative dimensions).

In terms of the former, the research data was analysed in relation to the overall positions supplied by the informants. The data was interpreted in relation to the inter – connections (and occasional contradictions) between various approaches towards political computing. In this way a process of theory building was established that made room for additional – supplemental questions and themes to be gathered as the research progressed. In other words, the interviews produced unexpected data and evidence that although not necessarily representative of all respondents, was too substantial to be excluded. As the research project progressed other themes were introduced and subsequent data gathered

that threw new light on the informatisation process, and new evidence of the emerging Scottish political culture, which in turn is expressed in the thesis.

To gain a better insight into the working political circumstances of the MSPs and the discourses in which they operate, a content analysis of the Scottish Parliament's web site was undertaken. I also utilised the Scottish Parliament's Webcast facilities which allow live electronic radio formulated access (with some additional tele-visual imagery), to the Plenary debates. These attributes ensured an understanding of the political environment and the research's working universe. After having familiarised the environment as a whole, I narrowed down the research into more tightly focused areas. This provided an index of issues and their relationship to informatisation within Scotland. This index of issues was used to develop a semi-structured interview instrument for use with MSPs. In researching the informatisation issue within the Scottish Parliament, attention was drawn to the presence of electronic petitions as a new Scottish political form. The use of electronic petitions in Scotland predates their exploration in the United Kingdom's Westminster Parliament. It seemed therefore appropriate to undertake an exploration of the Public Petitions Committee's activity within the framework of this thesis. As a consequence, the researcher examined all of the public petitions since the opening of the Parliament until a cut-off date of the 21.05.2001. In all 365 petitions were examined and categorised into (a) social groups raising petitions and (b) issues and sectors of social, economic and political activity addressed.

In the course of the research, it was realised that the European dimension of the funding for informatisation in Scotland was significant and it was decided to interview a number of Scottish MEPs regarding their awareness of the importance of information communication technologies in relation to their European Parliamentary activities. It seemed possible that the distance factors involved in operating as a Scottish MEP were likely to produce an

awareness and use of the technology by this group. The information arrangements of the integrating Europe seemed likely also to produce the opportunities for reflection on future political directions in terms of reinforcement or transformation on the part of this group. Five Scottish MEPs were interviewed out of a possible eight - the three remaining Scottish MEPs did not respond. The research also utilised Computer Mediated Communications as a means of conducting interviews with targeted groups: the MEP data was gathered in this fashion. In this sense researcher and participants were able to take advantage of the new medium and its ability to extend research into relatively inaccessible areas. In this way the online research gave wide geographical access and became a practical and innovative means of collecting narratives and data from respondents who were geographically distant. The practicalities of interviewing MEPs (largely politically resident in Brussels) by online research means is self evident. The process of online research then produced data from a '*hard to reach population*' (Mann and Stewart 2000 p17): the fit between this research method and the topic of the thesis was seen as an important dimension in itself.

At the heart of the new understanding of Transformational Politics is the interactive capacity of the new technology and consequently at the heart of this thesis is the concern to establish whether this interactivity is being harnessed by civil society, it was therefore decided to interview civil society organisations and representatives. As part of the research design an attempt was made to get matches between particular MSPs and corresponding civil society organisations that had contacted them in the search for political action on particular issues. In the event, no such match was obtained and considerations of time and resources precluded further attempts to obtain such an equivalent. However, representatives of five civil society groups were interviewed about their interactions with

the Scottish Parliament and its members in the context of the advent of new information communication technologies. In all twenty civil society groups were contacted, out of which fifteen did not respond.

The matrix below provides an overview of the research sources used:

**Table 3.1 The Research Matrix**

**Sources of primary evidence: quantitative data**

**Scottish Parliamentary Conducted Issues and ICTs:** These are all issues conducted within the Scottish Parliament Plenary. They are inclusive of Business Bulletins, debates and written Parliamentary Questions. All are conducted between the lifetime of the Parliament and the ending of the Parliamentary Session of 2001 in June 2001.

**The Scottish Executive: ICTs and written Questions/Answers** (URL as of 27/6/2001 12:40 –1700: <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/sch/results>). Total questions raised =120 between 1999-2001 this is the period between the beginning and the end of the respective Parliamentary sessions. 104 Written Answer Reports are listed on the Website. However, within these reports there is room for a series of questions (rather than simply one in singular form) to be submitted. The cut – off point for data was 27/6/2001 12:40 –1700.

**Scottish Parliamentary Debates/Plenary meetings:** as reported in the Scottish Parliament's official Reports. An initial search of the Parliaments website revealed 370 instances of the term 'information technology'. The term was then further broken down into sub-divisions and each of the Parliamentary meetings were analysed for concepts and themes. This is an empirical account of the issues raised regarding ICT and the Plenary meetings since the life-span of the Parliament. Overall, 83 subdivisions were delivered via the database. However, close analysis revealed that 23 contained no reference towards information technology at all. The cut – off point for data was 26/04/2001 website. [http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/sch/parl\\_list](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/sch/parl_list)

**Scottish Parliamentary Committees and dealings with ICTs:** The complete research base took a figure from 160 based on terms ('Information Technology' and the name of each subsequent committee). However, the total of 152 reflects occasional data that was received but on closer inspection revealed itself unconnected with ICTs. For example, 'information' as a concept would be delivered, as would 'technology'. In other words, passing references towards unrelated themes were delivered via the search engine facilities, and were discarded. Empirical research carried out @ [www.scottish.parliament.uk/file:///C:/parl\\_list cttees.htm](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/file:///C:/parl_list_cttees.htm). 20/05/2001, this in turn was the cut – off point for data collection.

**Committees of the Scottish Parliament and Public Petitions.** Each Committee was checked in turn via the Parliaments search engines for its dealings with public Petitions. This gives an indication of the concern expressed by citizens for particular issues, and the mechanisms in place to deal with them by the Parliamentary system. These search facilities were conducted on 1/06/2001 @ [http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/official\\_report/cttee/.htm](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/official_report/cttee/.htm). this in turn was the cut – off point for data collection.

**Electronically Submitted Public Petitions:****E – Petitions submitted to the Scottish Parliaments Public Petitions Committee**

These are petitions submitted via the International Teledemocracy Centre at Napier University Edinburgh. This routes the electronic petitions through the Centre in an official fashion recognised by the Scottish Parliament. The cut – off point for data collection was 30/04/2001.

**Sources of primary evidence: qualitative data****Members of the Scottish Parliament: MSPs and qualitative interview dates**

Aitken W: 15/10/2000	<a href="mailto:Bill.Aitken.msp@scottish.parliament.uk">Bill.Aitken.msp@scottish.parliament.uk</a>
Eadie H: 12/10/2000	<a href="mailto:Helen.Eadie.msp@scottish.parliament.uk">Helen.Eadie.msp@scottish.parliament.uk</a>
Gaillie P: 15/11/2000	<a href="mailto:Phil.Gallie.msp@scottish.parliament.uk">Phil.Gallie.msp@scottish.parliament.uk</a>
Grace-Elder D: 18/07/2001	<a href="mailto:D.Grace.Elder.msp@scottish.parliament.uk">D.Grace.Elder.msp@scottish.parliament.uk</a>
Grant R: 17/10/2000	<a href="mailto:R.Grant.msp@scottish.parliament.uk">R.Grant.msp@scottish.parliament.uk</a>
Harper R: 24/11/2000	<a href="mailto:R.harper.msp@scottish.parliament.uk">R.harper.msp@scottish.parliament.uk</a>
Hamilton D: 26/06/2001	<a href="mailto:Duncan.Hamilton.msp@scottish.parliament.uk">Duncan.Hamilton.msp@scottish.parliament.uk</a>
Macintosh K: 18/02/2001	<a href="mailto:Kenneth.Macintosh.msp@scottish.parliament.uk">Kenneth.Macintosh.msp@scottish.parliament.uk</a>
McNeill P: 7/02/2001	<a href="mailto:Pauline.McNeill.msp@scottish.parliament.uk">Pauline.McNeill.msp@scottish.parliament.uk</a>
McNulty D: 15/06/2001	<a href="mailto:Des.McNulty.msp@scottish.parliament.uk">Des.McNulty.msp@scottish.parliament.uk</a>
McIntosh L: 5/02/2001	<a href="mailto:Lyndsay.McIntosh.msp@scottish.parliament.uk">Lyndsay.McIntosh.msp@scottish.parliament.uk</a>
McLeod F: 15/03/2001	<a href="mailto:Fiona.McLeod.msp@scottish.parliament.uk">Fiona.McLeod.msp@scottish.parliament.uk</a>
Morgan A: 15/02/2001	<a href="mailto:Alasdair.Morgan.msp@scottish.parliament.uk">Alasdair.Morgan.msp@scottish.parliament.uk</a>
Mundell D: 15/11/2000	<a href="mailto:David.Mundell.msp@scottish.parliament.uk">David.Mundell.msp@scottish.parliament.uk</a>
Murray E: 15/03/2001	<a href="mailto:Elaine.Murray.msp@scottish.parliament.uk">Elaine.Murray.msp@scottish.parliament.uk</a>
Peattie C: 16/03/2001	<a href="mailto:Cathy.Peattie.msp@scottish.parliament.uk">Cathy.Peattie.msp@scottish.parliament.uk</a>
Radcliffe N: 13/02/2001	<a href="mailto:Nora.Radcliffe.msp@scottish.parliament.uk">Nora.Radcliffe.msp@scottish.parliament.uk</a>
Russell M: 26/03/2001	<a href="mailto:Michael.Russell.msp@scottish.parliament.uk">Michael.Russell.msp@scottish.parliament.uk</a>
Thomson E: 27/09/2000	<a href="mailto:Elaine.Thomson.msp@scottish.parliament.uk">Elaine.Thomson.msp@scottish.parliament.uk</a>
Wilson A: 7/02/2001	<a href="mailto:Andrew.wilson.msp@scottish.parliament.uk">Andrew.wilson.msp@scottish.parliament.uk</a>

**Members of the Scottish Parliament:  
MSPs and additional data regarding Section 2A**

Deacon S: 25/01/2000	<a href="mailto:Susan.Deacon.msp@scottish.parliament.uk">Susan.Deacon.msp@scottish.parliament.uk</a>
Douglas – Hamilton: 24/01/2000	<a href="mailto:James.Douglas-Hamilton.msp@scottish.parliament.uk">James.Douglas-Hamilton.msp@scottish.parliament.uk</a>
Harper R: 17/10/2000	<a href="mailto:Robin.Harper.msp@scottish.parliament.uk">Robin.Harper.msp@scottish.parliament.uk</a>
Hyslop.F: 25/01/2000	<a href="mailto:Fiona.Hyslop.msp@scottish.parliament.uk">Fiona.Hyslop.msp@scottish.parliament.uk</a>
MacDonald. M:24/01/2000	<a href="mailto:Margo.MacDonald.msp@scottish.parliament.uk">Margo.MacDonald.msp@scottish.parliament.uk</a>

(Source: Mr Howard Wollman: Head of Department, School of Psychology and Sociology, Napier University Edinburgh)

**Scottish Constituency serving Members of the European Parliament (MEPs)**

Martin D: 28/08/2001	<a href="mailto:David@martinmep.com">David@martinmep.com</a>
MacCormick N (Professor): 27/06/2001	<a href="mailto:NmacCormick@europarl.eu.int">NmacCormick@europarl.eu.int</a>
Miller B:16/10/2001	<a href="mailto:BmillerMEP@aol.com">BmillerMEP@aol.com</a>
Stevenson S:19/06/2001	<a href="mailto:Struanmep@aol.com">Struanmep@aol.com</a>
Stihler C:6/10/2001	<a href="mailto:Cstihler@cstihlermep.freemove.co.uk">Cstihler@cstihlermep.freemove.co.uk</a>

**Scottish Community Groups/civil society**

Action on Smoking & Health (ASH):27/06/2001	<a href="mailto:ashscotland@ashscotland.org.uk">(ashscotland@ashscotland.org.uk),</a>
Action Group (The):28/07/2001	<a href="mailto:Info@actiongroup.org.uk">Info@actiongroup.org.uk</a>
Scottish Crofting Foundation <sup>5</sup> : 25/04/2001	<a href="mailto:(hq.@crofting.org):(hq.@crofting.org)&lt;/a&gt;&lt;/td&gt;&lt;/tr&gt; &lt;tr&gt; &lt;td&gt;Highlands and islands Enterprise: 14/07/2001&lt;/td&gt;&lt;td&gt;&lt;a href=" mailto:an.ross@hient.co.uk"="">An.ross@hient.co.uk</a>
Abbeyfield Society for Scotland: 13/07/2001	<a href="mailto:Abbetfieldscotland@quista.net">Abbetfieldscotland@quista.net</a>

<sup>5</sup> Previously known as the 'Scottish Crofters Union'(As of 15/11/2001 the SCU changed title to the 'Scottish Crofting Foundation')

## Sources of secondary evidence: databases

**The Scottish Parliament:** ([http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/whats\\_happening/whisp-00/wh50-09.htm](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/whats_happening/whisp-00/wh50-09.htm))

Scottish Parliamentary Committees: All Scottish Parliamentary Committees can be found at:  
[http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/file:///Cparl\\_list\\_cttees.htm](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/file:///Cparl_list_cttees.htm)

The Scottish Parliamentary Cross Party Group on Information, Knowledge and Enlightenment (SPIKE):  
<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/msps/cpg/cpg-ike.html>

Consultative Steering Group, @<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/news/2000/03/se0928.asp>)

Scottish Parliament Research Notes (SPICE Research Note RN 99/54, 9/12/1999)

White Papers:  
**'Our Changing Democracy'** (': Cmnd 6348).  
White Paper November 1975

**The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (Scotland) 2000: (SPICE RN 00/30 4/5/2001).**

'Scotland's Parliament' White Paper of July 1997 (Cm3658)

**The Scotland Act 1998**(@<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk>),

White Paper of 1998: 'Our Competitive Future : Building the Knowledge Driven Economy'  
([http://www.dti.gov.uk/comp/competitive/e\\_comm.htm](http://www.dti.gov.uk/comp/competitive/e_comm.htm)).

**The Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Bill** ( \_ HYPERLINK  
[http://www.parliament.the-stationery\\_\\_http://www.parliament.the-stationery\\_\\_-off.uk/pa/1d999000/1dbills/061/200061.htm](http://www.parliament.the-stationery__http://www.parliament.the-stationery__-off.uk/pa/1d999000/1dbills/061/200061.htm))

**Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000** (see <http://www.scotland-legislation.hmso.gov....egislation/scotland/acts2000/00011—d.htm>)  
**'Modernising Government'** (the 1999 White Paper of the same name can be found at:  
<http://www.citu.gov.uk/moderngov.htm>.)

## Electronic government in Scotland/the Scottish Executive and the United Kingdom

Cabinet Office Central IT Unit (CITU@ [www.citu.gov.uk](http://www.citu.gov.uk))

Central Computer and Telecommunications Agency (CCTA@ [www.ccta.gov.uk](http://www.ccta.gov.uk)).

'Digital Scotland Task Force Report 2000' (@ May-00/TASK FORCE REPORT – FINALv1.1.doc).

**Information Age Government'**

@ <http://www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/moderngov/1999/whitepaper/4310-05.htm>)

**Modernising Government:**

'e-government' strategy document published under the auspices of the 'Information Age Champions' (see [www.iagchampions.gov.uk](http://www.iagchampions.gov.uk)).

**Scottish Executive: Electronic government in Scotland and the United Kingdom:**

([www.scotland.gov.uk/cru/resfinds/grf01-00.htm](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/cru/resfinds/grf01-00.htm)).

**Scottish Executive: representative interviewed on 19/10/2001**

(email submitted as confidential material)

Secure Inter-Governmental Intranet (GSI@ [www.gsi.net](http://www.gsi.net))

Social justice Annual Report for Scotland 2000: 'Social Inclusion partnership Areas' (see [www.scotland.gov.uk/library3/social/sjm-03.asp](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library3/social/sjm-03.asp))

**The Scottish Executive research report of the same name can be found at:**

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/cru/resfinds/grf01-00.htm>).

**'21-st Century Government for Scotland'(@<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/c21g/c21g.asp>)**

Scottish Executive Finance Minister Jack McConnell. 29/3/2000 @ [http://www.scotland.gov.uk/news/press2000\\_04/se0406.asp](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/news/press2000_04/se0406.asp)).

[www.ukonline.gov.uk](http://www.ukonline.gov.uk).

A programme for electronic government in the United Kingdom it offers a range of government websites (all of which are available through a single point of entry) that allow citizen based access to a range of government information and services.

**E-government pan U.K framework see:**

[www.e-envoy.gov.uk/publications/frameworks\\_index.htm](http://www.e-envoy.gov.uk/publications/frameworks_index.htm)



## Scotland and European Union Sites:

**Scotland and European Union Sites:**  
(<http://www.scotlandeuropa.com/sites.htm>).

***'Europe and the global Information Society; Recommendations to the European Council'***  
commonly referred to as the Bangemann Report (after its commissioning author Martin Bangemann). See, @<http://www.ispo.cec.be/infosoc/backg/bangemann.html>).

The European Council: 'e-Europe' (see 'e-Europe Action Plan of June 2000' @ [europa.eu.int/comm/information\\_society/eeurope/actionplan/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/information_society/eeurope/actionplan/index_en.htm))

[europa.eu.int/comm/information\\_society/index-en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/information_society/index-en.htm)

**European structural funds**

: [www.scottish.parliament.uk/official\\_report/session99-00/or30202.htm](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/official_report/session99-00/or30202.htm))

**European Survey of Information Society** ([www.ispo.cec.be/esis/](http://www.ispo.cec.be/esis/))

## Sources of secondary data and data sets: The New politics of participation and alternative forms of citizenship:

**Community and Local Links: Undiscovered Scotland; The Ultimate Online Guide @:**  
[Www.undiscoveredscotland.co.uk/uslinks/community.html](http://www.undiscoveredscotland.co.uk/uslinks/community.html)  
**Scottish Civic Forum @:** [www.civicforum.org.uk/aims.htm](http://www.civicforum.org.uk/aims.htm)).

**'Labour Left Briefing (UK) @** <http://www.llb.labournet.org.uk>.

**Direct democracy campaigns are at the following web – site:** <http://iniref.tripod.com/learn.html>.  
(On –line discussion is invited at the new provisional (as of October 2001) home of the

**'Democra@cy Forum' they are at the following web-site** <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/democracy-forum>).

**The Direct Democracy Campaign @**<http://www.homeusers.prestel.co.uk/rodmell/case.htm>)

**Possibilities of internet voting (see** [www.electoralcommission.org.uk](http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk))

**Non Governmental Organisations (NGO's) see: Walker 2001@** [www.lse.ac.uk](http://www.lse.ac.uk).

**Referendums and the Scottish Parliament: see: SP info.@** [www.scottish.parliament.uk](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk).

**Trade Unions:** [www.geocities.com/unionsonline/unionsonline.html](http://www.geocities.com/unionsonline/unionsonline.html))

[www.geocities.com/unionsonline/e\\_discourse.htm](http://www.geocities.com/unionsonline/e_discourse.htm))

Having presented the research matrix and provided an overview of the research process, the next section provides more detailed information on each of the research cases.

### **3.2.2. Five case studies: the theoretical background and preliminary empirical findings**

The research is triangulated and broken down essentially into three specific areas and two data-collection procedures. Firstly, there is the '*political-social agency dimension*<sup>6</sup>'. This is in turn sub-divided into the three specific working universes. These consist of members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) – the Scottish political elite; a counterpart (Scottish based) group of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs); and a series of interviews with groups representing Scottish civil society and a variety of disparate interests. The interviews (which were open – ended in format) established the necessary inferences, which relate to the arguments under scrutiny.

The key argument being explored is that informatisation will produce an extension of Scottish democracy, and produce a closer political 'fit' between Scottish civil society and the Scottish political system. In order to explore this argument both an empirical primary data gathering exercise (based on a content analysis of the relevant Scottish Parliament databases), and a qualitative information gathering strategy were undertaken (principally) from an elite grouping of MSPs within the Parliament. This is then compared with evidence from another set of key actors in the Scottish political system. – Scottish based Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), a member of the Scottish Executive, and representatives from Civil Society. These provide an insight into different

---

<sup>6</sup> This term refers to the qualitative interactions between the Scottish parliament and Scottish civil society.

understandings and interpretation of the tensions within and directions of the political system.

Secondly, the process of informatisation is also considered within the notion of '*Reinforcement Politics*' (Danziger et al 1992). This is an established component of informatisation theory, and operates as an effective methodological counter-point to *Transformational Politics*. Expressed simply, the former suggests that the power of existing groups within *organisations*<sup>7</sup> is secured by the processes that accompany the development of information architecture. From this perspective, political computing within the Scottish Parliament would stand in opposition to the form and declared rationale of Transformational Politics, and the professed movement towards the development of a model of institutional design, as it was given expression within the 1998 Consultative Steering Group on the Scottish Parliament document (ibid). The tension between Transformational Politics and Reinforcement Politics is, within this thesis, examined within an interactionist research approach. Here we explore the considerations of the elite MSP faction. In this sense the research focused upon the :

*'creation and change of symbolic orders via social interaction'* (Silverman 1985 p101).

The cohort of MSPs interviewed represented those with a particular interest in informatisation policy and related issues. They were chosen from a Scottish Parliamentary cross party group known as SPIKE (the Scottish Parliament Cross – Party Group on

---

<sup>7</sup> The conditions attached in the movement from an 'organisation' to an 'institution' are relevant factors within Transformational Politics in that an organisation exists independently of civil society. An example of such a referent would be the model of technocracy introduced in the previous chapter. It is a stand-alone organisation. An 'institution' on the other hand makes a more penetrative form of contact with civil society. For a further example see chapter one and Figure 1.2 'Relations between Reflexive responsibility moral governance and the New Politics'.

Information, Knowledge and Enlightenment). The remainder of the research base in this cohort were chosen by *deliberative sampling* methods. They included MSPs with a declared interest, or political brief, in other areas of Transformational Politics, such as members of the Public Petitions Committee (PPC). We will examine the work of the PPC in greater detail in chapter five. This is a case study in its own right, and was subjected to a theoretical and empirical analysis. The former involving the theories of sub-politics, and the latter a quantitative content analysis of the petitions themselves, their process through the Scottish Parliament and their relationship in terms of the subjects broached by Scottish civil society. This feature fits in with the third element of the research dimension.

The third element of the research involved collecting empirical primary data from the Scottish Parliament web-site. By adopting informatisation as the *frequency count*<sup>8</sup> a content analysis of the informatisation process was produced. This is essentially a unique point of reference. The parliamentary web-site changed its search procedures in August 2001, and in doing so effectively prohibits replication of this process.

We will examine shortly the employment of a survey method which involved MSPs and their views and conceptions of informatisation. The objective was to examine the impact of informatisation on Scottish political practice. Do the new ICTs render Scottish Government more transparent, open and accountable as is claimed? How can these terms be operationalised? What is the conceptual framework in which informatisation and the transformation of Scottish politics is taking place?

---

<sup>8</sup> This is a tabulation of the frequencies with which each value of a variable is discovered within a given set of data: in this case the informatisation variable is tabulated against the dependent variable of Scottish

One way to empirically test this notion is to examine the extent to which senior policy makers and MSPs are using, or ignoring, the opportunities provided by informatisation to make their policy positions known to the public and to communicate with their colleagues, their constituents, and other groups within civil/civic society. How much they use the Parliament's own *internal* electronic data systems, and to what extent they use the *external* facilities that are available, in order to enhance the level and quality of communications between themselves and citizens. Some theoretical questions concerning their views on the potential advantages and disadvantages of electronic democracy/teledemocracy are also explored. This line of questioning will offer a contrast between the deliberative nature of parliamentary democracy, within which political decisions are located within reasoned, collective discussion (Dryzek 2000) and teledemocracy, the latter is based upon the use of new technologies to provide new forms of access by which citizens might participate directly in the democratic process.

However, we will now examine the foundations of the research and its principal fields of enquiry. These are developed in the form the case studies illustrated immediately below:

**Case Study 1:** The Cross Party Group in the Scottish Parliament on Information, Knowledge and Enlightenment (SPIKE). Initially it was proposed to randomly sample members of the Scottish Parliament in order to obtain respondents on informatisation issues. In the course of the research an awareness of the SPIKE group caused a redirection of the research and MSPs in the SPIKE Group became first choice candidates for interview.

**Case Study 2: Members of the Scottish Parliament.** Initially a random sample of members of the Scottish Parliament was the preferred methodology, however, given the presence of SPIKE and the suitability of this group of MSPs for interviews on informatisation, it was decided not to randomly sample within the Parliament and SPIKE respondents were augmented by a small number of MSPs with a declared interest in the use of the technology. Cases 1 and 2 converged into one case study. The results of the converged case studies are to be found later in this chapter and within Chapter 4.

**Case Study 3: The Scottish Parliament's Public Petitions Committee**

([http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parl\\_bus/petitions.htm](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parl_bus/petitions.htm)). In order to gain an understanding of the context in which MSPs operate in respect of informatisation, the emergence of electronic issues within the public petitions committee was researched. All public petitions being scrutinised by the Committee since its establishment were subjected to a content analysis and the major results of this analysis appear in Chapter 5.

**Case Study 4: Scottish based constituency Members of the European Parliament**

(MEPs). In order to gain an understanding of the 'death of distance' in modern political life, the experience of MEPs use of the new technologies in their geographically extended political routine was researched. The results of this research are found in Chapter 4.

**Case Study 5: Scottish civil society. Electronic interactions with the Scottish Parliament.**

In developing the research, it was important to gain a view of the process of informatisation from outwith the elite. Ideally, it would have been possible to check with members of civil society whether their experiences of electronic interaction with elites matched the elites' perspective of what was taking place. In the event, no specific interactive match on a particular issue that involved both elite and civil society was available within the time horizons and resource constraints of this research. The results of the research on civil society are to be found later in this chapter.

The above case studies were chosen in order to obtain an overall perspective of informatisation, Transformational Politics and Reinforcement Politics, from the perspectives of the actors involved in such processes and encounters. The chapter now moves to a more detailed analysis of the case study approach and the theoretical basis which informs it.

### **3.2.3 Background to Case Study 1 and 2: The Cross Party Group in the Scottish Parliament on Information, Knowledge and Enlightenment (SPIKE<sup>9</sup>) plus additional MSPs**

There are a number of political sub-fields contained within the larger system of Scottish Government which have a specific interest in the informatisation process in Scotland. For example, the '*Cross -Party Group in the Scottish Parliament on Information, Knowledge and Enlightenment*' (SPIKE). Their remit is to:

*'champion the use of new and emerging information technologies (ICT) in Scotland in general and in the Parliament and the governance of Scotland in particular'.*

An analysis of the Scottish Parliament's database revealed those MSPs who had a declared interest in informatisation<sup>10</sup>. Given their declared remit on informatisation, they are capable of producing a set of specific opinions regarding ICT in terms of its application within government, public administration and its relationship with civil society. However, there will be ordinal scales of commitment towards the precise applications that MSPs consider informatisation most relevant towards. An overall data ranking for the MSPs

---

<sup>9</sup> For additional detail/membership of Group etc. see: (<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/msps/cpg/cpg-ike.html>)

<sup>10</sup> This involved a web-based scan of MSPs and their interests: conducted on 20/09/2000.

interviewed was developed (and is produced in Chapter Four). In undertaking this research, the background characteristics of the Scottish Parliament were collected and collated. These are illustrated in Table 3.2 (see below). The working universe (of 129 MSPs) is divided in terms of the distinctions made by The Scotland Act 1998<sup>11</sup>.

---

<sup>11</sup> This applies to the two separate returning methods for Scottish MSPs. The first distinction is applicable to what is termed as 'constituency members'. These are elected by a constituency which returns one elected politician elected in a 'first past the post' basis. The other members are to be elected in each of eight Scottish regions. This in turn is related to the boundaries used to demarcate European parliamentary constituencies (McFadden and Lazarowicz 1999). This is a matter of administrative interpretation and practicality, rather than a signifier of any strong association between the MSPs and any European constituency. But it does provide a further research correlation between the Members of the European Parliament interviewed in the research, and offers a strong linkage between related areas of political geography.



### **Table 3.2 Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs)**

Working Universe: the working universe is 129 MSPs . The following section breaks them down into political party status, and whether elected by constituency, or by 'List/regional' selection.

#### **Section 1) status of Parties with a collective number of MSPs**

**Scottish Labour Party:** Constituency MSPs =52

Regional MSPs = 3.

Total = 55

**Scottish National Party (SNP):** Constituency MSPs =7

Regional MSPs = 28

Total = 35

**Conservative and Unionist Party:** Constituency MSPs: 1

Regional MSPs =18

Total =19

**Scottish Liberal Democrats:** Constituency MSPs =12

Regional MSPs = 4

Total =16

The following section breaks them down into political party status, and whether elected by constituency, or by 'List/regional' selection.

#### **Section 2) status of Parties with a single number of MSPs**

**Scottish Socialist Party:** Constituency MSPs = zero. Regional MSPs =1

**Scottish Green Party:** Constituency MSPs = zero. Regional MSPs =one

**Denis Canavan (Independent Labour Party):** Constituency MSP =one.

**Presiding officer (Sir David Steel)** = Regional MSP

**Total constituency MSPs = 73. Total Regional MSPs = 56.**

(Source Scottish Parliament Web-site: Accessed by Griffin, 29/09/2000: The subsequent date is the relevant cut off point for the evidence as given)

[http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/whats\\_happening/whisp-00/wh50-09.htm](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/whats_happening/whisp-00/wh50-09.htm)

### **3.2.4 Background to Case Study 3: The Scottish Parliament's Public Petitions Committee**

#### **Case study 3: The Scottish Parliament's Public Petitions Committee**

*([http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parl\\_bus/petitions.htm](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parl_bus/petitions.htm))*

The research project examined the Scottish Parliament's dedicated 'Public Petitions Committee' (PPC) (see chapter five for an analysis of petitions and participation). The (PPCs) remit is to consider and report on whether a public petition is admissible, and if so, what action is to be taken upon it. The Consultative Steering Group report (CSG 1998), whose task it was to produce a framework for the new Parliament, considered it an important principle of the new Scottish democracy that people/citizens should be able to petition the Parliament directly. The following quote illustrates this point:

*'Public petitions should be encouraged by the Parliament*

*Any member of the public should be able to petition the Parliament. All petitions and responses should be in the public domain.'*

*(<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library/documents-w5/rcsg-14.htm>) (P2.point14.)*

At the time of completing the empirical research (August 2001) over three hundred and sixty five public petitions had been submitted to the Scottish Parliament. Moreover, it was determined how many were submitted electronically. Their origins and destinations, and an empirical analysis of their destinations and outcomes. This involved an analysis of the procedures of the PPC, and the various committees to which those petitions submitted were directed towards.

### **3.2.5 Background to Case Study 4:**

#### **Scottish based constituency Members of the European Parliament**

Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) were considered as an important component of the research project. Many will have had experience of national political life within their own home based parliament's, and as such transfer their understandings to the broader scheme(s) of European politics. Moreover, many are also involved in specialist committees and have become increasingly adept at investigating specialist policy issues in some detail. All Scottish based constituency MEPs were sent out online questionnaires, of these eight, five responded.

Historically, the political distance of Scotland from Europe was accentuated and amplified by the centrality of the Westminster parliament and its associated bureaucratic form of government: new information communication technologies have the capability of reducing the political distance between all tiers of government in Scotland and the new European centre of politics. The extent to which new information communication technologies can alter the traditional power distances between the Scottish polity and external governments, and the implication of this altered relationship for the relationship with Westminster itself has escaped the conventional political analysis. For this reason, it was decided to initiate research along this dimension.

### **3.2.6 Background to Case Study 5:**

#### **Scottish civil society: Electronic interactions with the Scottish Parliament**

We have noted in chapter two the strong presence of civil society in relation to Scottish political affairs. Its hostility and opposition towards Thatcherism combined with the media to produce an alternative political agenda. This agenda occupied a central position within (late) Scottish post-war political culture, and was integral to the demise of the technocratic Scottish Office and the establishment of the Scottish Parliament. Therefore, some understanding of the new political environment should include some account of their perspectives in this regard.

Civil society groups were chosen from a web search of organisations involved in Scottish politics and were emailed and sent a package of identical questions concerning their understandings of political computing and their relations with the Scottish Parliament. In this sense the data focused on qualitative accounts of the electronic interactions between civil society and the political system. The research was conducted in terms of initial preliminary enquiries with specific groups. The likelihood of them having any contact at all with the Scottish Parliament was therefore established and questions set out accordingly (and uniformly). Those groups chosen were systematically located in relation to their (relative) positions with the Parliament. For example, two were geographically distant, the other three were representative of specifically socially excluded groups. Accordingly, the research was driven by these dimensions.

The research also provided empirical accounts of informatisation from the Parliamentary database. This was achieved by undertaking a web search under specific 'ICT' terms and labels and identifying the frequency of these terms within the electronic record of

Parliamentary practices and relations. This was achieved by systematically scanning all electronically scripted Parliamentary records (such as Plenary debates, Committee meetings, Written Parliamentary questions and answers etc, all of which are accessible via the Parliaments website), and the nature of the ICT related themes. This involved a sub – strata of ICT related practices. Issues were broken down into specific categories (such as whether ICTs were being considered in relation to education and training, or security premised concepts for instance) which were then given numerical substance. This produced a detailed and systematic account of Scottish Parliamentary processes and informatisation (these results can be found in Chapter five).

### **3.3.1 The thematic framework: posing key questions.**

In addition to the above, this chapter presents an empirical analysis of the concept of ICTs as measured from a database of the Parliamentary questions submitted to the Scottish Parliament since its inception. My pilot study (conducted in March 2000) showed there to be approximately 1000 submitted Parliamentary questions, c370<sup>12</sup> are concerned with ICTs. As such, it is possible to present an analyses of the topic of informatisation and the Scottish Parliament in such a manner that clear indication is shown as to where such questions originate from, and how they relate to Parliamentary priorities. Moreover, an additional value is that they can be empirically presented in terms of those committees of the Scottish Parliament which show some ordinal commitment to the concept of informatisation. This can be measured by a comparable analysis of committees considering ICT related issues. In turn this will highlight how the relevant committees are dealing with them, and the interaction between ICT issues and their contacts with Scottish

---

<sup>12</sup> See for example: ([http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parl\\_bus/petitions.htm](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parl_bus/petitions.htm)). Data analysed via the Scottish Parliaments web-site on 6/3/2000.

civil society. They are also further broken down into the number of questions lodged by specific political parties.

Moreover, an understanding of informatisation should look at the control of information in government, and also at the strategic behaviour of certain key actors who attempt to control resources within the changing modes of the government – governance axis. Therefore, such strategies should be understood from a position that identifies the reasoning behind the development and design of informatisation. To this end the following set of questions were addressed to 20 MSPs, and a variation on the same set of themes to the 5 Scottish constituency MEPs. The answers are quantitatively (and where relevant, qualitatively) expressed.

**3.3.2 MSPs and informatisation: key themes and their distribution.**

The principal themes appear in **highlighted** form: this acts as a ready guide to the topic under research. The quantifiable averaged answers given by respondents are detailed in Table 3.2

**Table 3.3 MSPs and informatisation: the employment of a survey method**

<b>1) How many emails a month do you receive from constituents/and other groups?</b>
Average =179
Do you have your own web site? Yes = 16 No = 4
Have you used your web-site as a form of campaigning? Yes = 7
Do you think it helped the campaign? Yes =7

**Table 3.3 MSPs and informatisation: the employment of a survey method (continued)**

Have you used email as a form of campaigning? Yes = 7 No = 13.

Do you plan to use a web-site in your next campaign? Yes = 10 No = 10

Would you consider doing so? Yes = 10 No = 10

2) Do you take **email** enquiries/correspondence as seriously as **written/hard copy**?

Yes = 13 No = 7

3) Do you take **email** enquiries as seriously as **telephone** calls? Yes = 13 No = 7

4) Do you take email enquiries/correspondence as seriously if they are from **non constituents**? No = 20

5) How do you view email from known **lobbying organisations**? 'With suspicion' = 18  
'Has due relevance' = 2

6) How would you view a scheme which allowed MSPs to filter out email that is not from **constituents**? Legitimate idea = 3 Non legitimate idea = 17

7) '**email is not as effective as personal communications**': do you agree with this statement? Yes = 8 No = 12

8) Would you consider using email to keep **constituents** up to date with issues that may be important to them? Yes = 20

**Table 3.3 MSPs and informatisation: the employment of a survey method (continued)**

9) Which do you think is the more significant/important of the two roles commonly applied to ICTs within public administration/government? Their **external function**, i.e. their usage as links between government and citizens, or their **internal function** as a tool for making public administration more efficient and more cost/labour effective?

**External function = 7, Internal function = 3, Both = 10**

10) Do you use the Internet to **research information** on issues? Yes=20

11) Do you think that ICTs can **enhance democracy**? Yes = 20

12) Do you think Internet services (such as the Scottish Parliament Web-site) is essentially political window dressing? Or do you think it acts as a useful partner to the **democratic process in Scotland**?

Useful=20

13) Do you think that the Scottish Parliament web-site should contain an interactive capability? Perhaps as a method of **measuring public opinion**, or as way of providing for public comment?

Yes = 17

No = 2

Unsure = 1

14) Do you think that New technologies (such as the Internet/email) run the risk of **overwhelming Parliament with the immediate demands and opinions of citizens**.

Yes = 4

No = 4

Possibly = 12



**Table 3.3 MSPs and informatisation: the employment of a survey method (continued)**

15) Are you in favour of introducing **increased electronic based provision of information** about MSPs (voting preferences/patterns, views on policies etc) to the electorate? Yes = 20

16) Would you support the introduction of **online electronic voting** alongside traditional methods?

Yes = 8

No = 7

Unsure = 5

17) Do you think that the Internet should be used as a regular tool with which to conduct **referendums?**

No = 15

Yes = 3

Unsure = 2

17a) Do you view the **Internet as a possible threat to representative Parliamentary democracy?** No = 20

18) Do you think that MSPs should be allowed to take part in **Parliamentary affairs (plenary or committee work etc ) via the Internet?**

Yes = 12

No = 6

Possibly = 2

19) Do you think that a **dedicated live Parliamentary channel** might counter the negative aspects of political journalism (particularly press coverage) in Scotland?

Yes = 14

No = 1

Possibly = 5

**Table 3.3 MSPs and informatisation: the employment of a survey method (continued)**

**Question 19a)** Do you think that a **dedicated live Parliamentary channel** might counter the negative aspects of political journalism (particularly press coverage) in Scotland?

**Cross-party qualitative responses**

*'There is certainly the case for much more comprehensive coverage of the Scottish Parliament and Scottish politics. There may be a longer term case for a Scottish Parliamentary Channel. However, the most urgent need is for a Scottish six o'clock news. The existing UK bulletins almost completely ignore Scottish politics and Scottish current affairs, and cannot possibly hope to provide fair coverage of distinctive Scottish political parties'. SNP MSP.*

*'Yes I do. I think that the media have done a dis-service to the new Parliament. If we established a dedicated Channel (which would be possible given the limited, and structured timings and arrangements that are in operation) it would let people see what we were doing. Whether anyone would watch it though is another matter, but at least we would be giving them the chance'.*

**Liberal Democrat MSP.**

*'I don't think it would make much difference. The thing is to convince the press, especially the popular press, that we are actually up to some good. It is also about educating the press themselves in terms of the functions and set up of the Parliament. They don't really understand it and confuse the Executive with the Parliament. Besides even if you put out the Parliament on the air what about the committees? That is where the real work is done. The Parliament is all about show and rhetoric'.*

**Conservative MSP.**

*'I don't think that it could do any harm, but of course Plenary meetings are already broadcast on a regular live basis. There is a question as to whether or not people would actually watch it however. Overall I like the idea in principle but don't know about its real political relevance'.*

**Labour Party MSP.**

**Table 3.3 MSPs and informatisation: the employment of a survey method (continued)**

20) Do you think that **interactive Web-sites** for MSPs should be encouraged?

Yes = 19

No = 1

21) Do you think that more government information should be placed in the public domain via the Internet as a means of aiding greater **political transparency**?

Yes = 20

22) Is there a danger that the pace of change in ICT runs the risk of creating a **new form of social exclusion**?

Yes = 16

No = 4

23) Do you think that new interactive communication technologies can be successfully used to combat **social exclusion**?

Yes = 16

No = 4

24) 'If we get more people connected to the Internet we may be able to reverse the downward trend in **political participation**': to what extent do you agree/disagree with this statement?

Agree = 12 ; Disagree = 6 ; Possibly = 2.

**Table 3.3 MSPs and informatisation: the employment of a survey method**

**(continued)**

25) Do you think that the overall tendency of ICTs within public administration might be described as ***reinforcing existing relations of power?***

In other words, the foundations of democracy tend to be weakened and not strengthened by ICT applications in public administration. These applications tend to reinforce the existing dominant positions of the authorities, party elites and bureaucrats.

Or do the new ICTs promise the possibility of renewing democratic government, for example by making it more open, accountable and transparent?

Transformational politics position = 14

Possibilities within both directions = 5

Reinforcement Politics position = 1

26) 'Historically Scotland has suffered from what is generally termed as the '**democratic deficit**'. Do you think that information technology and its spread into Scottish civil society could remedy this situation in any future sense?'

Yes = 14

Perhaps = 5

No = 1

The above data represented a schedule of induction based themes which served as a guide for the open ended component of the survey questionnaire. As the interviews developed some themes became stronger in theoretical content and context, and began to inform and guide later research patterns. Conceptual models began to emerge in association with these clusters of themes that respondents presented to the interviewer. The research measured the patterns on both a nominal and an ordinal set of scale

positions. These patterns are essentially specific ideas and key points. They in turn fitted within the conceptual field of study, namely informatisation itself.

On the other hand, the application of ordinal scale properties was applicable to some elements of the research process. For instance, the frequency count of the informatisation dimension was rendered quantifiable by ranking its properties as established by the Scottish Parliament, and their attention to its details. This was achieved via the web based search outlined above. This quantitative data gave empirical substance to the qualitative materials encountered during the research. We now proceed to consider the informatisation perceptions of the Scottish MEPs. There is something of a contrast between the views of the MSPs and the Scottish MEPs as captured in this research, however, the number of interviews conducted can not be converted into a robust statistical measure. The evidence is presented in order to provide an insight into and a view upon changing and emergent political processes.

The results are offered now in Table 3.3.1 (see below)

**Table 3.3.1 Scottish Based constituency Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and informatisation: the employment of a survey method**

1) How many emails a week/month do you receive from constituents/and other groups? Average = 410 per week

Do you have your own web site? Yes = 5

2) Which do you think is the more significant/important of the two roles commonly applied to ICTs within public administration/government? Their **external function**, i.e. their usage as links between government and citizens, or their **internal function** as a tool for making public administration more efficient and more cost/labour effective?

Both = 5

External function = one

Internal function = N/A

3) Do you think Internet services (such as the European Parliament Web-site) is essentially political window dressing? Or do you think it acts as a useful partner to the **democratic process in Europe**?

Useful = 5

4) Do you think that the European Parliament web-site should contain an interactive capability? Perhaps as a method of **measuring public opinion**, or as way of providing for public comment?

Yes = 5

**Table 3.3.1 Scottish Based constituency Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and informatisation: the employment of a survey method (Continued)**

5) Do you think that New technologies (such as the Internet/ email) run the risk of **overwhelming Parliament with the immediate demands and opinions of citizens?**

Yes = 3

No = 2

6) Are you in favour of introducing **increased electronic based provision of information** about MEPs (voting preferences/patterns, views on policies etc) to the electorate?

Yes = 5

7) Would you support the introduction of **online electronic voting** alongside traditional methods?

Yes = 4

Unsure = 1

8) Do you think that the Internet should be used as a regular tool with which to conduct **referendums?**

No = 2

Yes = 2

Unsure = 1

9) Do you view the Internet as a possible threat to representative **Parliamentary democracy?**

No = 4

Yes = 1

**Table 3.3.1 Scottish Based constituency Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and informatisation: the employment of a survey method**

10) Do you think that MEPs should be allowed to take part in **Parliamentary affairs (plenary or committee work etc ) via the Internet?**

Yes = 1

No = 4

11) Is there a danger that the pace of change in ICT runs the risk of creating a **new form of social exclusion?**

Yes = 5

12) 'If we get more people connected to the Internet we may be able to reverse the downward trend in **political participation**': to what extent do you agree/disagree with this statement?

Agree = 1 ; Disagree = 1; Possibly = 3

13) Do you think that the overall tendency of ICTs within public administration might be described as **reinforcing existing relations of power?**

In other words, the foundations of democracy tend to be weakened and not strengthened by ICT applications in public administration. That these applications tend to reinforce the existing dominant positions of the authorities, party elites and bureaucrats. Or do the new ICTs promise the possibility of renewing democratic government, for example by making it more open, accountable and transparent?

Reinforcement Politics position = 1

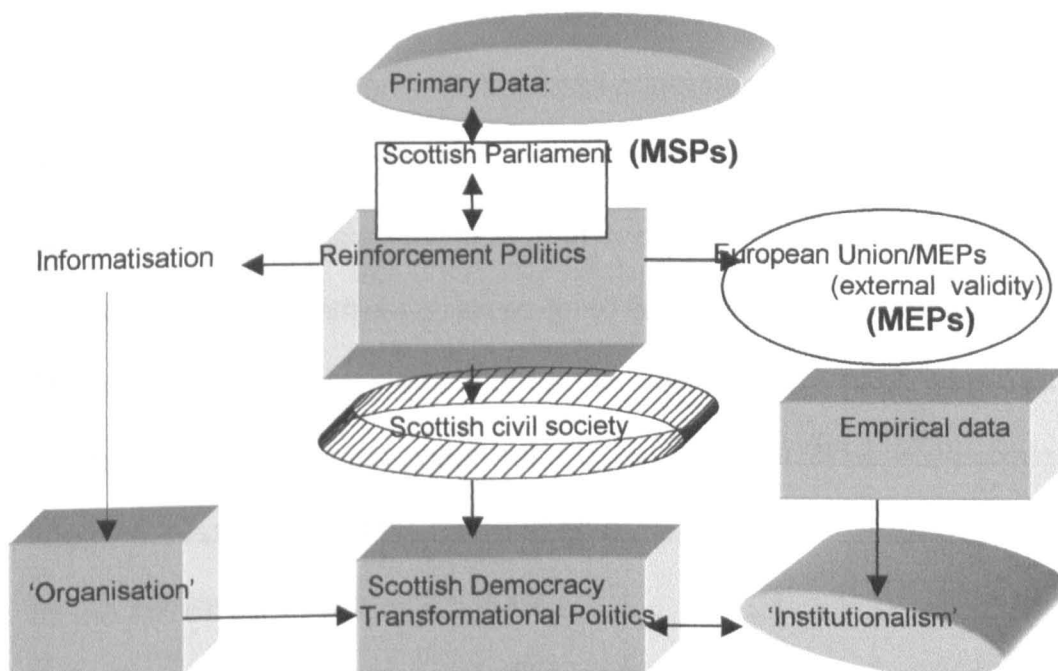
Transformational politics position = 3

Possibilities within both directions = 1



The third element within the research is measured in terms of Scottish Civil Society and its electronic interactions with the Scottish Parliament (see section 3.2.6 forthcoming). However, at this stage it may be useful to illustrate the research questions, focus, and methodological premises in diagrammatic format(see Figure 3.1 immediately below). After having established these points and orientations we then move into the second focus of this chapter ('Informatisation: government to governance' section 3.4.1.)

**Figure 3.1: A methodology of Transformational Politics**



The above figure establishes the intersections between informatisation, Scottish democracy, and the research triangulation. It shows the potential transformational direction of Scottish politics from the *organisational-technocratic* mode that we observed in chapter two, towards the set of possibilities that the *institutional* principle represents<sup>13</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> The institutional model represents a host of conceptual points. There are for instance shifts within the concepts of 'process and control' of political-social inputs, towards a more focused concern with outputs and outcomes (Maguire 1998). However, the main point is that institutions are the subject of Transformational Politics in that they, in theory, become the *'agencies of communities'* (Dorbeck-Jung 1998 p47). Integral to

The different case study bases, built within the course of the research, provide support for the relevance of this approach: there are links in the experiences of these groups as well as differences indicating that the ground for political shifts is present but there is no way of determining at this juncture precisely the direction of change - transformational or reinforcing. This is established not only through interviews with elites but also by interviews with a section of Scottish civil society who were distributed geographically, by age, and by relative health variables.

The sample study of civil society included a specific comparison of two distinct groups with relatively different ideological backgrounds. The two groups in question were a Scottish Crofting Union and a Highlands business confederation. These are different ideological communities, but both possess a relation to the new Scottish Parliament in their commitment towards Scottish land reform. Both groups have been interacting with the Scottish Parliament amidst a campaign to develop a land reform movement in Scotland. Their proposals include plans to bring into community ownership an area of land approaching half a million acres in the Outer Hebrides. Their interactions have been largely focussed around the introduction of the Scottish Parliament's 'Land Reform' Bill to be put before the Parliament in 2002.

If the Bill is passed into an Act it will allow the communities the rights to buy land in a communal sense, from previously private estate owners. The qualitative commentaries of selected elements of Scottish civil society are given in the following table (see Table 3.3.2 immediately below).

---

this is the notion, also developed in this chapter, that institutions are '*important determinants of human action*' (Lange-von Kulesa 1997 p73). This variable of social action is set against the idea of a virtual

**Table 3.3.2 Scottish Civil Society: Electronic interactions with the Scottish Parliament**

A) A registered charity campaigning on behalf of older people in Scotland (with particular reference to housing issues)

*'ICTs have a definite potential to aid the democratic process ..(however)..access to ICT resources will continue to be an issue for the socially disadvantaged – only once this is addressed will the new access to information, offered by ICTs, redress the balance of accessibility to the democratic process'*

B) A voluntary organisation who advocate on behalf of adults and children with learning difficulties

*'emails add some speed to our communications with the (Scottish) Parliament, but we do not see it working the other way'*

**Table 3.3.2 Scottish Civil Society: Electronic interactions with the Scottish Parliament (continued)**

C) A health based charitable group with close links to the Scottish Parliament and Scottish Executive

*'ICTs aid the democratic process to the extent that they offer fairly immediate and comprehensive access to official Parliamentary documents'*

D) A business-venture group for small to medium enterprises in the Highlands and Island(s) area

*'email links have made the relationship with the Parliament much more dynamic'*

E) A trade union representing the interests of crofters throughout Scotland.

*'emails, and the Parliament web-site, diminish the penalties of being based in the Highlands/Islands.....and of being a small organisation.....however, they are (more comprehensive) if used in conjunction with more traditional means ..such as giving evidence to Committees'*

The above Table illustrates some of the interactions between Scottish civil society and the Scottish Parliament. The evidence presented here suggests that electronic communications, at this relatively early stage of their adaptation and use, are charged with a similar set of imperfections present within other communications. The table of opinions presented here provides an abstract of the conceptual dimensions, and provides some understanding of the relationships between civil society and political agents.

The content is representative in form of other areas strongly associated with informatisation. For instance, the concerns voiced regarding political-social inclusion, and information equity issues is a consistent theme of informatisation research and policy.

Following in this chapter however, we now develop a position of theory building. Here we consider these ideas from a different set of perspectives. We will examine the informatisation process, and its relationship towards change, from the position of legitimation, scientific practice, and the extension of power. In this way we can bring forward a theoretical account of the informatisation process which goes beyond the experiential and empirical, and into the politics of technology.

The following sections provide an account of the reasoning behind many informatisation projects. Moreover, the ideas that we encounter here are in turn linked to other themes that we will return to in chapter six ('A new information settlement: wiring up the union). In this way our present attention towards theory building proceeds to offer a contrasting series of ideas which are in turn linked to political computing and the re-generation of government.

### **3.4.1 Informatisation: government to governance**

The concept of informatisation is being used by governments world wide to engender change, by relating new political conditions to the new technical philosophy of informatisation. In doing so they clear the obstacles of previous political generations from under them. For instance, they are using related normative and prescriptive models to manage change, and to emerge into the twenty first century with the bureaucratic rationalities, practices and structures of previous eras behind them. Traditional 'solid' bureaucracies (inflexible and tangible, hierarchical and slow, supposedly inefficient) are being transformed into virtual organisations which represent a decisive and dynamic process of change, and a radical departure from the institutional properties associated with previous models of administration (Frissen 1996). However, before we enlarge upon

these important themes we should consider the origins of this process. It is to a study of this that we now turn.

### 3.4.2 The origins of the informatisation process

Informatisation is a complex concept which relates and refers to a multitude of evolving ICT related phenomena<sup>14</sup>. However, we should first and foremost examine some of the early attempts at producing a systematic analysis of information technologies and the spread of accompanying issues. This section explores the ideas within recent history that point us towards some of the logic and rationale behind the emergence of informatisation. We will now explore these structural conditions and determining features.

The concept of informatisation<sup>15</sup> is derived from the work of Japanese Information Society theorists who (as early as 1963 had discussed the idea of an 'information society': Castells 1998) posited the idea of '*informatisation*'<sup>16</sup> to highlight the:

*'process by which the information society is created'* (Morris – Suzuki 1988 p8)

---

<sup>14</sup> A useful starting point is that conceived of by Frissen et al (1992 p1) who offer their analysis of the term in the following way, it includes the introduction of ICTs to facilitate ;  
*'the process of information supply(via) automated information systems;*  
*the arrangement and re-arrangement of flows of information and information relations (as they affect)*  
*administrative information supply; the adjustment or change of the organisational structure in which IT is*  
*introduced; the development of information policy as a differentiated policy in the organisation,, (it also*  
*includes) the introduction of specific expertise in the field of information technology via officials with*  
*backgrounds/assignments in this field.'*

<sup>15</sup> There are however, other theorists who describe the problems and potentials associated with the computerised transformation of society. In the introduction to the 1999 volume, '*The Coming of Post - Industrial Society*' by Daniel Bell, he outlines some of the attendant issues of post war French political culture which brought the twin formulas of information and computerisation to the fore. For instance, he notes the symbolic location of science and technology as an inspirational metaphor for both the public and the administrative elites, and the desire expressed by certain political actors to devolve power and to decentralise public administration (Bell 1999 ). This desire is fuelled by two additional features. Firstly, the global reverberations produced as a result of the 1973 oil crisis, in which it is evident that previously held ideas concerning Western economic and political autonomy and hegemony are called into question, and which ultimately produces a new form of capitalist accumulation based upon, as Castells notes, (1996 pps19, 51): '*deregulation, privatisation, and the dismantling of the social contract between capital and labour which underlay the stability of the previous growth model*'.

Nora and Minc (1981) adapted the term and its related themes, and advocated a French national unified information policy, to engineer the process of restructuring that they argued was essential after the oil crisis of 1973, and by the gathering momentum of American based telecommunications systems. So, the demands for a computerised/informatised society are two fold. They stem from an *internal* logic which recognises the need to centralise power and control via technology, and the imposition of *external* uncontrollable economic shocks to the system (Nora and Minc 1981)<sup>17</sup>.

The additional conditions which revolve around these points relate to the processes of political re-generation that informatisation allows. We will now consider this set of elements in greater detail. We now examine the desire by government to govern, to control, and the abilities contained within science that allows for the development of such possibilities.

### **3.4.3 The dialectics of the science-informatisation relationship**

Organisations, such as governments and public administration, are regenerated through a dialectical set of relations (Taylor and Van Every 1993). For instance, they need to re-legitimate themselves politically. In addition, they must also develop a set of processes which allow them to calculate, control and communicate (Bekkers and Frissen 1992). This process of regeneration is one of the principles at the heart of informatisation. This section

---

<sup>16</sup> This concept of 'informisation' is a forerunner of the later, and developing, term 'informatisation'. The former is given rein to free humans from routine drudgery, and to encourage human development. The latter is associated with a more bureaucratic based rationalism, and has (arguably) less cultural components.

<sup>17</sup> As the authors themselves note (1980, p1): '*If France does not respond effectively to the serious new challenges she faces, her internal tensions will deprive her of the ability to control her fate. The increasing computerisation of society is a key issue in this crisis and could either worsen it or help solve it. Depending on the policy into which it is incorporated, computerisation will bring about changes for the better or the worse: there is nothing automatic or preordained about its effects, which will depend on how relations between the government and French society develop in the coming years*'. Here we have early recognition of the place of political computing as a form of political-control technology.

examines these ideas within some of the theoretical positions associated with informatisation, political - social power, and its relationship with science as a method of state control and legitimation. In this section we examine the connection between informatisation, reflexivity<sup>18</sup>, and the New Politics in Scotland. This section also examines the 'science' of statistics in their contemporary Scottish context, and within that which Lyotard (1979 p45) refers to as '*performativity*'. For instance, Reflexivity is an extension of the notion of '*Performativity*', which in turn should be explained.

This is a concept Lyotard (1994) uses to outline how technology follows a principle of rationality. It does so by converting data into resources, with less energy expended than human functions are otherwise capable of achieving. By the late twentieth century this performativity takes the form of computerisation and the promise of the '*efficiencies*' which will be delivered as a result of the increasing informatisation/computerisation of government and state (Lips 1998). As such, according to Lyotard (1994) science, in the form of realised distributed computing, augments its relationship with the state and society by means of the performativity (or efficient- rationality) of its practices. In other words, its '*promise*' lies in its claim to further the rationalities of existence, and the ability to design, as it were, the future: computers extend the performativity of the system. Technology also

---

<sup>18</sup> Informatisation revolves around the use of reflexive ICTs within, and between, government and citizens. Reflexivity within an informatised system involves a set of '*signal structures*'. Relations are established within the information architecture that allows the electronic signal carriers to instigate or reflect upon its content (Bellamy and Taylor 1998). These take the form of both automated electronic information technologies (the technical apparatus-machinery of ICTs) and other associated conditions and developments. For example, by the appearance of a whole new raft of information based policy agendas, decisions and procedures which profess a desire to foster new democratic arrangements, techniques and means of legitimation (Frissen et al 1992). These reflexive informatised networks introduce a potential for new forms of co-ordination and optimisation between public administration in its national and localised forms, and offer not only an informatised addition to existing citizen services, but also new modes of electronic communications and service delivery (Andersen 1995).



fuses with discourse in that it offers the promise of knowledge<sup>19</sup> which is converted in order to govern (Miller and Rose 1993). Informatisation/computerisation, become the new: *'technologies of government'* (Miller and Rose 1993).

For example, governments require the:

*'elaboration of a language for depicting the domain in question that (can) represent it in a form amenable to political deliberation, argument and scheming'*. (Miller and Rose *ibid.* p80)

Therefore, a programme of government can be detailed which can establish perspectives and address specific issues within a particular framework . For instance, attention to the governance of the Scottish economy can be considered within the context of the following *'Scottish Executive Press Release'* which highlights the relationship between the

---

<sup>19</sup> Lyotard (1994) provides us with a series of links between our principal themes, amidst the overarching content of his work: postmodernism. For instance, his work on the field of knowledge in computerised societies takes into account the relationship between, as Jamieson points out in the foreword to Lyotard's 1994 revised edition (Jamieson 1994 p.viii/ix): *'The status of science and technology, of technocracy.. and information..... may be investigated as a subset of the vaster political problem of the legitimation of a whole social and (as a way of ) relegitimising contemporary science'*. Moreover, Lyotard is at pains to point out the fine points of detail that is at play within these relationships. For instance (*ibid.* p. xxiv) the correlation between concepts of 'efficiency' and 'legitimacy' within a given system, be it social, political-economic, or technologically based. He has in mind here the outline of power between, as he terms them, *'the decision makers'* (*ibid.*), and their interpretation of 'knowledge' as it is utilised within language games dedicated to the continuation and transformation of systems. For example: *'Along with the hegemony of computers comes a certain logic, and therefore a certain set of prescriptions determining which statements are accepted as "knowledge" statements'*. Lyotard's central thesis is the alliance between science and its association with the computerisation of society. This, as Poster (1990, p141) notes is at the core of his contention about the nature of postmodernism. It is in essence a historical analysis that brings into play the idea that a; *'new era of politics is emerging, one that brings to a close two centuries of Jacobinism and Leninism'*.

historically developing <sup>20</sup>science of the state, and a contemporary form of political arithmetic :

*'Quality statistics (are) vital to New politics: the provision of ..accurate. .economic statistics are vital to ..new politics in post devolution Scotland...'* (Former Scottish Executive Finance Minister Jack McConnell. 29/3/2000 @ [http://www.scotland.gov.uk/news/press2000\\_04/se0406.asp](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/news/press2000_04/se0406.asp)).

In the first instance, we examine the relationship between political computing and science. The characteristics that we will examine allow us to consider the *relations* between these two phenomenon and the *interactions* between them. In this sense we begin to acknowledge that science is in turn connected to the relations of power which reside within technology (Street 1992). With these ideas in place we can explore two specific features regarding contemporary science. One is concerned with the compact between science as a method of legitimation, whilst the other is concerned with the relationship between science and computerisation. A new politics is emerging, one that has at its core the relational focus between these two forms<sup>21</sup>. It is being argued here that power is resident within discourse. For example, the once legitimating employed grand narratives

---

<sup>20</sup> Foucault (1991a) charts the historical evolution of government and its exercise of power. In doing so he locates the expansion of the state, from the sixteenth century onwards, into those spheres previously held as private (the family, and 'population', i.e. the 'improvement' of its wealth in relation to, and conjunction with, the state: Foucault *ibid.* p100).

<sup>21</sup> The relationship between science, informatisation and politics can be considered as follows. For instance, informatisation process has *reflexive qualities*: the information transmitted via ICTs has a reflexive capacity. This means that information is both established within its setting, but that also that the reflexive features built into the information architecture will display additional reflexive counterparts, information that would have been lost or dismissed is given new meanings and form by the new technological reflect back upon it. This makes it uniquely interesting within the context of a new politics of reflexive democracy and generative politics (Giddens 1994). As Bellamy and Taylor (1998 p165) express it: *The forms into which information is put are both symbols of institutional identity, and also part of the process which continuously transforms and reconstitutes it as a political entity, ICTs and the information that they convey are to be understood as active elements in the*

of scientific discourse (for instance the concept of Enlightenment based 'progress'<sup>22</sup>) have collapsed, or have lost their motivational power<sup>23</sup>. In their place a new context (accompanied by a new politics) has emerged: a postmodern condition which sees, amongst other things, the centrality of computers/informatisation and their ability to control or empower. This is evidenced through the mass of informatisation projects within the European Union, and through the Scottish informatisation projects which are a central component of this thesis. A new politics of legitimisation emerges, which utilises ICTs to extend its means of control (as we will observe in chapter six), and to re-legitimise its political condition.

This is achieved through the selective promises of informatisation<sup>24</sup>.

Bellamy and Taylor (1998) advocate the need for a new heuristic framework for exploring and analysing change in and around government, including innovations centred around ICTs and their relationships towards changing structures, processes and values.

---

*definition, reproduction and re-shaping of institutional politics and power'.*

<sup>22</sup> We have observed in chapter two the concept of incrementalism, whereby political progress is steadily established in a rational, developmental manner. This places the idea of progression at the heart of the social-political project. Improvements are built upon the foundation of established conditions. Post-modernism denies the concept of developmental progression and advances through scientific logic. In place of this a new, more eclectic anti-foundationalism is premised. In this type, or notion, advances are subjective rather than objective and measurable.

<sup>23</sup> As Habermas (1971 p84) notes in relation to this:

*'The authority of "science" can...encompass both the broadly effective critique of arbitrary structures of prejudice and the new esoterics of specialised knowledge and judgement. A scientific self-affirmation of the sciences can promote a positivistic common consciousness that sustains the public realm. But scientism also sets standards by which it can itself be criticised and convicted of residual dogmatism. Theories of technocracy and of elites, which assert the necessity of institutionalised civil privatism, are not immune to objections, because they too must claim to be theories.'*

<sup>24</sup> The validity of a system is premised upon the attributes offered by scientific logic. As other explanatory devices fall behind in their ability to offer answers, or to convince, so then new instruments must take their place. These are in essence new manoeuvres whose purpose is to arrange power in new forms, and in so doing to produce a new politics. This is evidenced in the work of JF Lyotard (1994). Later, in chapter six, we will observe the relationship between power and informatisation within the work of Michel Foucault, and in particular the idea of the 'micro-physics of power' (Foucault 1991a). Drawing upon both technical and knowledge based perspectives, Lyotard highlights the principles at play within these new power configurations. For instance, Lyotard refers to the contextual control that is afforded by computer systems. By this he means that they can be seen as an extension of already dominant power relations, they serve to further power both within the language games of the concept (a general feature of poststructuralism-whereby power is resident within discourse) and within social – structural relations as well.

In particular we are interested in looking at these relations in terms of the associations between technology, and the scientific epistemology that supports such logic(s). These concerns are at the foundations of the informatisation process of the new politics, no precise understanding of the new informational relations that are developing can afford to neglect the reasoning behind them. They are evidential within and around the Scottish Parliament, where ICTs are used to undermine a consistent democratic deficit within Scottish politics, and to offer a new set of legitimacies amidst the transformational process which informatisation is supposed to engineer for Scottish democracy. However, an evolving definition of informatisation<sup>25</sup> should also examine the structural conditions that are associated with the re-invention of government, and indeed the progression towards what can be termed as 'governance'<sup>26</sup>. In order to make the necessary links we should

---

<sup>25</sup> The concept has an evolving nature, this is consistent with its reflexive features. However, greater precision for the term can be provided by Lenk. For example, According to Lenk (1998 p475) informatisation consists of what he terms as 'Tele-cooperation'. This itself has four themes, these are at the starting point of an account of informatisation within public administration according to Lenk. For instance, the use of telematic networks (such as the Internet) to perform and process informational work is one component, as is communication itself. The communication itself (the process by which information is transmitted: Schement and Curtis 1997), is accompanied by four other elements. These are technical and data related forms, and include the co-ordination and synchronisation of administrative practices within bureaucracies. Additionally, there are the electronic storage/retrieval processes associated with data base systems. Automation processes are integral to informatisation, and there is the generation of secondary information, the by-product of the process (statistical data, information for surveillance and control processes which can be used to assist management via the information architecture itself:: Zuurmond and Snellen 1997). Informatisation, is used within the theory of ICTs in two ways. Firstly as a description of the telematic capabilities and the increasing convergence of the technologies themselves and their penetration of the social and political, as well as the economic, architectures of society and polity (see Duff 2000). However, the term informatisation is used by Bellamy and Taylor to refer to the distinctive reflexive capacities of telematics. These were highlighted by Zuboff (1988). She argued that IT has the ability to offer reflexivity to administrations. As such ICTs are more than enabling devices which produce efficiency and speed up business processes, they: *'produce information which enables reflection upon the organisation into which it has been introduced, and thereby changes, in intended or unintended ways, human perceptions of the context in which that technology is employed'* (Bellamy and Taylor *ibid.* p27.)

<sup>26</sup> The desire to support new forms of political engagement within a new political structure, is evident in a variety of ways. Telematics are seen as capable of delivering a new form(s) of democratic enlargement and participation, and as a means by which the creation of new interactive political connections might be made between citizen and representative, thus both revitalising democracy, and as a tool of policy guidance (CSG 1998). The role of communications both as an internal aid to efficient public administration within the Parliament, and as an external device with which to extend government are institutionally structured features. These moves away from technocracy and the 'old politics' are themselves evidential of the shift from 'government' where politics is practised from the top-down, to 'governance' where policy is negotiated. ICTs play a significant role in these negotiative structures.

consider the concept of the Scottish democratic deficit (explored in chapter two), from a different perspective: from that of the information elites who are charged with developing policies aimed at undermining the political differentials of the Scottish system. To this end we now consider the potency of informatisation amidst the ideas and arguments established in the previous chapter on Scottish post war democracy.

As such, we now turn towards an understanding of the democratic potential of a society such as Scotland, and the position of the Parliament within this set of variables.

#### **3.4.4 The Scottish democratic deficit and informatisation**

Informatisation theories, set within their Scottish context, present the potential for an apparent extension of a democracy hitherto denied full representation. In this sense the democratic deficit, experienced as a condition of post war Scottish political life, is theoretically remedied. Below are a range of answers regarding the theoretical demise of the Scottish democratic deficit. Taken from MSPs they produce an understanding of the complexities of the issue. Within this context it is those MSPs who are directly involved in the Scottish Parliament's informatisation process.

In this sense we begin to further one specific set of reference points, these are associated with MSPs as a political elite. And in particular, the *action frame of reference* concerning informatisation and the Scottish democratic deficit of previous generations. The questions establish a framework that considers the possibility of a new form of deficit: and the related notions of information equity within their Scottish dimensions. These are explored in relation to the concepts of informatisation-political computing and its relations with Scottish democracy. The data presented

here is qualitative in form, and establishes an understanding of the communities of discourse and dialogue<sup>27</sup> that are a component of political life within the new Scottish Parliament. Moreover, the methodology adopts the conditions of 'New Institutionalism' as a means of locating the discourse itself. In this sense discourse is observed as:

*'a structuration of repeatable practices, a conglomeration of habits, patterns of social practices that occur in rule like fashion.....this perspective on organisations - that they are social constructions rather than concrete entities - ...is derived from Berger and Luckmanns (1966) 'Social Construction of Reality', which serves (to remind us that human beings) actively participate in creating the categories that pre-figure our knowledge of the world'*

(Fox and Miller 1995 p8-9).

In this way then we attach and utilise the concept of '*Field Theory*' in relation to the research (Fox and Miller *ibid.*). This concept applies to the process of Transformational Politics in that the Field in question is the amalgamation of forces and interactions that have a bearing upon a given situation<sup>28</sup>. The conception of political-social energies refers to the idea that within a given situation the core conditions of political policy are created and re-adjusted. In this way the notion of the democratic deficit can be considered as a discourse which can be related to the actions of Transformational Politics.

---

<sup>27</sup> By 'dialogue' I am referring to that '*which occurs when a group becomes open to the flow of a larger intelligence.....thought itself is not the result of an individual in isolation, but is largely a collective phenomenon. Dialogue is seen as meaning passing and moving through the free flow of meaning between people..*' (Dennings and Grieco 2000 p1870)

<sup>28</sup> In this sense the ideas developed by Anthony Giddens (1984) are adopted. Giddens' theory of structuration alerts us to the fact that institutions are connected in a variety of ways to social processes: they do not stand independently of social structure. This allows us to think about how it is that social-structure imposes limits on citizens and their possibilities to engage in action.

It can also be transferred to New Institutionalism, with its emphasis upon shifting politics and participation from elites and organisations into the social fabric of a given society.

We have observed the engagement with the idea of a democratic deficit within the recent context of Scottish democracy (from the mid 1950s onwards, and growing in its progressive strength: see chapter two), and the comprehension of this idea in relation to forms and political technologies aimed at its dissolution. In chapter four we will examine these ideas from the perspective of elite groups within the Scottish parliament itself. This offers evidence from the perspective of elites and is unique in that their understandings of the informatisation process have not been detailed before.

The Table cited below (Table 3.2.3 ) evidences the relations between new politics, Transformational Politics, informatisation and the evolutionary concept of the democratic deficit. Its recognition within Scottish politics and its distinct place in the political culture of Scotland renders it a valuable discourse, linking the past to the present in a deductive fashion. In this manner we are able to present a set of specific assumptions concerning the nature of the research phenomenon. It is then tested in an empirical fashion from the theory generated. The data gathering exercise utilised these ideas within what is termed as 'adaptive theory' (Layder 1998). This understands the principal nature of research to be concerned with a synthesis moving towards the gathering and interpretation of data. It is focused both upon the 'open ended' qualities of research (through which data gathered can be extrapolated further). It: *'focuses on the multifarious interconnections between human agency, social activities and social organisation (structure and systems).'* (Layder 1998 p133)

We now explore these ideas from the perspective of MSPs and their understandings of informatisation within the given historical context of the democratic deficit. The following Table (3.3.3) illustrates their positions in this regard.

**Table 3.3.3 Political computing: informatisation and the concept of the Scottish democratic deficit. Interviews with MSPs (conducted between November 2000 and March 2001 Question 25a)**

'Historically Scotland has suffered from what is generally termed as the 'democratic deficit'. Do you think that information technology and its spread into Scottish civil society could remedy this situation in any future sense?'

*'There is a crisis of representative democracy. In Scotland the experience of government is one of control from elsewhere. The political settlement (of devolution) contains some of the necessary attributes for self government, but they do not go far enough in terms of empowering Scotland.....there remains the possibility of a new type of democratic deficit emerging, in fact one could say that it is already here.....given that we do not have sufficient power to challenge, or to question, some of the terms of the (devolution) settlement.... Westminster still offers an alternative form of politics that is in opposition to our own....it is unlikely that I.T. will alter that fact of political life' .*

**SNP MSP and member of SPIKE**

*'Politics is all about control, but it depends upon what you mean by that term. Information technology is a tool like any other, its not a neutral condition. In some ways a new democratic deficit could happen. The way to avoid this is to get as many people as possible connected up to the Internet. But having said that, the political side of things needs to come up to speed....'*

**Scottish Labour MSP and member of SPIKE**



**Table 3.3.3 Political computing: informatisation and the concept of the Scottish democratic deficit. Interviews with MSPs (Continued)**

*' At the moment the net is good for some things and hopeless for others.....besides, I actually wonder whether or not ordinary people are at all bothered about being able to get hold of information. What I mean is that those people who want to access information about their MSPs or this or that Act or Bill, are already likely to be in positions of power.....most people are not interested in politics...we (MSPs and interviewer) live in a very different world from ordinary folk, in that we (mistakenly) presume that they are as interested in (political )things as we are...'*

**Conservative MSP and member of SPIKE**

*'Information technology could create a new type of underclass, yes that is possible...this is why its so important to get our citizens connected. The old idea of the democratic deficit suggests that Scotland was not represented in any meaningful sense, I don't think that is true anymore.. we have the new Parliament, and even if it has its problems it still brings the system a bit closer to home. The I.T. side of things should be worked on a bit more.....it needs fine tuning in that we need to decide how far democracy should be extended...the idea that people should be able to direct democracy as it were, needs to be really considered seriously.....how far should these ideas go? In that sense you could see a new democratic deficit coming about in terms of those who have the connections (through the net) to their representatives, and those who do not....any way I think that this already happens to some extent '* **Liberal Democrat MSP and member of SPIKE**

**Table 3.3.3 Political computing: informatisation and the concept of the Scottish democratic deficit. Interviews with MSPs (Continued)**

*'(the idea of the democratic deficit and Informatisation)...is a good point. What might happen is that Westminster, and the Executive who are already their stooges in some respects, might use I.T to exert even more control over our system and its rather limited powers. Anyway, its already happening.. the Executive are the ones in control, not the Parliament, in this way you can see them using I.T to underpin their powers....for example, the collapse of the electronic voting system... was not an accident...they rigged it to go off-line at a time when they though they were going to lose the vote (on support for the Scottish fishing industry in March 2001).....that's a new form of deficit...the old one hasn't really gone away, its just changed shape a little'*

**SNP MSP and member of SPIKE**

The Table illustrates some elements of the qualitative moments associated with a democracy in transition, and the place of informatisation in such a trend. However, the informatisation process invites a new form of political tension. It confirms the ability of ICTs to extend the democratic process in unique ways. This is something that we should explore further.

### **3.5.1 Informatisation and the extension of democracy**

We have observed the engagement with the idea of a democratic deficit within the recent context of Scottish democracy and the comprehension of this idea in relation to forms and political technologies, aimed primarily at its dissolution.

As such, changing political processes involve challenges to existing rules, assumptions and norms. From these will emerge a debate about the overall values that a society might wish from its system of government and public administration.

This has also been developed in chapter one in relation to the process of political transformation in Scotland. The desire to achieve the above, particularly via the adoption and use of ICTs, can be seen as a means of re-engineering a political system, and the means by which ICTs might be used to aid the development and promotion of alternatives. However, after debating the concept of a democratic deficit let us now consider in greater detail what is in some sense its opposite number. The idea of a Teledemocratic society, whereby citizens can vote upon the issues of 'the day', is a controversial one. Political concerns arise in that it produces the opposite of a deficit. A system of direct democracy has ambitions to push the political system away from a representative model and onto instead a more radical participatory design.

The production of what might be termed a political surplus is possible. This would manifest itself in terms of an increasing tendency for citizens to vote upon issues, and for the range and vitality of issues to increase dramatically. The incrementalist and deliberative nature of representative democracy may be undermined in ways that call into question the systems legitimacy and functional purpose. For instance, those democratic impulses which offer a challenge towards established UK centrist versions of parliamentary democracy (now made tangible in the Scottish Parliament), and other assumptions concerning ICT and democratic alternatives may grow in strength and political élan. Many of these emerge from a more radical approach towards existing forms of, or alternatives towards, democracy. For example, the notion that a model of teledemocracy, which is cited almost as an ideal type within some versions of democratic theory (i.e. direct, electronically enabled democracy: Dahlberg 1999), might assert itself as the most strident and challenging alternative to existing political forms and institutions (Becker and Slaton 2000, Taylor and Burt 2001).

That this argument is essentially technologically determinist in perspective is rarely acknowledged however. The idea that a credible strain of direct democratic formulae existed prior to the new technologies which now make it feasible, is not politically sustained. The relative purity of the thesis in this regard (that democracy should, by some natural order, move towards a more direct form) may be placed for the moment at least within political theory and philosophy, rather than as voter aspiration. However, a measure of its condition as having any future validity or otherwise may be ascertained from a review of MSPs and their views and perspectives on a gradual extension of informatisation and democracy. These themes and further detailed evidence are explored in greater detail in chapter four. But for the moment an analysis of the issues gives an indication of later important contents of this thesis.

### **3.5.2 A theory of democratic informatisation and direct democracy: referendums and initiatives**

There is a substantial literature which outlines the tele-democratic potentials of the new ICTs (Budge 1996, Dahlberg 1999, Becker and Slaton 2000<sup>29</sup>). Great claims have been made about their abilities to provide solutions to the problems of an enlarged democracy, and the potential to overcome the constraints of political institutions that cannot aggregate the collective demands of citizens other than through paper ballots performed every four or five years (Schalken 1998, Becker and Slaton 2001). As such, direct democrats consider political computing within the context of instant referenda, cyber-communications and libertarian initiatives<sup>30</sup>. New political realities can therefore be formulated around the

---

<sup>29</sup> See: the 'Direct Democracy Campaign@ [www.homeusers.prestel.co.uk/rodmell/case.htm](http://www.homeusers.prestel.co.uk/rodmell/case.htm) ),

<sup>30</sup> For example as Bellamy and Taylor note (1998) there are many theorists who will argue that ICTs automatically promote desirable values in society and help produce a more egalitarian organisation. These ideas are similarly suggested within the context of political processes which in turn emphasise the lateral and more creative diffusion of power, and an increase in participation (Silcock 2001). In addition, it is argued

extension of the internet, and 'lost' political communities restored and energised via distributed technologies (Rheingold 1993). There are variations on the theme inasmuch as, at one polarity, a series of writers see no further need for representative democracy at all. The institutions of democracy may be allowed to stand albeit in a new and informatised mode. For instance, within the context of an autonomous mass of citizens who nevertheless require *public administration to secure their wishes*: re-engineered through informatisation (1996 Budge, van Dijk 2000).

This might conceivably be achieved in the following way, by the detachment of a political executive from the system, and its replacement by what is in effect an informatised bureaucracy. For instance, one of the principal conditions of informatisation is its ability to provide a form of 'smart' reactions to information. For example, the process involves collecting information and then acting upon it independently of immediate human agency, producing as a result new streams of data and information. As such, political information could be effectively transferred from the administrative into the democratic realm. As Abramson et al note (1988) these characteristics allow for the constantly updated provision of citizen-government interactions. As such, political computing can be used to extend informatisation into the direct democratic process itself. The information architecture which allows the registration of statistical formulae could be used, it is argued, to gather opinions and responses to and from citizen/government. For instance, in the form of sophisticated feedback mechanisms and the revitalisation of citizen based initiatives and referenda. The shift in political thought and practice is from top-down politics, in which organisations establish the context and conditions of the plebiscite (or

---

by the proponents of direct digital democracy that they decentralise 'mass' communications, and therefore provide an infinite volume of information (Abramson et al 1988 *ibid*).

other similar formats<sup>31</sup>) towards a re-vitalisation of the concept of information as it relates to citizenship and democracy. However, the dangers of a descent into what Hirst (1994, p35) refers to as the '*plebiscitarian legitimisation of administration*', are very evident here. Proponents of direct tele-democratic politics generally fail to consider this feature. An automatic presumption is made that it is democratic grass roots politics in style and content: this is not necessarily so.

However, as a way of testing the political system's reactions towards direct democratic forms, the research focused on the introduction of incremental advances in electronic democratisation. The position here was to suggest to MSPs that although a type of democracy could be delivered through informatisation, it remained unclear as yet precisely what the overall outcome would be. Furthermore, the strain upon the nature of institutional development would be problematic, or at least carry the potential for problems. The concept of the democratic deficit that we have explored thus far was set against the idea of the surplus potential of too many democratic impulses and ambitions.

In this sense, the research contrasted the account of the negative historical past of the democratic deficit, with a new potent future that carried with it possibilities for the afore- mentioned surplus. This was the context for the range of questions and themes put to the members of SPIKE. Qualitative expressions regarding these options produced the following data. The following table reveals an understanding of the overall response in relation to some of the ideas explored above in the explanatory framework. The quotations

---

<sup>31</sup> The referendum for instance, is characterised by its close connection with this form of democracy. It is generally distinguished by its hierarchical, rather than its vertical, form. In other words, the executive body establishes the proposal and the technical forms which surround it. Only then is it '*submitted to a 'popular vote for acceptance or rejection*' (Michels 1959. p333). The *initiative* on the other hand is a different format of direct democracy as Budge (1996) notes it is perhaps the nearest political approach towards direct democracy. It is a much more innovative form of politics, with the development of an idea from civil society itself. It can be used to attack the incrementalism of government by effecting a near immediate answer to a particular issue (Poupa 1998).

are selected (representative) opinions which give a qualitative dimension to the quantitative responses which are also included in the data.

**Table 3.3.4. The Scottish political system and its reaction towards electronic democratisation. Electronic referendums as a measurement of democracy. Support for their introduction within their Scottish political dimension**

Question: Do you think online referendums are a measure of democracy?

Would you support their introduction in Scotland?

**No: 18 MSPs**

*'People elect a representative to do just that...represent them. Most political issues are matters of administration and a fair level of understanding is required even to do that, let alone for your ordinary fellow to find the time, or inclination, after work to sit and consider things. Having said that, I suppose there is an issue of public responsibility. You could imagine a situation where there is a big political debate and you might worry about the public's own democratic duty to think in sufficient depth about what was needed to vote (responsibly). Mind you.....what degree of responsibility do the media display in their coverage of politics? Pretty poor sometimes...although it is getting better'*

**Conservative MSP**

**Table 3.3.4 The Scottish political system and its reaction towards electronic Democratisation and electronic referendums as a measurement of democracy: support for their introduction within their Scottish political dimension (Continued)**

Question: Do you think 'online' referendums are a measure of democracy?

Would you support their introduction in Scotland?

*'No, I would think this is a bad idea all round. It could lead to a kind of 'populist autocracy'.*

*People who believe in the power of 'instant politics' think that everything can somehow be solved through consensus. But, the referendum does not always produce consensus, and it can be tampered with to produce the result that the government, or the executive want.....just remember the 1979 referendum on devolution.....the way it was set out gave the government of the day the upper hand.....they set out all the conditions and were in a way responsible for setting out the problems for Scotland that have only just been partially resolved' .*

**SNP MSP**

*'I don't think there is any political system in Europe that is really prepared to make a commitment to this kind of thing...a regular referenda (whether electronic or not) suggests that people have strong opinions and ideas about a lot of similar issues.....how would ideas be put forward? ...what would happen is that you would get a core of people putting forward perhaps quite undemocratic ideas about politics.....look at Clause 28.....I don't think that is a good pointer towards a future such as you are suggesting.....it would mean more and more issues and counter issues too, because other would react by organising their own polls or referendums'*

**Scottish Labour Party MSP**



**Table 3.3.4 The Scottish political system and its reaction towards electronic democratisation. Electronic referendums as a measurement of democracy. Support for their introduction within their Scottish political dimension (Continued)**

Question: Do you think 'online' referendums are a measure of democracy?

Would you support their introduction in Scotland?

**Yes: (2 MSPs)**

*'The notion of an available electronic democracy is a reason to re-examine whether representative democracy is still the best method of government'*

**SNP MSP**

*'...the use of electronic referendums could re-vitalise those areas of Scottish political culture who feel detached and missing out. The socially excluded in other words....community portals could be the answer to the relatively small take-up (of net access in Scotland).'*

**Scottish Labour Party MSP**

(\* 'digital drag' is another less widely known term for 'information inequality')

There was little support for the use of electronic referenda. Of the twenty MSPs interviewed only two were positively in favour of the notion. One opposition MSP considered the concept as perhaps a favourable route for democratic politics. Moreover, it was expressed by the MSP that the possibilities offered by ICTs produced some valid reasons to question the overall legitimacy of representative democracy. In other words that the ICTs were not so much a threat to representative democracy, but rather a means of urging the political system to promote better democratic practices. The other exponent of electronic referenda did not regard the representative system of democracy to be under threat in any way by the adoption of ICTs as a tool with which to conduct regular

referendums. Of the 80% of MSPs not in favour of the concept of electronic referenda four made further observations that at some time in the future the concept of an electronic referendum might possibly be introduced. It was suggested by these MSPs that *experiments within local democracy* might be a means of testing out the ideas before possibly applying it to the national Parliament. Similarly, the idea was viewed by the remaining two MSPs as possible in light of further experiments, and case study materials being made available to the Parliament.

What this data shows is the relatively limited nature of the Scottish Parliament for citizen based referenda innovations. However, these responses permit other democratic assumptions to be made. For example, there are a host of positive considerations to be observed from a system which proves itself resistant to expressions of support for direct democracy<sup>32</sup>. For example, unlike signatures on a petition, or impulses contained within an electronic document, parliaments are able to revise poor or inadequate legislation over a lengthy period of time. In this sense, political representatives within a democratic institution are subjected to scrutiny by their peers, and by the electorate themselves. In this way they are sanctioned and endorsed, or removed from office, and incrementalism is pursued. This brings into play a consideration and a contrast between the associated forms of electronic democratisation and its tele-democratic (or direct democratic) counterpart. The connecting point of reference is informatisation. The tensions between grassroots politics and established interests can be observed in the debate that exists between ICTs and electronic democracy and electronic democratisation (Malina 1999a).

---

<sup>32</sup> There is a draft report concerning the likelihood, and the negative-positive dimensions of direct democracy at the following web – site: <http://iniref.tripod.com/learn.html>. Online discussion is invited at the new provisional (as of October 2001) home of the 'Democr@cy Forum' they are at the following web-site <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/democracy-forum>.

These concepts both refer to the means whereby democratic structures and principles might be re-vitalised, and re-engineered. However, the former refers to a political process that seeks to utilise ICTs to radically advance the pace of democracy, to extend direct democratic participation and to transcend, whenever appropriate, the incrementalist structures of political decision making. The electronic democratisation notion on the other hand does not advocate the disposal of representative institutions. Rather, it sees the exploitation of ICTs as a way of furthering the democratic remit, and as an aid to the overall informational link between citizen and institution.

The following Table (Table 3.3.5) illustrates these ideas, and their political implications with reference to teledemocracy.

**Table 3.3.5 The axis of political computing**

	<b>Electronic Democratisation</b>	<b>Teledemocracy</b>
<b>Level of change</b>	Incremental	Radical and non incremental
<b>Starting point</b>	Existing political process	Clean slate
<b>Frequency of change</b>	Continuous	Immediacy
<b>Time required</b>	Within time span of parliament	ICTs: threshold of citizen approval
<b>Participation</b>	Bottom up	Bottom up
<b>Typical scope</b>	Narrow within parliamentary functions	Broad, cross functional
<b>Risk</b>	Moderate	High
<b>Primary enabler</b>	Democratic-elitism parliamentary approval of ICTs	ICTs: threshold of citizen approval
<b>Type of change</b>	Democratic, and political – cultural. Engineered by parliamentary political technologies	Radical structural and cultural. Engineered by Teledemocracy

**Source: Griffin 2002 ( adapted from Horrocks 1997 p60)**

The Table illustrates some of the tensions here between the possibilities that informatisation allows, and which existing political structures prohibit.

For example, the distribution of ICTs offers a future potential for increased democratic access. It allows for the development of:

*'new social and political practices .....and grassroots access to ICT'* ( Little et al 2001 pp 359-362).

These in turn offer the possibility of ever increasing demands from citizens to be granted access to political-social decision making mechanisms. The hypothesis under contention is that citizens and interest groups will seek to advance their positions via ICTs, and that this will be presented in relation to teledemocratic principles. In addition, the hypothesis maintains that politically established interests will seek to determine the development of informatisation within its Scottish context in ways that prohibit such demands. These theoretical principles are highlighted in the above Table, but it can be hypothesised that existing political structures will come under pressure to accommodate these interests.

The hypothesis is tested in relation to the position of MSPs and their perspectives regarding the limitations and extensions of an informatised democracy. These are revealed in chapter four (Scottish Parliamentary elites and Political Computing) and the theoretical and methodological dimensions are suitably expanded upon in a number of other important ways.

For example, one of the principal questions and hypotheses put to MSPs was that the nature of distributed technologies (that informatisation now allows) might indeed produce *'new ways and methods of political practice'*. The informatised networks, set laterally

amidst community and government, are premised upon the continued generation of information, and its relatively egalitarian distribution (which includes a commitment towards invoking democratic participation). In particular it was suggested to the respondents that the power of distributed technologies might distribute power itself, thus threatening structurally located sites of power. We examine the response towards this question in detail in chapter four. However, it is necessary prior to that to locate such ideas within a suitable framework. The next section addresses the relationship between distributed technologies and the threat to traditional political geographies.

### **3.5.3 Informatisation, Political Computing and Political Geography**

It is argued by some authors that informatisation will produce a new set of virtual interactions and relations (Kinney 1996, Sobchak 1996), and that these will produce new patterns of power and new forms of democracy that are not limited by traditional spaces and environments (Grieco 2000, Turner et al 2000, Frissen 1998b).

In this sense then ICT based technological developments lead towards what can be described as '*de-territorialisation*' and new social – political communities<sup>33</sup> distributed

---

<sup>33</sup> The concept of 'community' can be explored in the first instance, within the context of classical sociology, and the 'loss' of community as a source of normative guiding principles, as a mode of identity, and as a system of control and authority in a Durkheimian fashion (Bauman 2000). However, the concept of community can be considered also within its contemporary usage: as a method of furthering those political and social practices which seek either to: '*integrate people or smooth the path towards new societal conditions*' (Malina 2001 p1). Indeed, the Internet often serves as a form of contemporary shorthand, a metaphor, for a variety of communities which utilise it to communicate directly with others upon a variety of issues. The new technologies are, under such conditions, presumed to bring about less hierarchical structures, they are 'flexible', and the strength or validity of the communication process is based less upon numerical order (a quantitative dimension), but rather on qualitative issues (van de Donk and Tops 1995, Lyon 1988). In this sense then the internet is said to facilitate horizontal computer mediated relationships, which in turn are used to form a 'symbolic construction of community' (Cohen 1998), new values, norms and moral codes are used to provide a sense of identity. These ideas have been adopted as a political exemplar for many new forms of governance. The notion of a network of social actors (defined as sets of connected-in this instance electronically- exchanged relationships: Hakansson and Johanson 1998) valorises the role and the location of domination by the social actors themselves. Moreover, within such a theory there is a circular -causal relationship between activity interdependencies and exchange relationships. If, for instance, no externalities enter into the network then the implication is that there is a type of automatic mechanism which strengthens the relationship and the inter-dependence of those involved. There exists a supposedly mutual field of interaction inasmuch as the activities of both sets of actors are modified positively over time, adaptation occurs and new activities are integrated or created.

perhaps geographically-spatially, but united through informatisation<sup>34</sup> .

These arguments for de-territorialisation suggest that traditional temporal modes have been reconstructed, and reconstrued by political actors, via the new technologies (Kinney *ibid*), and as such it is argued that:

*'neither time nor space pose significant constraints'*. (Frissen 1998b p121).

From such a perspective this produces another set of tensions within the political system.

These tensions are premised upon traditional forms of political geography and those structures associated with the nation state<sup>35</sup>. The distributed technologies and the centrifugal forces allied with informatisation (and their combined effect) will lead public administration into an era of post-modernisation<sup>36</sup> (Frissen 1998b).

---

<sup>34</sup> Changes within CMCs (computer mediated communications) are also producing shifts within political geography. Not only in terms of the important, macro forms associated with globalisation (Giddens 1998), but also within more localised forms. For example, if traditional 'old politics' was understood to have operated within the configurations of territorial resources and the process of territoriality (the means which individuals and collective agencies, such as the nation-state, social/political actors etc, define and control space as a means to a social/political end) then ICTs assist in the construction of a new politics: a politics of information, a new politics of space including new sites and new discursive forms. Increasingly these are centred the transformation of space into positive flows of information, power too becomes contested then around, and about, these new spaces. Theorists ranging from Foucault (1991a, 1991b) to traditional neo - Weberians such as Giddens (1987) have long emphasised the importance of controlling space as a means of operationalising and maintaining social and political control. Now however, such control becomes problematic, the site of authority becomes (arguably) diffused and vertical in form, rather than strictly geographical and horizontal as in previous models.

<sup>35</sup> These broader shifts are concerned with the channels of influence surrounding globalisation. For instance, the gradual erosion of nation-state boundaries and sovereign powers. These ideas also argue for a more trans-national economy. The associative point however is that of ICTs. The ability of the technologies to extend time and place, to move beyond regulation and the reduction of the economy to the national interest, is said to be a feature of the spread and influence of ICTs. However, as some authors note (Hirst and Thompson 1996), the whole remit of globalisation is a brake on social and economic policy making. It serves as a useful tool with which governments can adopt to deny responsibility for their actions (or lack of them).

<sup>36</sup> The extension of these arguments from within a post-modern theory, is that identity and location are no longer closely and tightly connected (*ibid.*). As such, ICTs create new sites of activity and new vacuums to fill (Lyon 1998). The political spaces left by the voids of Thatcherism were filled in as it were by new forms of political agency which drew strength from the chances and challenges presented to them (Jessop 1990). The new ICTs can be seen as a similar form of participatory democracy, filling in new spaces and gaps, and integrated around a type of *virtual community* which assists in the shift of agency from centre and privileged sites of power, to loosely formed community affiliations and social interests. The temporal dimensions based

However, there are additional themes worth exploring in greater detail. For instance, as Frissen (1998b.p123) observes, the rapid diffusion of ICTs now make '*small scale*' a Political-technological option<sup>37</sup>. So, while technology has, in the history of organisations and public administration, usually provided arguments for the enlargement of scale ( Nora and Minc 1981, Street 1992), now ICTs (potentially) support de-centralisation and a decreasing scale, and as such may combine with distributed discourse to challenge existing power relations<sup>38</sup>. This offers the idea of a re-structuring of such power relations away from traditional sites, and out into the ICT enabled world of :

*'more progressive political thought and action'* (Kinney 1996 p80/81).

---

around traditional political notions of agency (for example, located via the representative who acts on behalf of a citizen within clearly defined limits and space) can be challenged by the new ICTs and those who advocate further shifts in political discourses which go beyond the processes of established political technologies and '*constitutional discourse*' (Parsons 1998 p100). These advocates stress the extension of space and time not only in terms of the ICTs ability to stretch political and social relationships, but also within a new process of: '*renewal through community...and communication*' (ibid. p102).

The Scottish Parliament has as one of its central values the establishment (or re-establishment) of 'community'. Achievement of such a condition can be seen as a normative mechanism which has identified a set of political, social and moral values which it favours. It has established these values within an overarching political ideological - normative mode entitled the 'New Politics', and with ambitions to fulfil the development of these prescriptions, it charges a set of institutions to deliver them. One of these institutions is the PPC. It has a responsibility to ensure that those groups and individuals who seek to raise a matter of concern can do so via the direct route offered to them by the committee. In this way political participation is achieved by means other than voting, or the submission of a letter to a citizens MSP or MP. Moreover, it is seen by the Parliament as a method of achieving the standards established for it by the CSG, and the Standing Orders arrangements therein.

<sup>37</sup> If one adopts a perception of politics as being, amongst other things, concerned with the capture of resources (Grieco 2000) then ICTs may aid those who have been traditionally disadvantaged in this regard. As such, they may be able to capture the means to provide either a new form of public space which can be used as a site of new democratic participation and practices (MacDonald 2000, Schalken and Tops 1995), or new methods of accessing time and social capital (Carter and Grieco 2000). Or, at the level of existing public institutions, citizens may be able to access their representatives more readily than before, or for the first time.

<sup>38</sup> In other words, if computerisation/informatisation becomes increasingly detached from the administrative realm (its previously privileged location) and, moves in line with more radical ambitions to upgrade the principles of democracy, and to establish the technological infrastructure to achieve such ends, then the demands of the electorate/citizens in extending their political agency (beyond for instance interactive requests for information and electronically routed complaints procedures: Andersen 1995), could bring with it opportunities and an increase in the demand for a greater say over political outcomes, and social destinies (Corrigan and Joyce 2000). As such, those new technologies designed in the first instance as either vehicles for private entertainment, or as a means of extending the locus of labour (rendering it portable and modifiable, Etzioni 1995) may be applied within an extension of new political action and a transfer of traditional sites of hierarchy and authority.

As such then, the traditional sites of power are being challenged. For instance, the conception of distributed technologies and distributed discourse, supports the existence of separate sites of agency and new forms of political identity. New ethical politics emerge and do violence to the old politics of centrality, purpose and diagnosis.

However, as new political strategies and ideologies have emerged, so too have *re-integrative mechanisms* designed to limit, or curtail, these alternative political expressions<sup>39</sup>. Reflexivity is central to an understanding of these ideas, it permits a succession, and an extension, of the state's network based processes<sup>40</sup>. This reflexive-informatisation process (instrumentalised within information architecture) not only supports administrative procedures and performance, it also functions as a system which registers and monitors communications (Frissen 1998a). As such, it gathers information, and supports new actions and transactions, and integrates interests<sup>41</sup>. The thesis I will present argues for the emergence of a new structure, a new political system, and a new model of political method built upon the emergence of a new Information Union. These ideas are related theoretically to those espoused by Zuurmond (1998) and are applied within their Scottish context to produce an entirely new account of the informatisation process. For instance, Zuurmond, sees informatisation not as a communications architecture which supports fragmentation and plurality of difference, but

---

<sup>39</sup> The mainframes of central government are designed to out-perform their micro-PC counterparts. Set within functionalist sociology we can observe that there is a correlation between the degree of differentiation within a system, and the concomitant decline in relative political-social equilibrium (Laszlo 1969).

<sup>40</sup> For example, ICTs are tools with which bureaucrats, politicians or public administrators can utilise to re-arrange/re-engineer their internal and external functions (this is given the title of '*Political Process Re-engineering*' by Van de Donk and Meyer 1995 p245). In this sense ICTs are an enabling tool/process which have a radically new reflexive dimension as an integral and vital element.

<sup>41</sup> We will explore these ideas in detail in chapter six, but for the moment the following quote illustrates the relevant themes as they relate to this concept, and the historical precedents that present themselves to us: '*That is to say, the invention and assembly of a whole range of technologies that connected up calculations and strategies developed in political centres to those thousands of spatially scattered points where the constitutional, fiscal, organisational and judicial powers of the state connect with endeavours to manage economic life, the health and habits of the population, the civility of the masses and so forth*' (Rose 1999 p18).



rather as a force which supports centralisation of authority and new forms of hierarchical control.

These principles suggest that new information connections should be realised between elements of the polity, and that innovations in organisational forms and service deliveries should be sought from the inherent flexibilities that ICTs can ensure (Taylor 1998).

However, the idea of flexibility and transparency of action and purpose is challenged by the concept of the information union which is central to this thesis. My hypothesis is that an information union is being advanced throughout the United Kingdom, and that its *intention* is to offset the devolutionary potential of Scottish politics and the qualities of distributed political discourse .

In order to produce a comprehensive understanding of this hypothesis we should consider Zuurmond's (1998) contemporary location of new information rationalities. These develop from a Neo-Weberian context, and are readily understood within Weber's formulation of 'Ideal Types'<sup>42</sup>. These ideas have a specific application within the emerging information union that I argue is developing across the United Kingdom. This is dealt with in detail in chapter six. However, in order to understand the referential logic of these forthcoming arguments, and their evidential base, an understanding of Zuurmond's work is necessary. We now address this feature in the next section.

---

<sup>42</sup> These are heuristic models which examine the theoretically perfect construction of a bureaucratic rationality. Once established Weber saw the possibility of measuring weaknesses and failings as a comparative project (Weber 1978). The expansive and reflexive logic of the infocracy takes on its own Neo-Weberian direction. For instance, the essential tension between democracy and bureaucracy (that an increase in bureaucratic administration brings about reductions within the degrees of political autonomy

### 3.5.4 Informatisation as a control technology

Informatisation creates a new electronically charged information based architecture. This new format substitutes traditional bureaucratic control and co-ordination for newer, less obviously hierarchical, yet paradoxically more powerful forms of control and political intelligence. Instead of a bureaucracy we witness the birth of a concept which Zuurmond terms as the 'Infocracy'. Within the Infocracy new forms of political computing (and control) have emerged. Power is channelled through information architecture, instead of going through the older traditional bureaucratic structures of the past. These mechanisms are embedded within the computer software, and filed directly into databases. This Infocratic theory of contemporary politics and public administration suggests that Informatised bureaucracies are replacing traditional bureaucratic structures and forms (van de Donk and Snellen 1998, van den Hoven 1998). Accordingly, it relates to another theoretical position that we attended to earlier (in chapter one: section 1.3.1 'Dynamic conservatism: informatisation and Reinforcement Politics), in that it is a system that allows for greater centralised control by information elites.

The infocracy then, consists of '*digicratic*' tendencies: the elite adaptation of the new ICT media to strengthen the internal machinery of communications within bureaucracies (Raab 1998) government, (King and kraemar 1998) and party ( Smith 1998). As such, it can be argued that although the external surface appearance of twenty first century government displays a character akin to transparency and openness, its internal political architecture is incompatible with such values . This conception alerts us to the hidden informatised elements of the infocracy, and its inner set of relations. For instance:

---

afforded to the population (Giddens 1972), to which Weber drew our attention, ( in 'Economy and Society' 1978) is an unanticipated consequence of informatisation.

*' Whilst the outward appearance of much current change is fragmentation, loose coupling, devolution, and empowerment, the inner reality is one of strengthened monocratic control...this control is embedded in the decision premises that are resident in information architectures.'* (Taylor 1998. p.29).

It is the informatisation process that renders these structures invisible, traditional bureaucratic forms<sup>43</sup>, such as formalisation and the standardisation of practices, appear to disappear, yet in reality they are inculcated into the informational architecture itself. However, Zuurmond argues that the Infocracy is more powerful than the traditional ideal type of bureaucracy, the Infocracy can register massive amounts of information on increasingly integrated electronic networks. This is a feature of the hypothesis that we address in chapter six, the development of the information union, and the surveillance of Scottish civil society. The process of informatisation means that public administration can supervise its citizens more efficiently than ever before. Once established and clearly defined administrative separations are disappearing (Bekkers 1998a, Zuurmond 1998) This is evidenced in chapter six when we examine the emerging information union that is reconfirming the United Kingdom as a political project, and closing down the autonomous spaces that devolution has (partially) created.

---

<sup>43</sup>The Infocracy is an ideal type akin to Webers; a contemporary heuristic device with which to understand informatisation. Zuurmond maintains that the bureaucratic process described by Weber in its classical format, is disappearing, but that the attendant dangers identified by Weber still persist, and have in fact developed their strength and potential apace with ICTs. For example, in Weber's theories the bureaucratic structure is so strong that it potentially endangers the democratic system. The administrative machinery has the inherent power to become as it were a force in its own right, to pursue its own political – administrative trajectory, leaving behind as it does so, the: *'goal setting function which properly belonged to the politician'* (Beetham 1985, p65). Similarly, Weber was aware that this could threaten individual civil liberties: freedom of speech, of union, assembly and so on. These liberties ensure that citizens can indeed oppose the leader and the bureaucracy which serves him. The power of bureaucracy had to be controlled via strong charismatic leadership on the one count and the application of individual civil liberties on the other.

### **3.6.1 Conclusion**

This chapter has detailed the evolution of political technologies as a means of distributing, and controlling, social – political impulses. In doing so it offered a theory of a democracy in transition. It also offered a theoretical account of Transformational Politics.

Having established the principles of informatisation, chapter four then enlarges upon them in an empirical fashion, with particular reference to the democratic position of

informatisation, and MSPs views on such issues. As such, we have established a progressive condition of theory building. This now enables us to advance our arguments and our data. In the next chapter we develop some of the above themes and examine the new politics of information and its relation to those involved in the informatisation process: political elites within the Scottish Parliament. In this sense the series of hypotheses

outlined above are examined and tested. This serves as a way of realising the associations, and some evolutionary understanding, of informatisation in its democratic context. Contemporary issues surrounding the development of the democratic process in Scotland are explored within some of the broader theories of representative, parliamentary - participatory, and direct democracy. The issues presented here are extended in chapter five which considers such themes within ideas surrounding the extension of political computing and the informatisation of community.

Finally, in chapter six we consider some of the opposing arguments against the power of distributed technologies. These are set against the developing power of the new information union. This chapter then, has laid down the theoretical and methodological dimensions that allow us to explore these later themes with greater clarity.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Scottish Parliamentary Elites and Political Computing**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents a case study of the Scottish Parliament, political elites and the use of informatisation within governance. A series of themes, issues and questions explore the use of ICTs within the Scottish Parliament and its conduct with Scottish civil society. A key research hypothesis concerning the use of ICTs within the Scottish Parliament is situated within the context of the Transformation Politics - Reinforcement Politics axis<sup>1</sup>. The question of power, as exercised in various ways through informatisation, is given expression through the opinions of the elites, and through a set of questions that seek to confirm or refute the validity of either position within the new Scottish politics. In this sense, this chapter examines the present and future usage of informatisation/political computing within a distinct policy environment. Empirical material is drawn from an extensive series of interviews with MSPs composed largely from 'SPIKE'. As we observed in the previous chapter, this cohort of MSPs have a common concern and a democratic interest in the development of political computing in the new Scottish Parliament. Given the short lived nature of Scottish democracy the research focus takes as a condition of its enquiry, the future development of the Scottish political system and the position(s) of informatisation within it. In this sense then, informatisation occupies a crucial position at the centre of the new politics, and as a feature of the historical Scottish moment.

---

<sup>1</sup>The Reinforcement Politics position (Danziger et al 1982) was discussed in chapter one. A theory of Transformation Politics was attended to in chapter three.

Its progress should be critically understood within the context of informatisation and political computing. The outcomes of what is essentially an untried political technology are to be considered within a variety of perspectives. These include the possibilities of democratic transformation from within the Scottish Parliament itself. The position of elites in deliberating upon this aspect of the new politics is of vital importance in this regard. Their specific views on informatisation will produce a set of models and opinions that will alert us to the possible futures of political computing. As such, we will encounter a variety of theoretical scenarios and potential futures within which informatisation might be usefully located. Key themes are explored in relation to the evidence gathered from the parliamentary elites. However, in the first instance, we will establish some additional background to the important themes included within this chapter.

The concept of democratic informatisation should be understood as a key component in the movement from a representative system to a more participative democracy<sup>2</sup>. New democratic theories have been formulated around the concept of interactive governance (Amin and Hausner 1993, Grieco 2000), and more reflexive forms of politics based upon concepts such as openness and accountability within systems<sup>3</sup>. However, these more open

---

<sup>2</sup> As evidenced by a number of theorists there has been a move generally within Western administrations towards a more 'heterarchic' form of politics (Kooiman 1993, Rhodes 1997, Parsons 1998, Hofs et al 2000).

<sup>3</sup> As Finer (1982 p63) notes, '*accountability*' implies that a government must continuously test its representativeness, that is to say whether its claim that it is derived from public opinion is still valid'. The 'testing' of this idea via ICTs is now a challenging pointer towards the future condition of democracy. ICTs permit, theoretically, a continuous review of performance by interested parties/citizens.

forms of governance may find their positions increasingly tenuous inasmuch as 'openness' is very likely to prompt organised or opportunistic ventures from political actors outwith the system (Jessop 2000). This brings with it the admission of a new politics into the system, and in doing so legitimises such impulses<sup>4</sup>. Such Politics it may be argued, are moving from margins once occupied, into the stages of social and political design. Informatisation and interactive governance may strengthen such impulses, and assist in the development of new political practices and initiatives. This has specific relevance for Scotland. For instance, Scottish politics is in a transformational condition, its position of relative autonomy, and the distance placed between the new system and its legacy of the democratic deficit, has yet to be firmly established. As such, governance finds itself at a critical juncture, whereby pressures and forces are interacting with it in demanding circumstances. These pressures and forces are characterised by new conceptions of Citizenship, new forms of democratic participation, and new distributed discourses, all of which are emerging at the beginning of the twenty first century<sup>5</sup>. However, one of the characteristics of transformation within a political system, is the ability of dynamic structures to effectively respond to:

*'external and internal forces'*, (Lane and Ersson 1995 p1).

---

<sup>4</sup> The new politics of the late twentieth century and the immediate twenty first, is evidenced by a new format of political subjectivity. The former polarisation of politics between left and right, now largely dissolved (Giddens 1994), has been replaced by '*citizen initiative groups*' (Beck 1997. p100), such as voluntary organisations (Taylor and Burt 2001), or Non governmental organisations.

<sup>5</sup> For example, a citizenship based around a new politics of accountability, reflexive responsibility towards civil society, and the condition of openness/transparency within governance (Parsons 1998). These ideas are given further impetus via new distributed technologies that threaten to re-compose traditional forms of power.

The appropriate response is generally characterised by the introduction of various mechanisms/technologies which are aimed at restoring or redirecting the political order (Raab 1975). The United Kingdom and its ambition to restore some pre-devolutionary order, and to offer a counter to the distributed politics, is a theme examined within this chapter. As such, political computing, can be seen as a way of integrating disparate political energies back into the system once more. These tensions are studied within these contexts as a way of understanding Scotland's constitutional future. However, there are some methodological issues which have a direct bearing upon the nature of the research undertaken for this chapter. We will now address these in some detail. In this sense the following sections adopt a specific approach to the interview of political elites and their position on informatisation issues. It develops the ideas that we encountered in the previous chapter, and builds upon them in relation to the new Scottish politics of information.

#### **4.2.1 Political elites and the research schema**

I have adopted the theoretical framework suggested by van Dijk (2000) as my methodological schema. There are three essential components to a methodology of institutionalised political computing. We will introduce each briefly (and figuratively as a whole), before developing each feature in greater detail shortly. The first of these refers to the notion that a valid informatisation based research project should aim to identify the:

*'arguments about the pros and cons of the use of ICTs in politics among*



*people engaged in the design and use of political applications of ICT'* (ibid. p38).

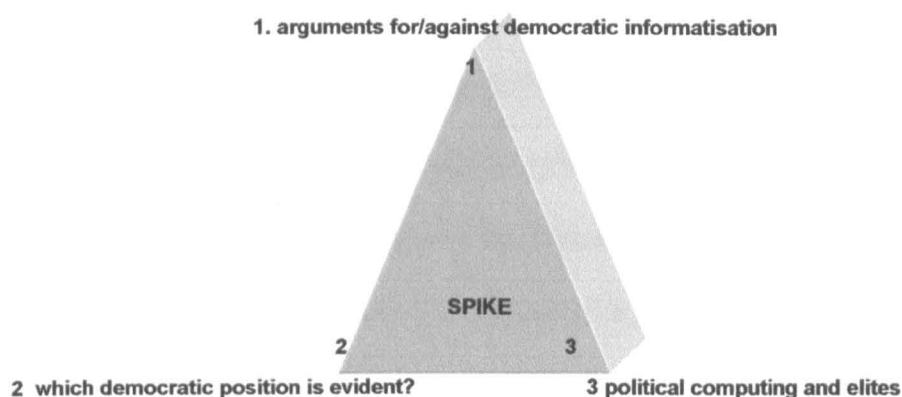
In other words, there will be a variety of motives and assumptions made about informatisation by those who implement its political use. The second research feature is concerned with revealing the *set of democratic positions that the respondents disclose in their answers*. In the third condition of the research triangle there is the added notion of trying to observe the specific and *most favoured aspect of political computing* that the elite group appear to consent towards<sup>6</sup>.

The research methodology which pursues this approach is represented in the following Figure (4.1 The SPIKE research pyramid) which examines the possibility of new emergent forms of distributed (and direct) democratic politics. These ideas were established in conjunction with the third position of our informatisation based research: the use of informatisation as a tool for Transformational Politics or Reinforcement Politics.

---

<sup>6</sup> The reformation of public services via ICTs, the re-engineering of bureaucracy, and the renewal of democracy are all innovations that centre around ICTs. Within the Scottish dimension the application of ICTs is presumed to extend and strengthen the political and social infrastructure, as well as increase the efficiency of public services (CSG Report 1998).

**Figure 4.1 The SPIKE research pyramid**



**Source: Griffin 2002 (adapted from Van Dijk 2000)**

These two themes were contrasted as a theoretical context for MSPs to deliberate upon, both in terms of the micro conditions of distributed political discourse, and the wider macro context of the new emergent information union. However, we will now examine the MSPs and their theoretical position regarding the use of informatisation in and around Scottish politics. We review these ideas from the second methodological position.

#### **4.2.2 MSPs, Informatisation and the capacity for action**

The second feature of our theoretical position<sup>7</sup> is located in terms of democratic informatisation and the opinions of politicians. For instance, a respondents political position may be determined by his/her understanding of the relationship between informatisation and the conditions of governance/public administration. Here a subtle yet important distinction is drawn, in that governance equates with the extension of the political system

---

<sup>7</sup> This position is concerned with revealing the set of democratic positions that the respondents disclose in their answers.

*outwards*, externally as it were, towards a more inclusive encompassment of civil society: the information links with citizens and representative organisations are given priority. The public administration feature on the other hand, suggests a propensity towards a model of government that favours *directives*, it is more concerned with the duties of governing efficiently and within acceptable modes of economic elasticity. Such ideas can be used to locate the position of informatisation within the Scottish Parliament in a specific political context. For example, the *external function* of informatisation, is accorded by MSPs with an almost unanimous endorsement. Those MSPs who considered it to be related to the vitality of a democracy were the majority. The internal functions of informatisation were classified as having a lesser political role. In this manner we can begin the process of understanding the place of informatisation within Scottish politics. The next section considers such notions in greater detail.

#### **4.2.3 MSPs and the establishment of a model of Scottish democracy**

We have noted the political considerations of informatisation above (in terms of their democratic potential, and their economic optimality). Yet there are other concerns surrounding the extension of democracy that we should consider. For example, the above ideas concerning the various democratic positions can be placed in contrast to the direct democracy configuration that we encountered in chapter three. Much of the debate around political computing stresses the possibilities of a new emergent direct democracy, which in turn theoretically allows citizens more input in terms of political

steering (Schalken and Tops 1995, Becker and Slaton 2000). This process of enlargement is also accompanied by ideas which recognise a reappraisal of boundaries (Jessop 2000), and the establishment of an ethical infrastructure for governance (Maguire 1998). The boundaries that are being re-drawn are those which have traditionally stood between public administration, community and civil society. New forms of governance are establishing themselves along more interactive lines, and seek to transform institutions into the agents and partners of communities (Kooiman 1993). The Scottish Parliamentary system confirms that it seeks to re-organise the interface between citizen and institution through the capabilities offered by ICTs (CSG 1998 chapter 3.6, and Annex 'F'). The questions posed to members of SPIKE revolve around these themes, particularly in regard to the interactive infrastructures and the issues of democratic governance. In particular, questions and issues focused upon the enlargement of democracy as a condition of informatisation.

The likely effects of new models of social - political governance (for example, those which stress interactivity as a component of democratic informatisation) were also principal themes. The possibilities and limitations of these issues were explored (initially) in terms of the administrative workload of MSPs (and by extension the parliamentary institution) in relation to features such as information 'overload', and the registration of issues of citizen interests and concerns via ICTs. The latter includes a survey of the relationship towards democracy and ICTs in terms of how political computing might develop the Parliaments process of accountability. Moreover, larger macro political issues

are explored particularly within these contexts. For instance, the decline in democratic participation is examined in terms of the abilities of online voting for citizens, and referendums as means to assist in the registration of opinions. These and other issues are considered in relation to the theoretical perspective of a move towards a more direct democracy that is now realisable via ICTs. This is a technical possibility, and can be seen as a threat to the legitimacy of representative democracy (Snellen 1995, 2001).

New forms of governance are considered and evaluated against this radical backdrop. In this way, a sense of perspective and proportion is approached within a continuum that stresses electronic democratisation, and parliamentary democracy at one level, and direct democratic initiatives at another. Additionally, other questions consider the political role of an informed citizenry within a new (and transitional) democracy such as Scotland's<sup>8</sup>. An analysis of emergent democracy in Scotland can reveal the possibilities of future democratic informatisation. Does the introduction of ICTs offer the system a genuine means of rejuvenating democracy, can they be used to counter-act a largely apathetic/hostile media? Can ICTs facilitate social and political inclusion by enlarging access to the political system through ICTs?

---

<sup>8</sup> That such new democratic issues are gaining some ground is evidenced by the Electoral Commission's Report on the 2001 general election. This suggests that there is substantial support for changing voting procedures as a way of resolving the poor electoral turn-outs and the challenge to legitimacy that such conditions present. Amongst the future options under consideration are internet voting (see [www.electoralcommission.org.uk](http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk)). Similarly, in England (in Liverpool and Sheffield) voters are to be given a telephone alternative to voting in the traditional fashion. This is to combat disaffection and apathy. For example; '*Research among first time voters at the 1997 general election....has shown that under one in five had bothered to vote. Many instead had turned to protest politics and to direct action over issues*' (Hetherington 2002 p7).

Perhaps more importantly, are the democratic foundations of the new Scottish politics underpinned or supported by the informational architecture? Or are they undermined from the direct democratic forms now gathering pace, and the infocratisation of the UK bureaucracy which seeks to re-wire the United Kingdom? In other words, much of the debate around new political informatisation in Scotland emphasises the centrality of political and administrative reform. By identifying the position of information elites at the centre of ICT based democratic reform, it is possible to identify the preference(s) which lie behind this position. This must be two-fold: in the first instance the position of the elites should be characterised<sup>9</sup>. This is the set of democratic positions that the respondents reveal in their answers. It forms the second component of the research methodology.

Now we will address the third and final position of the research triangle (illustrated in Figure 4.1), this looks at the position of the respondents in relation to political computing. How do they view the future of informatisation within its political context?

---

<sup>9</sup> To this end I have taken two models of elite democratic theory within which to locate the Scottish MSPs. One is the competitive elite theory as offered by theorists such as Dahl, whilst the other (more accurate model as it transpired) is the democratic-elitist prescription as suggested by Bellamy (2000). Moreover, I have also taken Schalkens (1998 p161) position as a starting fundamental here. Schalken suggests a reformation of a much considered notion within political computing research. This line of enquiry moves away from asking the question of: 'what impact will ICTs have on democracy?' to the more subtle perspective of '*what is the democratic potential of a society within which (ICTs) are embedded?*'. This assertion examines how democratic values express themselves, and how they must be considered in the first instance before any accurate understanding of political computing can be realised. The position of ICTs as essentially neutral instruments put to the service of specific interests is stressed throughout. This position maintains that the centrifugal democratic potentials, or reinforcement thesis, of ICTs must be judged by the prevailing

#### **4.2.4 Political computing: the gathering of information, or a precondition for participation?**

In the third condition of our research triangle there is the added notion of trying to observe the specific and most favoured aspect of political computing that the elite group appear to favour. The answers of the respondents offer clues as to the future of democratic informatisation in Scotland, and reveal the goals of political computing. For example, is there any evidence to suggest that ICTs are being utilised to reinforce existing power positions, or are the proponents of informatisation seeking to use them as a means of Transformational Politics? As a means with which to:

*'spread politics into society...or outside the traditional boundaries of the political system?' (van Dijk ibid. p39).*

The answers to such questions are points and indices which may conceivably be applicable to other newly informatised political systems.

As such, their significance moves beyond their immediate Scottish context.

The following data is an index of specialist politicians with a prerequisite (and developing) concern, with the establishment of political computing and other informatisation based issues. The Table below (4.1) represents a *qualitative* account of the opinions of MSPs in this regard. It builds upon the *quantitative* expression attended to in chapter three.

**Table 4.1 Informatisation and the potential democratic impact of ICTs**

***'What is the likelihood that the Scottish Parliament might be overwhelmed by the immediate demands of citizens/interest groups via democratic informatisation?'***

*'The risks of being over-run are largely remote. As it stands at present most of my constituents come to see me (if they have an issue to resolve) at my surgery. Or they will write to me. We get more emails than before but you would expect that. As a technology takes off, more and more people use it.*  
**Conservative MSP.**

*'Yes, I could see that happening at some point in the future. What is developing is the tendency for people outwith my own constituency to contact me with issues that affect them. There is little I can really do, just the sheer volume makes it especially difficult to even respond to them. My Party are effectively being over-run by all communications, not just email. In some ways this is complimentary, it means we are being recognised as valid, but on the other hand there is a side effect in that the sheer weight of issues means we cannot respond as quickly as we would like to. People could become disaffected with us in that regard. That is a worry'.*

**Single member MSP.**

*'We all get an enormous amount of emails, but then again we get a mass of requests from constituents. I can foresee a time when the sheer volume of requests might prove awkward in some fashion. Perhaps the issue with email is that people often expect it to be more immediate, more direct than letters. That can be an issue. They think you are waiting at the end of the line as it were, for their requests and views.*

**SNP MSP.**



**Table 4.1 Informatisation and the potential democratic impact of ICTs  
(continued)**

***'What is the likelihood that the Scottish Parliament might be overwhelmed by the immediate demands of citizens/interest groups via democratic informatisation?'***

*'There are always deadlines of some sort or another in politics, as in life. emails make no difference either way. The more information you get, the more you make plans to deal with it'*

**Labour Party MSP.**

*'email is still a relatively new technology. Most communications still appear in the ways that they always have. Most of the time my email is from organisations and from Party chiefs. The take up rate for I.T. in Scotland is pretty poor. That explains my answer to some extent'.*

**Liberal Democratic Party MSP.**

The data offers a cross-party (and representative) account of opinions on the subject of computer mediated communications and their current positioning within the Scottish Parliament. It also reveals that opinions are largely divided in terms of future outcomes in terms of informatised overload. Respondents regarded the volume of email as a negotiable condition.

However, it was seen as problematic in relation to the immediacy that it offered. This was contrasted with the slower moving (non-technological) context of political life and affairs. Other contrasts presented themselves also. For example, the *'digital divide'* was a recurring issue for many MSPs who felt

that informatisation policies would not produce the optimal benefits until internet access in Scotland moved beyond its higher income bracket province<sup>10</sup>. The range of questions which produced the above set of responses were set within the context of both formal policies pursued by the Scottish Executive (such as social inclusion/exclusion initiatives), and programmes which carry cross party consensus, such as public sector administrative efficiency, and values established within the Parliament's conditions of operation: openness, transparency and accountability for instance<sup>11</sup>.

In the next section however, we present a different account of some of the contemporary debates regarding ICTs and their political use. This next section looks at the issue of social exclusion within its Scottish context. This theme is joined by informatisation in that MSPs were asked to consider the potential for reducing social exclusion by the use of information technologies.

---

<sup>10</sup> Scotland has particularly bad internet and computer based divisions. For instance, figures from the Scottish Household Survey (2000) reveal that these are based along class and income lines. Only 12 per cent of lower income families have a PC. This is comparable to 50 per cent in families with a higher income. Similarly, internet access in Scotland is premised on the following income based figures: 4 per cent of lower income families have access to the internet, compared to 22 per cent from higher income brackets.

<sup>11</sup> However, as Reichard (1998) notes, these concepts have a multitude of meanings, both can refer to quality of services, customer orientation, the legality of a particular decision and the mechanisms available to uphold it. In addition however, it can refer to a more critical form of public administration. As such, it can be located either in terms of condition or effect: or as a dependent or an independent variable. The dependent variable of transparency is gauged within the *effects* of performance management, the independent variable is on the other hand seen as a *precursor* towards this aim (Reichard *ibid*). These two notions were posed in question form in order to gain a sense of the MSPs value orientation in this regard. In this sense questions were put to MSPs to establish their own measurement of transparency in relation to the operations of the Parliament and the ability of citizens to oversee its actions and operations.

#### 4.2.5 Social exclusion, ICTs and the public provision of information

Social exclusion is a relatively contemporary addition to the political vocabulary<sup>12</sup>. It carries with it a variety of political associations that connect up various forms of social deprivation with exclusion from the wider society.

In particular it is linked to declining citizen and community participation. In this sense, the need to promote a culture of citizenship is seen as a likely future index of political re-engagement by those who have withdrawn (or been excluded) from the political and social 'community'. The underlying context of issues surrounding social exclusion focus primarily upon building a partnership with citizens, the replacement of hierarchy, and exclusion from the sites of power (Silcock 2001, Scottish Parliament Research Paper 1999/11).

This exclusion from situated power is exacerbated by the crisis of public communications<sup>13</sup> that some theorists refer to (Blumler and Gurevitch 1995, Hofs et al 2000), and which others (Grieco 2001, Malina 2001) see as being potentially resolved via ICTs<sup>14</sup>. Moreover, the issue of social exclusion is central to post war public administration inasmuch as it is concerned with (historically) the concept of universal access. The public provision of information has now come to be seen as an example of the extension of such

---

<sup>12</sup> 'Social exclusion' has its etymological roots originating from 1970s French public administration (see chapter one). However, it has been developed within the UK via the establishment of the New Labour governments Scottish Social Exclusion Network.

<sup>13</sup> This 'crisis' centres upon the supposed failings of existing democratic media to provide an information infrastructure for democracy. In other words, the increased commodification of the media, a loss in the integrity and primacy of the public sphere has brought about an increase in the manufactured and insubstantial condition of politics.

<sup>14</sup> The diffusion of ICTs, their lack of centre and their proliferation is seen by such authors as bringing about a potential increase in democratic based initiatives. In particular, the interactive capacities of ICTs are said to provide new: '*information spaces and information flows*' (Little et al 2001, p 353), thus attending to the problems of exclusion in the wake of

universalist notions (Taylor et al 1997). Those who inhabit the structurally marginal positions within society are to be included into the fabric of the system. The means of achieving this is to be via ICTs and a new politics of inclusion and governance. The new communication technologies are charged then with establishing in a tangible form the political will of the Scottish Executive, and of the Parliament.

It is the creation, in effect, of a new form of public communications which aims to strengthen state-society interactions (Malina 1999b). However, this in itself is dependent upon social and political agency and access to the technologies themselves, which in turn is dependent upon the political and social credibility of a system which is network accessible. For instance, the Digital Scotland Task Force was established by the Scottish Executive in 1999 to explore the possibilities of '*e-inclusion*' (2000 p27).

The remit considered from the outset was to examine the potentials for digital inclusion. To this end the Scottish dimension of politics is concerned with reversing the downward trend in political participation in Scottish politics. Information technology is held up to be a key feature in this regard. It is seen as potentially inclusive. For example, in Scotland there are a raft of initiatives aimed at reducing social exclusion by the use of ICTs<sup>15</sup>.

---

such facilities.

<sup>15</sup> These are: 'Social Inclusion Partnerships' (SIPs) and 'Working for Pathfinders' (WfCps). These projects revolve around the: '*access to, or use of, computers, computer-related technologies or telecommunications technologies*', (Scottish Executive @ [www.scotland.gov.uk/cru/kd01/red/audit03.htm](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/cru/kd01/red/audit03.htm)). Within the inclusion remit the provision of ICT access is said to offer the following positive

In the next section we will examine the Scottish Parliament's attention to the details of social exclusion and its informatisation aspect. The supporting empirical evidence shows a breakdown of informatisation issues both by subject comparison, and by political parties themselves. In this way a ranking can be made of which party within the Scottish Parliament offers their own specific perspective on informatisation. We will examine the issue of social exclusion in relation to an additional set of variables.

#### **4.2.6 An empirical analysis of the social-economic utilisation of informatisation within the Scottish Parliament**

An analysis of the proceedings of the Scottish Parliament will reveal the extent or otherwise of the Parliament's attention towards specific ICT related issues and themes, including social exclusion as an issue that it has consistently declared as an issue of some importance (CSG Report 1998). The analysis shows that the relationship between informatisation and the Scottish Parliament is primarily one that is less concerned with the issues associated with social exclusion ( 9%) and considerably more with both education and training (30%) and electronic commerce (20%) (See Table 4.2)

---

features. These include; The provision of access to, or share of a wide range of information; Provision of access to, or allowing the development of, new skills (social, communication, or technical) and the enabling of excluded groups to become included/integrated. This includes people with disabilities, ethnic minorities, single parents. Public services will be able to extend their services and to deliver information more easily and effectively. ICTs will enable people to gain access to educational materials from a variety of outlets. They will allow people to take part in education/learning despite their geographical location, ICTs will allow people to work from a variety of places and situations. This in turn will enable more people to enter the workforce. The provision of ICTs will allow them to participate more fully in education, employment, leisure etc. ICTs will enable people to participate more fully in the democratic process.

As such, there are indications which may be taken to support those such as Schiller (1996) who maintain that the new information technologies are being used primarily to enhance the strength of those already powerful in society. If economic issues which favour the more powerful interests in society are central, then why should political computing be any different? The following data reveals that this is the case within the Scottish Parliament.

**Table 4.2 The Scottish Parliament and the informatisation emphasis by Political Party. An issue based analysis: ICTs and written Questions/Answers to the Scottish Executive**

	Lab	SNP	Cons	L/D	SSP	Gm	DC	total
Education and Training	7	10	17	1	0	0	0	35
Privacy	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Public Administration: external service provision	0	1	6	0	0	0	0	7
Public Administration: internal service provision	0	3	5	1	0	0	0	9
Security	0	6	8	1	0	0	0	15
Law	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Social Exclusion	7	1	2	1	0	0	0	11
Transport	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Local Government	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
E: commerce	2	6	17	0	0	0	0	25
Health	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Voluntary Sector	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Communities	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	4
Others	1	3	4	0	0	0	0	8
Total per political party	18	31	67	3	1	0	0	

Abbreviations in use for Table 4.2

Lab = Scottish Labour Party

L/D = Liberal Democratic Party

GRN = Scottish Green Party

DC = Dennis Canavan (Independent Candidate)

SNP = Scottish National Party

Cons = Conservative and Unionist Party

SSP = Scottish Socialist Party

L/D = Liberal Democratic Party GRN = Scottish Green Party

DC = Dennis Canavan (Independent Candidate)

Total questions raised =120 between 1999-2001 this is the period between the beginning and the end of the respective Parliamentary sessions. 104 Written Answer reports are listed on the Web-site. However, within these reports there is room for a series of questions (rather than simply one in singular form ) to be submitted.

(URL as of 27/6/2001 12: 40 –1700: the cut off point for this data is as given)  
<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/sch/results>)

The above data shows empirical evidence of the Scottish Parliament's informatisation emphasis. The highest order of priority is given to education and training, electronic commerce, and security issues. In terms of political parties it is the Conservative Party which raised most questions (a total of sixty seven) in relation to informatisation policy matters. Issues such as transport, and law were not the subject of any written questions to the Executive at all. The evidence would suggest that, in line with other empirical data presented, the informatisation process is largely economic and education/training based.

The category of 'privacy' is related to the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000 that we examine in some detail in chapter six. Written questions in this instance amounted to one (from Tommy Sheridan MSP: Scottish Socialist Party). The three questions addressed to the executive from the Liberal-Democrats, ranks far behind those of the Scottish National Party (at thirty one) and indeed shows us something tangible and empirical not only about the Liberal-Democrats stance on ICTs, but also in terms of their pact

with the governing administration. It should be noted that 'Transport' as a feature of informatisation was not raised at all in Written Question form. The relevance of this lies within our next section when we examine the relationship between geographical location and the powers of distributed technologies to reformulate centres of power.

We will now examine the relationship between informatisation, virtual politics, and political geography. This has particular importance because of the assertion often expressed by theorists that distributed technologies will re-locate previously fixed sites of political geography (Frissen 1998b, Grieco 2000). Such theorists claim that distributed informatisation will flatten out the inequalities resident within traditional social-political territories. Is there any evidence for such a claim contained within Scottish political elites and their attitudes to the distributed nature of informatisation? The next section explores these ideas.



### 4.3.1 MSPs and political practice: the displacement of politics from the centre?

Digital democracy can be described as:

*'an attempt to practice democracy without limits of time, place and other physical conditions'.*

Van Dijk (2000 p30).

In this sense, it suggests the possibility of a new set of political practices within electronic democracy and electronic democratisation. These can be considered with regard to the former as a new politics of empowerment, and to the latter as a means of developing existing democratic institutions by effectively freeing up time and spatial limitations upon the exercise and range of democracy (Richard 1999) This position takes as its starting point the potential of an ICT based political space which is ultimately decentralised, widely distributed and free from state interference<sup>16</sup>.

If we explore informatisation in relation to Transformational Politics, it is argued that older established models of institutionalised and geographically structured power relations will gradually dissolve (Frissen 1998b, Lenk 1998),

---

<sup>16</sup> It is seen by such theorists as offering the realisation of Habermas' concept of the public sphere (1989). There are other consequences also. For instance, the classical assertion by Michels concerning elites (1959). Namely that the organised political tendencies of the elites within political parties would endure over the rank and file, and that the elected would in a similar fashion uphold their interests over the electors. These ideas stress the co-ordinative capacities of the elites, who by virtue of what Weber termed as the 'law of the small number' (Beetham 1985) and the cardinal qualities associated with leadership, are able to augment their power base. However, other theorists, such as Greene et al (2001) and Grieco (2001) see the distributed capacities of informatisation as inherently democratic and egalitarian. Their distributed format allows for new types of political engagement, and undermines long established power sites and hierarchies based around elite administration.

new models of political action, participation and organisation will take their place at a number of informatised, distributed technological points (Grieco 2002). For example, 'virtualisation' based technologies will allow greater citizen participation in and around new interactive forms of policy making (den Boer 2000). In this sense then, there are possibilities surrounding the political potentials of ICTs to utilise new forms of decision making. These include the use of virtualisation technologies to enable citizens to access decision making processes regardless of distance, new forms of perception<sup>17</sup> and participation are created through converging technologies (Frissen 1998a).

The accompanying logic is centred around the temporal and qualitative distinctions which surround existing electronically accessible events such as video-conferencing or online debates. The concept of virtualisation therefore, is extended beyond its more readily understood context of providing a means of attaining a form of three dimensional access, and the electronic simulation of external objects (Robertson 1998). Rather, Frissen (1998b) uses it as a metaphor for new forms of electronically integrated governance and administration. However, in order to comprehend these debates from within their Scottish perspective we must firstly examine the political relations that revolve around a '*virtual politics of informatisation*'. We will explore the future possibility of a form of virtual politics within its Scottish context.

---

<sup>17</sup> In this sense 'perception' can be considered in a number of ways. Firstly, it is employed by Little et al (2001 p356) in its cultural aspect(s) to denote: '*opportunities for the extension and enlargement of multi and parallel cultural voices and visions that inhabit the world of global communication*'. Moreover, it can be thought of in another way. Social life, mediated by 'virtual reality', becomes interactive, extended and capable of producing new '*virtual environments*' (Schroeder 1998 p104).

As a new political institution can we observe any possibilities which suggest an extension of politics beyond traditional structures and boundaries? In this important sense, primary research data is introduced to make such ideas and theoretical contexts more tangible. By examining the notion of virtual politics then, we can consider whether political elites are persuaded to re-align power away from its orthodox locations and spaces. The following section will examine more direct teledemocratic forms within their Scottish context. As we will see, there are relationships between the 'virtual' politics discussed in this section, and these forthcoming ideas.

For instance, much of the energy devoted to demands for a more direct democratic system have emerged from teledemocratic exponents of democracy. There are a wide range of political views, but the uniting feature is arguably a post geographical form of politics (van Dijk 2000.) In other words, what unifies these theories is their attention towards an associative politics which moves beyond political – geographical limitations (Hirst 1996). ICTs assist in the development of a new politics which is centred upon the internet: new power arrangements are configured around these relationships, and new political communities emerge as a result (Grieco 2001, Grieco 2002,).

Similarly, It can now be argued that the new ICTs now offer the rank and file membership a set of methods which deprive the elites of their previously held monopoly over communications and organisation (Greene et al 2001, Grieco 2001). Moreover, the elan of political skills that are practised by the elites, are said to be called into question by the political-educational qualities offered by the ICTs.

Additionally it is argued, political competence is likely to be decided not by face to face meetings and by the verbal skills associated with organisation, but rather by a new condition of:

*' technical and symbolic-intellectual skills'* (van Dijk 2000 p31).

Thus the previous models of elitist politics, tied to institutions and organisational based political geographies, are challenged from below. Moreover, the ICTs now offer models of participation which are no longer the prerogative of those with material resources and the advantages of time: these previously dominant features are called into question by the re-distributive capacities of ICTs (Grieco 2001).

However, the forms of '*virtualisation*' that Frissen (1998a p37) refers to (i.e. the use of new technologies as a means of limiting the geographical constraints and limits of public administration and democracy), are a futuristic example and may yet happen, but as a precursor to these ideas I focussed upon the concept of MSPs taking part in Parliamentary affairs on the internet, and notions around interactive video-conferencing. This gave the concept some initial context to MSPs whose ideas could then be related to the broader themes that we have discussed above. As Frissen notes, organisations arrange their processes along the lines of linear based models of time, with the new temporal dimensions offered by ICTs<sup>18</sup>. With such a challenge comes

---

<sup>18</sup> In this manner linearity of time is called into question in much the same way that Newtonian politics is supposedly arrested by the demise of its standardised cause and effect principles.

the related shift in political relationships: organisations are capable of organising outwith the centralised institutions of orthodox politics (van Dijk *ibid*). In this sense, the devolved nature of power that is supposedly representative of postmodern politics (Frissen 1998a, 1998b) takes on a new form. We will now examine the implications of these concepts in more detail.

#### **4.3.2 The political independence of time and place: towards a virtual political establishment?**

'*Virtualisation*' refers to the use of new technologies as a means of producing new forms and practices within cyberspace. This has important implications for governance in that public administration and democracy may be able to exist outwith structured physical locations and institutions. As a precursor to such ideas I focussed upon the concept of MSPs taking part in Parliamentary affairs on the internet, and notions around interactive video-conferencing. With the shift in physical boundaries comes a growth in distributed networks that operate outwith centres. Contained within these networks are a host of social and political policy issues and areas which taken collectively form an alternative infrastructure to the centralised model of the state.

For example, links and conjunctions between networks go beyond previous territorially contained models. Frissen takes these notions a stage further and talks of the possibilities of informatisation in governance and public administration taking on a virtual form. In other words, the conditions of 'virtual reality'<sup>19</sup> will allow the interchange of a truly distributed discourse, and the

---

<sup>19</sup> 'virtual reality' refers to computerised interactions which are a simulation of direct relations. Virtual realities are considered by some authors (Frissen 1998b and Schroeder

comprehensions of geography, environment, and power from a distance.

There is an important point here, one that the data will uphold. Namely, questions which suggest whether or not politicians are prepared to divorce power from location.

In other words, reactions towards questions of online communications which go beyond the physical locus of the Scottish Parliament, are evidence of whether or not those who wield power are prepared to see it distributed away from the centre, with its presence in terms of political geography, and out more towards the communities that they represent. In this way, the format of questions which invoke such ideas, present yet again clues as to the future political context and conduct of public affairs<sup>20</sup>.

We will now expand on the empirical evidence to support or refute such claims.

---

1998) as offering a set of future political possibilities which move beyond tangible limits and restrictions, and in so doing permit new forms of political agency and new accompanying philosophies.

<sup>20</sup> It also alerts us to the relative commonality of purpose that existence amongst politicians as a collective. To divorce power from structure means divorcing some important elements of established political life and political culture of politicians themselves. Their willingness to dismiss the possibilities afforded by virtual politics re-asserts the political geography of space, and also shows the flexibility of internal politics. Its ability to cope with political technologies that are not of their own design or choosing. The main point of reference is concerned with the correspondence of autonomous structures which nevertheless share the same political, and social space. The relations amongst these structures is such that they nevertheless have their own dynamic principles, they are not controlled from above by the state, but are rather independent. Moreover, they exist independently from other functional structures. Secondly however, they are nevertheless dependent upon other inputs from those same structures: they are not autarkic. In addition, within a form of systems theory, they experience shifts and changes within their operative context as irregularities which impact upon their mode of operation. Lastly, by reacting to these disturbances they operate in accordance with their own co-ordinative mechanisms and rules: these codes assist in their evolution. As Jessop observes (2000 p359): *'the combination of these features means that the development of a given autonomous structure is conditioned by its relations with other structures but follows its own logic'*.

### **4.3.3 The future practice of politics:**

#### **Primary evidence of changing attitudes from MSPs**

My initial line of questioning focused upon primary evidence of changing attitudes amongst MSPs to the practice of every day politics in its relationship to ICTs. This took the line of the nature of their personal relations and understandings of political computing within internal political communications and interactions, citizen interactions, and previous experiences before (or in preference to) ICTs. Research, such as Frissens which suggests that computer mediated communications will undermine or challenge the need for face to face meetings, is countered by my own research into the contextual preferences of MSPs. That which Beck (1997 p98) refers to as the everyday condition of politics as practised via:

*'conflicts, power games, instruments and arenas'.*

Such ideas are very much in evidence. For example, ten (50%) of the MSPs interviewed suggested that whilst valuable tools for some tasks, ICTs could not replace inter-personal interactions and critical engagements with other participants. Issues of political and personal integrity could be more readily observed and profiled. Other personal qualities and distinctions were made evident through such personal contacts, intellectual propensity, notions surrounding trust and confidence (the art of politics in other words), were also expressed. The respondent's felt that these areas were part and parcel of their dealings within the Parliament itself, and issues of extending a measure of

confidence with regards to themselves and their personal contact with constituents was very much in evidence. Moreover, the extension of Parliamentary affairs (both in Plenary and committee) via the internet was not favoured on similar grounds. In other words, that personal contact was a vital and superior pre-requisite of debate, and that (with exceptional circumstances) should not be permissible within the Scottish Parliament. 'Exceptional circumstances' included the use of ICTs to enable witnesses to supply evidence to committee meetings when they would have been otherwise excluded, or attendance would have been impossible. On the other hand, the other ten MSPs who did favour it did so because of a variety of reasons which included freeing up more time, cutting down on travelling, and other similar 'practical reasons'.

**Table 4.3 The Scottish Parliament and the possibility of a virtual politics: qualitative expressions**

*'I think there is a case to be made for moving the Parliament to different locations. This would spread politics beyond Edinburgh for example. But the idea of giving politicians the ability to take part in proceedings in some automatic fashion by TV or video or whatever, would take away the onus for attendance. Actually being in the centre of politics, where important decisions are made and discussed, where you get a chance to talk things over with colleagues (and the opposition too) is really vital, electronic communications could never replace that'. Labour Party MSP.*



**Table 4.3 The Scottish Parliament and the possibility of a virtual politics: qualitative expressions (continued).**

*'There may be a case for this in some circumstances, but there is a danger that few MSPs would turn up in person, reducing both the quality of debate and public accountability'. To act politically, as a representative of peoples needs, and their demands, means actually being there in person. I would expect that of a 'representative, i.e. to represent me in person, and not over the telephone or whatever'*

**SNP MSP.**

*'I can see the case being made here. In some ways it makes sense, especially with those MSPs who represent constituencies in the far north, or in the Islands. Having to come down to Edinburgh takes up time which could be used for other local concerns. It also suggests to people that you have in some sense upped camp, and moved away from the locale. This is not the case, but that is often the perception. Naturally, there is a strong distrust of Central Belt politics'.*

**Labour MSP.**

*'I think there might be an argument for tending to some Parliamentary work from my constituency office, for example. This would save time. But I don't think you can substitute that kind of essentially administrative work from the real politics that goes on with colleagues and opposition members. Being away from the Parliament means being absent from debate and discussion'.*

**SNP MSP.**

*'It might be useful for some, I could see some virtue in it in terms of letting people know that Edinburgh is not the be all and end all of things political. It would be a useful experiment in the Short term at least'.*

**Independent MSP.**

**Table 4.3 The Scottish Parliament and the possibility of a virtual politics: qualitative expressions (continued)**

*'Yes, I can see the advantages in such a thing. For one it would save on travelling, free up some time and cut out wasted energy. It might make more sense to try it out in Committees. I think there has been a case where this has already happened. The presentation of evidence from witnesses at committee stage could also allow those (who for whatever reason) unable to turn up to do so. There is some strength to the idea. This is a new Parliament, so I think we can be allowed some new ways of thinking about how politics should be done. Labour Party MSP.*

The above data reveals an ambiguity to the idea of a virtual politics.

Respondents are essentially split between the trade-off of savings in terms of time and travel (the practicalities of employment as it were), and the loss of the valuable social – political networks that they felt would be forfeited.

They perceived that divorce from the centre of the structural political institution would deprive them of the necessary political relationships, and the practices and organising principles of a multi-stranded (political) community (Grieco 1987). My evidence then, shows that the virtualisation of politics is to be considered in terms of a duality of opinion. In terms of approving some external validity for this data it can be usefully cross referenced with the same question put to Scottish based Members of the European Parliament (MEPs). From a total of eight Scottish based MEPs approached, five were interviewed in this respect. The data below, in Table 4.4, provides some useful, and contrasting, evidence.

**Table 4.4 Scottish based constituency Members of the European Parliament (MEPs ). Opinions on a virtual politics**

***'Do you think that MEPs should be allowed to take part in parliamentary affairs (plenary or committee work etc) via the internet?***

Those against such a principle: four

Those in favour of such a position: one

*' It is important to have a physical presence at both plenary and committee work. In this sense no I don't think it would be advantageous. However, it could have some application in parliamentary affairs'*

**Labour MEP.**

Having observed the ambivalent reaction towards a virtualisation of parliamentary structure we will now address a related theme.

The following section examines the potentiality for reform of the Scottish political system through ICTs. The political context of information is the connecting theme in the following sections. In the first instance, we should examine the possibilities of another type of virtual politics that is gathering pace. Driven by the need to encourage more innovative forms of democratic participation, new political experiments are taking place in relation to the possibilities of *online voting*. The Electoral Commission have drawn up a series of plans for voting reform that recommended an overhaul of the United Kingdoms voting methods and practices. These included options to vote via telephone and the internet (see [www.electoralcommission.org.uk](http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk)).

We will now explore these ideas within their Scottish dimensions. These ideas will then be given external validity in a comparison with the Scottish MEP base.

#### **4.3.4 The support for online voting set alongside traditional methods**

Eleven MSPs were in favour of on line voting as an accompaniment towards orthodox voting methods. Six were very much against, citing security reasons and the traditional participative nature of democracy as justification for their response. Other reasons expressed were that there was no need to change the existing methods. The remaining three were unsure, certain doubts were expressed about the authenticity of signatures and their verification. Moreover, one opposition MSP cast important doubts regarding the interests of the Scottish Executive and the integrity of an electronic vote registering system. The theme of political integrity was established alongside the context of an Executive defeat (the first ever in the Parliament)<sup>21</sup>. However, serious doubts were raised in terms of the objectivity of the Parliaments electronic voting system. For example, that a number of votes had somehow not been registered by the system whilst others had been wrongly recorded. The interviewee expressed the opinion that it was commonly acknowledged amongst many of those outwith the Executive, that this was a result of deliberate tampering with the electronic capabilities of the system. The Scotsman newspaper of 9/3/2001 also reported the failings of the electronic

---

<sup>21</sup> The vote for a financial package to aid the Scottish fishing industry occurred on 8/3/2001. The Parliament voted against the proposed labour plans in favour of accepting alternative proposals. The Labour Party stressed the details of the Scotland Act (1998) which allow for those motions which the Parliament approve, to be registered, but effectively over-turned by

system in a similar fashion.

Effectively Reinforcement Politics in practice, this raises serious questions concerning the legitimacy of political computing in the Scottish context. Moreover, it also calls into question the related areas of security and privacy, not only as experienced in this instance by political opponents, but of citizens in relation to their wider interactions with government. The following Table offers evidence of the ambiguities of online voting, and online/electronic democratisation as a whole from the positions of those involved in the informatisation process. The example of Reinforcement Politics serves, in some respects, as a metaphor for the wider elements of mis-trust that surround issues of security and information politics. It highlights the potential difficulties associated with the electronic extension of democratic practice. In this sense, the security angles move outwards from the political institutions, into society and the political culture itself. However, the following Table reveals some qualitative accounts of MSPs opinions upon the introduction of online voting for citizens.

**Table 4.5 MSPs and citizens ability to vote online as a future democratic possibility.** Those *in favour* of online voting as an accompaniment to orthodox voting: 11 MSPs

*'Anything that gets people to vote has to be positive. I don't think it matters so much the manner in which its' done, just as long as people feel that the system lets them take part, and that the system actually wants their vote'*

**Labour MSP.**

*'Yes, if people are taking part in the campaign to elect their representatives, then whatever way they do it seems to me to be irrelevant. They are still taking part. That is the important thing. I don't see the necessity of making it awkward, or a test of political, or democratic commitment to have to turn out at a church hall at seven in the morning or whatever. If it can be done through the TV, or the PC, then so be it.'*

**Labour MSP.**

**Table 4.5 MSPs and citizens ability to vote online as a future democratic possibility:** Those *against/unsure* concerning the construction of an online voting system: 6 MSPs

*'I think there is a lot to be said for people turning out and actually taking part in the process. That is real democratic participation. The fact that people have to actually go out and make an effort is in itself a positive thing. Politics should be about participation, and making an effort to do something which is after all still a social commitment '*

**SNP MSP.**

**Table 4.5 MSPs and citizens ability to vote online as a future democratic possibility (continued):** Those *against/unsure* concerning the construction of an online voting system

*'No, the system is fine as it is. All the talk of falling turnouts is a bit of a side show, most people still vote. Besides, there are lots of different ways to think about falling electorates and voter decline. I hate to say it but you could make the argument that people don't vote in the same strength of numbers (that they used to) because they believe that the government is actually doing a good job. I am not at all convinced of the reasoning behind electronic voting, especially the idea that people can vote in pubs, or supermarkets or whatever. It seems ridiculous, a bit of an insult to those who go to the polling stations'.*

**Conservative and Unionist MSP.**

*'Electronic voting will be the last straw. People could be manipulated by politicians, frankly even if turnout plunges lower than at present, at least some have bothered to vote...cared enough. People will button – push with less thought than present'*

**SNP MSP.**

**Those unsure of the advantages/disadvantages:3 MSPs**

*' I would have to be convinced of the security angle of such an idea. What is to ensure that votes are recorded? Computer technology does let people down. At least with the tried and tested methods a degree of accuracy is a practised trend. On the other hand, the idea of letting people who live in remote places get their vote in under easier circumstances has to be positive'*

**Liberal Democrat MSP.**

**Table 4.5 MSPs and citizens ability to vote online as a future democratic possibility:** those *against/unsure* concerning the construction of an online voting system (continued)

*'There may well be a case for it, but I am not so sure that there would be adequate safeguards to stop fraud and multiple voting. All sorts of computer thefts and failings are becoming evident now. The technology is not fool proof and I would need to be convinced through some pilot studies or tests, perhaps in local government elections'.*

**Conservative MSP.**

However, we will now examine the position of informatisation within the context of Scottish civil society. The overall questions addressed are based around informatisation and the ability of civil society to ensure that political structures consider the registration of their opinions via informatisation. Additionally, does informatisation offer a challenge to the privileged 'information' condition of politics, assumed by professional political practitioners?. In other words, does the distributed nature of informatisation pose a threat to established political structures by re-distributing access to public policy /political evidence? We will examine these views in the first instance in terms of a base measure of how Scottish civil society might consider the broader remit and values of informatisation. Then we will analyse the associated themes introduced a moment ago. In particular we should consider the relationship between the provision of information in the context of political computing, and the possibility of the undermining of established political contexts and calculations premised around privileged knowledge.



#### **4.4.1 A critical evaluation of electronic democracy: Scottish civil society and its interactions with the Scottish Parliament**

The provision of political information is an essential component of participation, and is seen as an active constituent feature of public opinion (Habermas 1989). In these respects the role of ICTs in such a process are often seen as exemplifying a new politics of political opportunity and decision making. In turn, these notions are said to be capable of supporting new electronically charged democratic structures, and new forms of participation (Lenk1998). However, in the embryonic stages of Scottish democracy, is there any evidence of this type of action and activity? The research data presented below (in Table 4.6) observes some initial perspectives upon such ideas.

The Table considers the theme of electronic democracy from the position of Scottish civil society. A series of interviews were conducted which sought to re-evaluate the questions put to the MSPs, from the '*logic of the community*' as it were (Hague and Loader 1999 p19). In this sense, the research sought to provide a counter – balance to the institutionalised practices of politics.

The resulting data is to be considered as something of an outreach into the social environment that these groups inhabit on behalf of their client base.

As such, questions and themes that we have considered up until this point are given a new turn. They are premised on this position.

**Table 4.6 An evaluation of electronic democracy: Scottish civil society and its interactions with the Scottish Parliament**

**'Do you think that internet services (such as the Scottish Parliament's website) have the potential to aid the democratic process in Scotland? Or are they essentially a front for existing power relations to develop their interests behind?'**

Unreserved and valuable addition to the democratic process: two Scottish community groups

*'(it) aids the democratic process to (the) extent that it offers fairly immediate and comprehensive access to official Parliament documents'*

*'the web-site is an excellent and essential means of communicating what's going on in Edinburgh for the vast majority who cannot physically monitor Parliament's activities'*

*'It does both. They aid access to information. But, the Executive web-site in particular (verges) on propaganda'*

*'It has definite potential to aid the democratic process..(However).. access to ICT resources will continue to be an issue for the socially disadvantaged- only once this is addressed will the new access to information offered by ICTs redress the balance of accessibility to the democratic process'*

However, given the broad based historical circumstances of Scottish politics, epitomised by the democratic deficit, the role of informatisation in limiting its future place within political institutions should be prominent, and given analysis. The following Table provides us with some evidence in this regard.

**Table 4.7 The Democratic Deficit, ICTs and the quality of Scottish**

**Democracy: opinions from Scottish civil society**

**'Do you feel that ICTs go some way towards repairing the 'democratic deficit' in Scottish politics? i.e. the dislocation/disengagement from the arena of political and social decision making by citizens (and groups acting on their behalf) who were previously unable to access power?'**

**Yes: (Four groups)**

*'Yes, but only to some extent. You have to bear in mind that the Parliament has only a very limited decision making role relevant to those of the Executive. Our big problem is access to influencing the senior civil servants of the Executive who a) are very susceptible to influence from larger organisations local to Edinburgh who can pro-actively 'doorstep' the Executive, and b) think nothing of organising very brief meetings in Edinburgh at short notice-which the likes of us cannot possibly manage to attend, .i.e. the civil service is not geared up to using ICT in a meaningful way in its decision making process: they remain very traditional in outlook and practice. Furthermore, the Parliament has yet to demonstrate its effectiveness in influencing the Executive's decisions, and calling senior civil servants to account'*

**No: 10% 'not yet evident'**

**(one community group representative)**

The data offers a positive account of the democratic informatisation process in that it is seen as reducing the privileged data hierarchies of past regimes.

However, these ideas in turn lead us into other points of political action, and the information quotients that may emerge from a more widely distributed set of (political) data bases. In other words, if the privilege of political office is built around hierarchical knowledge based authority, then what of a future scenario when political communications are more lateral in their configurations?

The responses detailed above, centre largely upon the technicalities of democratic informatisation. In other words, the respondent's presumptions concerning electronic democracy are focused largely around the availability of data, research, and information frameworks.

Such organisations are largely bound to such concerns, acting as they do in relation to a wider social community who lack the necessary resources to engage directly with political structures themselves. Might this change, and if so what role would an informatised society contribute to a new politics of representation? The next section addresses these questions. Within this perspective, the ideas surrounding neatly contained political arrangements, determined by tangible political structures, are called into question by informatisation. For example, the transparency of political action now made possible by informatisation, now makes it possible for citizens to actively contest the decisions made on their behalf by their representatives. Accordingly, the base upon which the democratic legitimacy of representative government is built upon, is further called into question.

For example, the *representative political condition* is premised upon two fundamental '*knowledge gaps*' (Snellen 1995 p55) that are now losing their democratic footing. For instance, the distinction made between the representation of interests, and opinions, is premised upon two further points. The first of these revolves around the idea that '*representatives in parliament vote without mandate or consultation*'. Snellen (1995 *ibid.*) refers to this as '*knowledge gap 1*' (or *k1*). The second point (*Knowledge gap 2, or k2*) centres around the additional feature of expertise and political intelligence, upon which the legitimacy of the expert is upheld (generally by other experts, Maguire 1998).

The presumption in 'K1' is that the parliamentarian was effectively chosen to represent an encompassing raft of interests, rather than the individualised opinions of citizens, and that the responsibility of an elected politician is altogether different from that of a registrar of opinions. In other words, he/she has a duty to attend to political and social practices which extend into the realms of the public good, and which will on occasions be representative of the national community of interest, rather than the constituency itself (Downie 1971).

The second point (*Knowledge gap 2: k2*) centres around the additional feature of expertise and political intelligence. For example, a representative is privileged in that he/she operates at the heart of the polity. He/she therefore is aware of the political environment, the sheer complexity of politics, and the

absolute consequence of decisions (Offe 1996). Parliament therefore, is the institution where collectively binding decisions are made. In line with this argument, we can characterise this position as being one which literally formulates the will of the electorate/the citizens through the institutions themselves. It is produced through the formations of democracy, and made manifest through public administration. It is, in this sense, the political structures themselves (formulated around established politics) that give opinion substance. As Offe notes in this regard:

*'The will of the people does not exist prior to these procedures and independent of them, but instead arises in them'* (Offe 1996,p 91)

As such, this is further translated into legitimacy via the notion that the institution provides the surroundings within which the outcomes are made possible. The institution then organises the nature of politics. A knowledge gap (the k1 variable) can be observed when the information made available to elected politicians can allow them to consider in depth their constituencies political preferences and wishes (these are uncovered through information systems that allow the cataloguing of opinion and political will). In addition, k2 is called into question via the electorates ICT based ability to keep track of individual MSPs voting preferences and parliamentary attendance, and the online provision of political information and debate. This refers to the electorates ability to keep track of their MSPs voting preferences, (as measured against declared voting intentions for example), and their

attendance in Parliament. Potential issues and problems here point towards the K1 and K2 knowledge gaps that exist according to Snellen 1995. K1 refers to the idea that the opinions of citizens (in their appropriate constituencies) can be accessed by MSPs via information systems that allow for the registration of their will and political opinions. The distribution of political will then is undermined by the centralised position of the political representative who, with the aid of informatisation, is able to establish a new politics of agency and, ultimately, the delivery of political action. These ideas were explored in relation to the expansion of their position within Scottish politics. We will now examine them in greater detail.

Of the twenty MSPs asked in the research whether or not it would be beneficial to democracy to extend the degree and depth of information to the citizens-electorate nineteen said 'yes' one said 'no' Out of the nineteen, three said that much was already there, and that there was little evidence that citizens would wish such information. One expressed concerns regarding the technical demands of choosing precisely what information to place on the chosen site, and how it might be verified. Further details can be considered in Table 4.8 below. Those in favour of *increasing* the electronic based provision of information to the Electorate (For example, in terms of highlighting the voting preferences and patterns of MSPs, and their views on particular policies) were by far the majority, however one MSP suggested that more information was an irrelevancy. Qualitative expressions of both these features are attended to in the following Table (4.8).

**Table 4.8 The Scottish Parliament and the increased provision of political information to citizens as expressed by MSPs: 19 (90%).**

*'The more information about the Parliament that is placed in the public domain the better. Its important to see beyond the internet side of things, I suspect that the people who use it are people like yourself, or students, or journalists or whatever. That's not to say that the public do not, but rather that if they do then they themselves, by virtue of this fact, are not really representative. Having said that the more information that people have, the more able they are to make their decision'.*

**SNP MSP.**

**Those against such a proposal: one (10%)**

*'There is already lots of material and information on the (Scottish Parliament) web-site, there is a whole range of the stuff, almost the entire proceedings in fact, so I don't really see the point of pushing out more information in this way, no.'*

**Conservative MSP.**

The focus of research in the above section was to establish whether or not MSPs might be favourable towards extending the volume of information (including increased data about their Parliamentary strategies, voting patterns on specific issues and so on), available to the public electronically. The question was designed to test such an attitude in terms of fulfilling the K2 criteria (which concerns the electorates ability to track such information). However, few democratic politicians are ever likely to answer negatively to such a question. To suggest that *less information* should appear in the public sphere is to appear in some sense anti – democratic, or elitist. It was surprising therefore that one MSP did suggest that more information would in



effect be politically superfluous. In the next section we turn to a similar theme. Here we examine a future set of possible political scenarios. For example, rather than laying down the infrastructure for the parliamentary based political administration of the future, through which citizens mediate with the political-social environment, the networks that are being formed may effectively side-step such institutions.

We will now examine these themes, and their political context. The research focus is set upon the thesis posed to MSPs that an Increasingly interactive-informatised polity may result in an emergent tension between the demands of citizens and their representatives within parliamentary democracy.

#### **4.5.1 ICTs to support democracy: future political tensions**

It has been suggested within the previous section, that there is a largely unrecognised tension at the centre of ICT parliamentary based democratic initiatives. Parliamentary democracy is charged with upholding and providing the legitimising mechanisms for such practices (Held 1998)<sup>22</sup>. These institutions are historically and geographically, premised upon the principle of political representation (Coleman, 1999a). Or, from the position advanced by proponents of planning and technocracy, their authority is built upon planning and administrative competence (Hirst 1997).

The common point of reference here is that the condition of the political community at large, is theoretically enhanced by the centralised, neutral, and

---

<sup>22</sup> Within liberal economics however, a tension presents itself most readily in that it is the fulfilment of such freedoms that has traditionally been associated with a competitive market

allocative position of the state. In other words, its position at the focal point of the political -communications network, or at the 'nodal' centre (Hood 1983), renders it more capable of allocating resources and transforming demands from its sub -systems into outputs (Easton 1964). However, fearful of a decline in structured institutional political action, governments are hopeful that ICTs will increase the propensity of citizens to re-focus their energies back into politics, via political parties, or the state through a series of modernising strategies<sup>23</sup>.

As such, the possibility of the state offering increased channels for the development of a new political will is increasing, and brings with it potential political fault lines. In other words, one of the essential components of informatisation (the distributed politics of ICTs) allows the flourishing of new democratic practices, and new political spaces (Grieco 2002) which are, paradoxically, open to capture. This takes account of a future political scenario that might be termed as *citizen incrementalism*. In other words, citizens are used to political reforms that impose a version of political reality from the top – down, as it were (Watson and Mundy 2001). Yet, there are other possibilities and variables that may give rise to a new, and more direct expression of the political will. For instance, the technology to produce a new version of political decree, is an example of the capacity to produce democratic reform. In this sense, democratic informatisation takes the potential for reforms of

---

of goods, services and information (Gauthier 1999).

<sup>23</sup> The incremental enlargement of citizen access to the Scottish Parliament (via the gradual improvement of interactive technologies, and new experiments in voter registration) is seen as a way of resolving existing democratic weaknesses (Coleman 1999a).

governance onto a radically different perspective<sup>24</sup>.

In the next section we consider a future set of possible political themes.

Rather than laying down the infrastructure for the parliamentary based political administration of the future, through which citizens mediate with the political-social environment, the networks that are being formed may effectively side-step such institutions (Loader 1998). We will now explore these ideas, and the ways in which they contrast with other political technologies that are re-positioning the centre of political conduct through organisations and hierarchies. The next section examines the potential of informatisation to offer a new politics of immediacy.

#### **4.5.2 Informatisation and the movement from monocentric government: towards a rapid response democracy**

We will now examine the relationship between the Scottish Parliament and more direct forms of democratic participation. This will consider the relationship between structurally located political institutions and distributed

---

<sup>24</sup> We should consider here the new emerging politics of society-government interactions (Kooiman 1993), within which conceptions such as governance are considered to be a vital form. The new politics of governance is said to be less hierarchical and more driven by the interests and demands of citizens, particularly in terms of communicative governance (Van Vliet 1993). This approach moves away from what Van Vliet (ibid p106) terms as a '*monocentric*' approach moving towards a '*polycentric*' model. Within this format, political relations are considered to be shifting towards decisions and policies that are made or considered from a multiplicity of sources, a network of organisations who are interdependent and committed to negotiation and communications as a way of realising solutions. Within the context of the Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee for example and electronic democratisation, there is an assumption that the connection between citizens and Parliament will produce a form of negotiated governance. Implicit here is the assumption that the concerns and the registration of ideas will contribute towards a new set of policy dimensions which do not involve the need for intermediary institutions like political parties (den Boer 2000, Silcock 2001). It is a form of democratic mandate that offers an insight into the elasticity of such engagements in an informatised society. In other words, how far should mediating institutions be charged with the delivery of policy when the informatised society can deliver a version of political command?

political technologies. The data received is used to conceptualise the position of ICTs within a Scottish political context, and in particular the clash of political interests that are present (but rarely acknowledged) within the new political context of distributed ICTs: the distribution of technologies and their potential to shift democracy towards more direct forms. Informatisation then, can be said to threaten (or to potentially undermine) existing established structures. In other words, as interactivity between institutions and citizens or civil society expands, then there is a possibility that citizens may grow increasingly impatient with the form and pace of politics managed by institutions<sup>25</sup>. This political energy could transform itself into a more direct, or expansive democracy. In other words, the transformational capacity that is often associated with ICTs and political computing, may move in a manner that is impatient or hostile towards the deliberative, and incrementalist position of government. The new ICTs, as the technical infrastructure of the new institutionalism, may possibly enhance a future point of political departure. Accordingly, the move towards a more participatory democracy based around ICTs, may set in motion other political consequences, and potentials for new forms of democracy to emerge. Issues and themes such as these raise the question of whether ICT based networks might replace institutions as the defining political complex. Responses from the cohort of ICT specialists within a newly established political institution such as the Scottish Parliament, give clues as to the salience of such issues from the perspective of political elites. They alert us to the reception by elites and institutions to such concerns.

---

<sup>25</sup> Anti incrementalism in other words, whereby decisions are taken cumulatively.

ICTs bring with them the possibility of a radical extension of democracy along the lines of a politically challenging and distributed discourse (Greene et al 2001), yet how far such discourse travels and what impact (if any) it has upon existing structures remains as yet unclear. In other words, at one end of this polarity it is argued that citizens will be able to effectively access the machinery of power via ICTs, and that representative democracy may (perhaps incrementally) lose its primary function: that of representing citizens (van de Donk and Tops 1995).

Such a model views direct democratic initiatives as the vital political form. Decisions should be made by citizens via referendums or plebiscites. As such, it is the citizens who act to engage directly with the implementation of political decisions. One of the common themes suggested by these models is an end to incrementalism (Arterton 1987) and a move towards a more rapid decision making environment. In other words, the character of institutional pace is seen as outmoded and hierarchical. The technical capacities of the new media are seen as a way of realising an authentic mode of democracy that has in effect been displaced by weak versions of political representation and agency. As such, a quick and *rapid response democracy* (one which acts to register citizens interests and demands in an executive fashion) is seen as desirable by direct democrats (Becker and Slaton 2000). Such positions see incrementalism as a form of obsolete bureaucratic administration, perhaps even deliberately slowing down the pace of political and social reform<sup>26</sup>.

---

<sup>26</sup> On the other hand, some authors such as van de Donk (1998) and Schalken (1998) regard incrementalism as a political virtue. It observes a process of deliberative democracy in which

One of the major drawbacks to representative democracy, it is argued, is the systems inefficiency (Kinney 1996). Either the system *cannot* adequately register the demands of its citizens because its political technologies are outdated (a fact recognised in many respects by attempts to re-engineer, or re-invent government), or it *will not*: because the Michelian argument about the triumph of oligarchy is correct. Either way, it is argued that the system is ready for reform (Rheingold 1993). In addition, the premise that representative democracy is grounded upon, namely the prevailing logic of the technical impossibility of mass representation, is now defunct. Direct democratic means of repairing the expansive democratic deficit are now technically possible. For instance, the new communications technologies offer the possibility of radical democratic alternatives based around their two-way interactive capacities (Edwards 1998).

As a way of considering the future possibilities associated with political interactivity the question of its virtue was put to MSPs. A set of ideas were expressed to the respondents that interactivity could perhaps be measured in some sense to ascertain public opinion in line with Parliamentary proposals. The results are expressed in Table form below (see Table 4.9).

---

change is pursued at a studied pace. It is conservative to its detractors and deliberative to its adherents. However, public administration has made changes in this regard. Moves towards both a shorter response time between answering calls from the public/citizen, and reengineering government are both signs of an adaptive administration conscious of the external pressure imposed upon it, and conscious of a degree of impatience with similar macro issues of incrementalism.

**Table 4.9 Political interactivity, informatisation and the Scottish Parliament**

**'Do you think *interactive communications* with the Parliament should be encouraged ? Should the Scottish Parliament website contain an interactive capacity?'**

*'There is certainly scope for.... Interactive material. The Parliament web site per se has to remain politically neutral, however, and any such debate would have to take place with individual MSPs, and the Executive themselves.'*

**SNP MSP.**

*'There is plenty of interactivity already. The internet gives immediate access to information, there are all sorts of message boards and places to leave your opinions. Of course you can contact your MSP directly and to a certain extent instantaneously through the email system. I cannot really see the need for much more'. Conservative MSP.*

Eighteen (80%) of interviewed MSPs said that ICT based interactivity was a democratically positive virtue. Two considered the current level of email based interactivity to be adequate. Qualitative expressions are given below.

The above Table shows (despite the near overall support for more interactivity) some of the ambiguities associated with it in its political format.

The MSPs questioned almost all appeared to consider the theme itself as a democratic virtue. However, when follow up questions were posed in terms of the *directive potential* for citizens (as measured against MSPs and institutions), doubts were expressed in terms of the real benefits of the idea.

Nevertheless, 'interactivity' (and it became clear that this meant – despite

interviewer explanations) very different things to the respondents. We will now explore these notions in greater detail in the next section.

#### **4.5.3 Qualitative expressions of informatised political interactivity**

Qualitative expressions from MSPs concerning informatisation and political interactivity, focussed upon measuring public opinion, although there were reservations concerning the capturing of the electronic domain by interest groups, and the degree to which social exclusion might yet again be an issue related to information poverty. Others regarded the website as a mechanism that should be used to empirically measure public opinion, three MSPs (one Labour and two SNP) thought this was a good thing, and thought the interactive capacity should be extended to include such features. However, doubts were raised as to how public sentiments or opinion should be determined, and that a measurement of 'public opinion' might not accurately reflect the Scottish population as a whole. Some reservations in this sense were expressed regarding its extension. However, it was suggested that the existing channels could perhaps be expanded.

One MSP thought that a technically determined measure of public opinion was a worthy thing, with definite benefits in terms of keeping the Parliament in touch with the feelings and wishes of the electorate on a regular basis.

One other thought the provision of public '*comment*' would be a favourable thing, but that the Parliament should arguably have no constitutional claim to exercise or act upon such data. With this idea in mind it was suggested that



an electronically based provision for the registration of citizen/public ('comment/opinion') might be provisionally enacted (on an experimental basis) at a local government level. Its extrapolation to central government was deemed to be problematic in that its registration would allow critics to suggest that Parliament was not acting upon the clearly stated wishes of its citizens. Other MSPs were less enthusiastic stating for example that the deliberative process is an integral feature of democracy and should not be undermined by an active minority. In this sense the registration of opinion was considered to be an unnecessary addition, and an unwelcome pressure upon the democratic process. In addition, one MSP thought that interactivity was not beneficial to the workings of democracy or the Parliament at all. The registration of public opinion was perceived of as unnecessary: MSPs '*were there to perform precisely that function*'. These themes are given quantitative expression in Table 4.10.

**Table 4.10 Informatisation and interactivity: the registrational capacities of political computing within the Scottish Parliament**

Those in favour of the web-site: 20
Those in favour of <i>increased informatised interactivity</i> : 18
Those in favour of using the Parliamentary website for registering public opinion: 18
Those with reservations about the extension of interactivity and the use of the parliamentary site as a mechanism for the <i>registration of public opinion</i> : two

The above data was expressed largely by members of SPIKE (with the exception of the three additional MSPs), therefore we can assume that they have an understanding of the more orthodox perimeters of ICTs within their democratic context. However, as a measurement of more *radical inclinations* towards electronic democracy, and as a way of testing MSPs perceptions of the teledemocratic potentials, other areas and questions were investigated both qualitatively and quantitatively. These will now be examined within the context of a method favoured by direct democrats: the referendum and the initiative.

#### **4.5.4 Democratic informatisation and direct democracy: referendums and initiatives**

Arterton (1987) and many other political scientists, have produced work outlining the tele-democratic potentials of the new ICTs (Budge 1996, Becker and Slaton 2000, 2001). Great claims have been made about their abilities to provide solutions to the problems of an enlarged democracy, and to overcome the constraints of political institutions that cannot aggregate the collective demands of citizens, other than through paper ballots performed every four or five years (Schalken 1998). Accordingly, direct democrats consider political computing within the context of instant referenda, cyber-communications and libertarian initiatives. For example as Bellamy and Taylor note (1998), there are many theorists who will argue that ICTs automatically promote desirable values in society and help produce a more egalitarian organisation (Becker and Slaton 2000). These ideas are similarly suggested within the context of

political processes, which in turn emphasise the lateral and more creative diffusion of power, and an increase in participation (Silcock 2001, Grieco 2000). In addition, it is argued by the proponents of direct digital democracy that they decentralise 'mass' communications, and that they:

*'explode all previous limits on the volume of information that can be exchanged'* (Abramson et al 1988).

New political theories can therefore be formulated around the extension of the internet. There are variations on the theme inasmuch as at one polarity a series of writers see no further need for representative democracy at all (Scott - Aitkens 1999). The institutions of democracy may be allowed to stand albeit in a new and informatised mode<sup>27</sup>. For example, as Abramson et al (1988) note, informatised characteristics allow for the constantly updated provision of citizen-government interactions. As such, political computing can be used to extend informatisation into the direct democratic process itself.

The information architecture which allows the registration of statistical formulae could be used to gather opinions and responses to and from citizen/government. For instance, in the form of sophisticated informatised - feedback mechanisms, and the revitalisation of citizen based initiatives and

---

<sup>27</sup> For instance, within the context of an autonomous mass of citizens who nevertheless require public administration to secure their wishes are engineered (van Dijk 2000, Budge 1996). This might conceivably be achieved in the following way: by the detachment of a political executive from the system, and its replacement by what is in effect an informatised bureaucracy. For instance, one of the principle conditions of informatisation is its ability to provide a form of 'smart' reactions to information. For example, the process involves collecting information and then acting upon it independently of immediate human agency, producing as a result new streams of data and information. As such, the process can be effectively transferred from the administrative into the democratic realm.

referenda<sup>28</sup>. The shift is from top - down politics, in which organisations establish the context and conditions of the *plebiscite*, towards a re-vitalisation of the concept of information as it relates to citizenship.

This is achievable via citizen premised *initiatives* (Hale et al 1999).

As Budge (1996) notes, it is perhaps the nearest political approach towards direct democracy. It is an innovative form of politics, premised as it is upon the development of an idea(l), from civil society itself. It can be used to further the attack on incrementalist government, by effecting a near immediate answer to a particular issue (Poupa 1998). For instance, it is based upon the concept of popular sovereignty, within which the initiative is called by a group(s) amongst citizens/electorate: it exemplifies the notion of direct citizen intervention and often revolves around a perceived grievance (Budge 1996).

Referendums are, by contrast, more generally determined by governments.

In this instance, the distinction between a referendum and a citizen based initiative might be usefully contrasted. Referendums are largely seen by direct democrats as politically flawed. For instance, they can be engineered to direct the likelihood of a particular outcome. For example, it is government/executive that establishes the proposal to be considered, the time and the required majority are set in a similarly hierarchical fashion (Bowler and Donovan 2000). Moreover, aside from the context of the result, there is the

---

<sup>28</sup> The referendum for instance, is seen by direct democrats as flawed. It is characterised by its close connection with representative democracy. It is generally distinguished by its hierarchical form. In other words, the executive body establishes the proposal and the technical forms which surround it. Only then is it: '*submitted to a 'popular vote for acceptance or rejection'*' (Michels 1959 p333).

establishment of outcome to be considered. For example, governments may decide not to abide by the results, or attempt to establish yet another referendum to produce a more favourable conclusion. The referendum is an instrument of parliamentary sovereignty and can be used to further, rather than undermine its power. Moreover, it can prove to be an indecisive mechanism. The proposal may be poorly considered, and deliberately indecisive phrasing of an argument may be used. For instance, in order to produce an alternative interpretation of the result, should this be deemed necessary. In addition, the problem of poor voter participation may produce inconclusive results. Moreover, there are issues related to the national interest, which transcend parliamentary democracy and popular sovereignty<sup>29</sup>.

However, we will now consider another dimension to the debate: the position surrounding electronic referenda. This will be explored in the first instance by a theoretical understanding of the main issues and themes. Then we will consider their position within the research profile of the Scottish Parliament and the European Parliament, and the views of respondents upon these issues.

#### **4.5.5 Support for electronic referenda: MSPs and MEPs**

Much of the energy devoted to demands for a more direct democratic system have emerged from libertarian exponents of democracy (Rheingold 1993, Becker and Slaton 2000, 2001). There are a wide range of political views, but

---

<sup>29</sup> For instance, within the areas of national security the state may suppress the enactment of popular will on these grounds.

the uniting feature is arguably a post geographical, post hierarchical form of politics (Sardar 1996, van Dijk 2000). In other words, what unifies these disparate forms is their attention towards an associative politics which moves beyond political – geographical limitations (Hirst 1996). ICTs assist in the development of a new politics which is centred upon the internet: new power arrangements are configured around these relationships, and new political communities are said to emerge as a result (Hale et al 1999, Malina 1999b, Robertson 1998)<sup>30</sup>. For libertarians, the internet is an attractive model for a new politics, it challenges the regulatory state in radical political manner, and generates a new political community (Sardar and Ravetz 1996). As such, it represents a new distribution of political activity and engagement, which goes beyond the hierarchical and institutionalised representative forms of previously existing models (van Dijk 2000).

The direct democratic turn however, favours a shift away from the purely discursive scheme associated with representative informatisation (within which politics is essentially guided from the top-downwards by parliamentarians), and into an altogether more radical scheme of things. Proponents, such as Becker and Slaton (2000), argue that in a cyber-wired society the information deficits (such as those we observed earlier in the chapter in the work of Snellen 1995, who examined the position of what he terms as 'knowledge gaps- k1 and k2 for example), will be radically diminished, or dismissed completely.

---

<sup>30</sup> Advocates often cite Habermasian conceptions of a new public sphere within which discourse is evident, and supposedly rational and challenging (Malina 1999). Exponents of these theories make grand claims for their capacity to alter political and social structure(s). Territories are de-centred, discourse is dispersed, the states control and regulation of the

All the failings and weaknesses of representative democracy will be resolved, once the citizens themselves (who by extension are seen within the same light as the proponents, i.e. thoughtful, liberal, and well educated), are able to vote direct - electronically on the issues affecting their lives and societies as a whole (Sardar and Ravetz 1996). The context of direct democracy and the likely scenarios surrounding its viability, or otherwise, were put forward to MSPs and established within some of the above scenarios.

The contrasting range of possibilities were presented in terms of a strengthening of the democratic links between citizens and their representatives. As such, both the more radical condition of direct democracy were outlined, and its weaker programme (whereby representative democracy remains in place, yet sanctions many more referenda than is common within UK/Scottish political culture) were detailed during interview.

The answers to the survey are detailed beneath and are illustrated both quantitatively and qualitatively in Table 4.11. immediately below.

**Table 4.11 Electronic referendums as a measurement of democracy.  
Support for their introduction within the Scottish political dimension**

**'Do you think online referendums are a measure of democracy? Would you support their introduction in Scotland?'**

**No: 18 (80%)**

*'I think referendums are most appropriate for major constitutional issues (for example, the SNP supports a referendum on independence, and also a referendum on the Euro). I am not convinced of the case for ongoing referendums on a large number of single issues. Parties should be held to account to the electorate for their actions, i.e. representative democracy'*  
**SNP MSP.**

*'I think there is a case for the introduction of referendums on some issues. It could be seen as a way of getting more information from the electorate on specific issues, in that way they are a measure of democracy. But there are problems concerning the binding nature of them. The executive or ruling body don't always stick to their outcomes, they can be effectively overturned (as in Ireland with the Treaty of Nice recently). Also dialogue on the whole is more important than the weight of numbers. On the whole I would not be keen on a rolling set of referenda. Also people would get fed up voting, and activists would take over the show. Also what about those people not connected to the net? They would be disadvantaged straight away '*

**Labour MSP.**

*No I don't think it is necessarily a good thing. There is not enough overall access. Scotland is not internet heavy. Also there are the ever present security issues'*

**Conservative MSP.**



**Table 4.11 Electronic referendums as a measurement of democracy.  
Support for their introduction within the Scottish political dimension  
(continued)  
Yes: 2 (20%)**

*'Yes. I think they are a valuable tool . However, I think we need to examine these idea in light of whether or not representative democracy is still the best method of government'*

**SNP MSP.**

*'Yes, but it depends upon the nature of the referendum. Who is going to establish the terms or set the agenda? Do we leave people to be pushed towards an issue perhaps by the Press? Also there is the chance that issues could be forced upon the Parliament by powerful groups. The' Keep the Clause' campaign was a good example of this. Backed up by the Press (or some elements of it at least) they created an issue out of nothing. In a way they actually damaged the democratic process. Things hadn't even got going when they began to push this idea of a radical Parliament run by an out of touch middle class degenerates'*

**Labour MSP.**

Qualitative expressions regarding these options produced the following data.

There was little support for the use of electronic referenda. Of the twenty interviewed only two were in favour of the notion. One opposition MSP considered the concept as perhaps a favourable route for democratic politics. Moreover, it was expressed by the MSP that the possibilities offered by ICTs produced some valid reasons to question the overall legitimacy of representative democracy.

In other words that the ICTs were not so much a threat to representative democracy, but rather a:

*'reason to re-examine whether representative democracy is still the best method of government'* **SNP MSP.**

The other exponent of electronic referenda, did not regard the representative system of democracy to be under threat in any way by the adoption of ICTs as a tool with which to conduct regular referendums. Of the 80% of MSPs not in favour of the concept of electronic referenda, four make further observations that at some time in the future the concept of an electronic referendum might possibly be introduced. It was suggested that experiments within *local democracy* (in the form of local government) might be a means of testing out the ideas before possibly applying it to the national Parliament. Similarly, the idea was viewed by the remaining two MSPs as possible in light of further experiments, and case study materials being made available to the Parliament. A similar proposal for electronic referenda, when put to Scottish based MEPs produced the following responses. These are illustrated in Table 4.12 (immediately below).

**Table 4.12 Scottish based MEPs and the Internet as a tool with which to conduct referendums**

**'Do you think that the Internet should be used as a regular tool with which to conduct referendums?'**

**Labour MEP: 'Yes'**

**Labour MEP: *'no firm views on this'***

**Labour MEP: *'No. I do not think government by referendum is a good way forward'***

**SNP MEP: *No. Not until there is...near universal access. There is also something to be said for the ritual of going out to vote'***

**Conservative MEP: 'Yes'.**

Weighted by their connections with the Scottish Parliament, the MEPs show a more favourable attitude to the issue of electronic referendums. This may be because of the large geographical size of their respective constituencies, or it may highlight a more innovative condition within European politics. The need for active models of European integration and monetary union policies may

also be a relevant factor<sup>31</sup>.

However, the next section examines the largely negative ideas surrounding the extension of electronic democracy from a set of positions that encapsulate the opinions of Scottish Parliamentarians.

#### **4.5.6 The superior capacity of representative democracy over direct democracy**

Unlike signatures on a petition, or impulses contained within an electronic environment, parliaments are subject to the law of 're-encounter' (Offe 1996). In other words, political representatives within a democratic institution are subjected to scrutiny by their peers, and by the electorate themselves. In this way they are sanctioned and endorsed. In addition, as Hirst (1994) notes, the state is a developing systemic process, which is established to co-ordinate to administer, and to control. These functions may on occasions be at odds with the collective will and wishes of citizens.

This position is illustrated by the following quote from an SNP MSP :

*' The difficulty with these arguments (concerning the extension of electronic democracy) is that it is the job of Parliament to put forward legislation. We act*

---

<sup>31</sup> For example, European Monetary Union (EMU) is primarily a means of forging closer union and ensuring greater technical co-operation between the member states as opposed to, for instance, ambitions to fine tune fiscal powers (Hartmann 1998). In this sense then there are historical precursors which bear out the existence of unification and closer integration of political, economic and cultural ties as an ongoing project(s) (Brittan 1997). To those projects which have characterised the Union since its inception in 1956 can be added those ICT based designs associated with inter-governmentalism and integration theory, within which informatisation projects play a decisive part (George 1999).

*in accordance with public opinion as best we can. There will always be times when it is wrong or ill conceived to act in such a way, but I don't see what other real alternative there is. And, even if we do get it wrong there is always a chance to redress the situation through the same system. Parliament can, and does, reconsider poor or faulty legislation. I can think of many examples of this kind of thing. It's not at all unusual. Along the same lines, Parliament takes a lot of time considering and debating (and sometimes arguing), the rights wrongs and whereabouts of legislation. I can't imagine such debate being subject to this kind of lengthy process if it was, say, led by the media for example. This is the virtue of the system as it stands at present'*

#### **SNP MSP.**

As such, the Parliamentary context is an ensemble of the technologies that are available to government (Johnson 1993). These technologies are the means by which it is able to govern. It is not likely to surrender centuries of political construction to an 'artificial' and ephemeral 'majority' constructed through opposing technologies. In this sense the majority in question is merely:

*'a coalition of disparate interests'* (Hirst 1994 p35).

Moreover, parliamentary institutions are conducive to '*fruitful communicative situation(s)*' (Offe 1996 p94). The following quote (from a Conservative MSP) illustrates these points:

*'where does this view of an electorate charged with political fervour come from? They don't seem interested in the every day nature of political life, which is really what its all about, unless it affects them in some ways that's understandable. After all that is why they elect people to do this kind of thing for them. Most people may not have a set of opinions on some of the things that we take for granted as being important. I don't think that there is an untapped mass of public opinion waiting to be instantly tapped and then transformed into action. After all there are opinion polls anyway. Surely they are an indication of public opinion? The whole point about having the Parliament is that it is an institution built ( at enormous cost) to give the political will some shape and some direction. The act of placing the elected members under one roof allows us to give time to matters that are for the best part, important to people, even if they don't realise it themselves'*

### **Conservative MSP.**

Along similar lines many MSPs asserted that methods of compromise, dialogue and exchange are part of the proceedings. Politics was about negotiation, compromise and trying to produce a particular meaning from events that otherwise had little or none. The whole process was enhanced by real face to face encounters, and by the '*communities of meaning*' that emerge from such gatherings (Cohen 1998 p70). In other words, these positions argued that ultimately it was the political structure within which discourse and interaction was conducted that helped determine behaviour and meaning<sup>32</sup>.

---

<sup>32</sup> There is a spatial – structural feature of the New Politics of the Scottish Parliament. This is evident in terms of the 'horse-shoe' shape of the debating chamber. This was designed to

In this way it is 'New Institutionalism' that emerges as an explanatory model of political conventions within administration. For example, the new institutionalist perspective argues that the doctrines of political conduct are explained in terms of the social conventions which occur within institutions, how politicians/individuals act within the collective political environment that in turn is dialectically shaped by their formal and informal interactions (Stoker 2000). Moreover, individual and collective identities are expressed through:

*'the human and technological architecture of interaction and communication'* (Amin and Hausner 1997 p3 ).

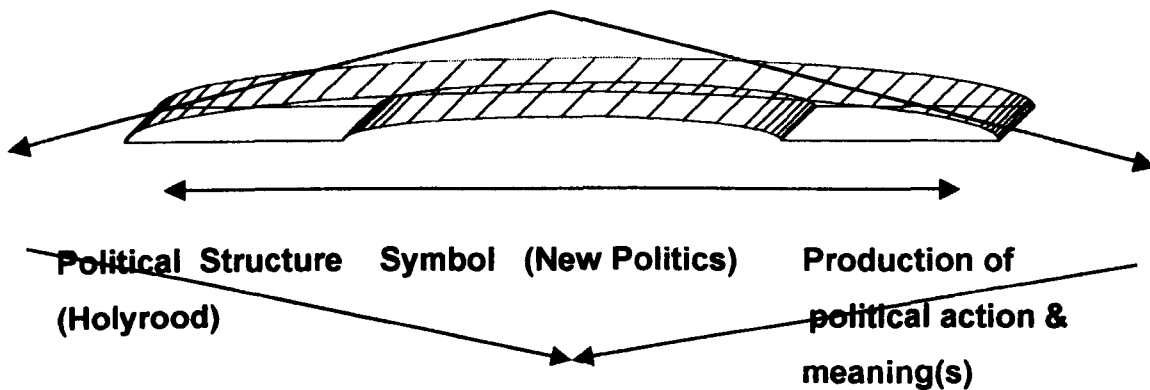
The Figure below (Figure 4.2 *The Spatial-architectural feature of the New Politics*) shows how this feature works to produce such meaning. The process is circular in effect and should be read from left to right, and then back upon itself as it were: it is a self supporting mechanism. Indeed, this self-supporting set of arrangements are what its antagonists would claim to be its essential weakness: that it is detached and enclosed within its own protected environment. Nevertheless, there is a strong argument that maintains that politics and political action is most effective when given structural focus. This contention then, undermines the distributed discourse feature that so often surrounds informatisation and the re – location of power arrangements from institutions to the PC, for example. The structural focus of the Scottish

---

facilitate a less confrontational form of politics. As such, it endorses the claim for structure attempting to condition behaviour. In addition, 'Old institutionalism' should be explained. This stresses the explanatory role of formal rules and procedures in establishing such identities.

Parliament is given figurative expression immediately below.

**Figure 4.2 The Spatial-architectural features of the New Politics**



The Figure illustrates how the located situational position of politicians serves to produce political meaning, political action, and political symbolism. Action (*'initiating a change', or 'a negative reaction to a state of affairs'*: Knox 1968 p103) then, is sited most forcibly in a political sense, within institutions. In turn, the action itself is determined via the spatial characteristics and format of the tangible institution itself. For example, the 'horse-shoe' dimensions of the Scottish Parliament are taken to be more conducive towards 'reasoned' and non-confrontational debate. This is represented in the figure by the over-arching feature. This condition privileges the corporal site of political action as having a structured and sited locus and focal point(s).

However, the same structure that allows for (or directs) political communications also situates political representatives within the specific domains and strategies of power.



For example, coalitions, committees, and what Offe (1996) refers to as:

*'The constant election campaign fought out in parliament and the interests of the individual members',*

In this sense the new politics is seen as *constrained* by its environment rather than enhanced. Political conduct, as established within the institution, limits and composes argument and change within pre-ordained and conservative orthodoxies (for example, within the hierarchies established in political parties). This is precisely what the direct democrats (such as Kinney 1996, and Becker and Slaton 2000) object to. For example, a connection can be made in the form of political parties and organisational structure as Duverger (1974 p.188) notes within the concept of '*parallel hierarchies*'<sup>33</sup>. For instance, party members may simultaneously be linked to various elements of the larger political structure of which he/she is already a member: i.e. the state.

For example, he/she is a member of a party hierarchy, an overall system hierarchy (perhaps within the political executive), a committee structure which will be hierarchical, and within the representative capacity attached to the constituency he/she acts for. As Michels (1959) notes, these co-ordinated forms of political activity will be assisted by the psychology of power and the

---

<sup>33</sup> Duvergers conception of parallel hierarchies comes from the study of totalitarian regimes who adopted in many instances a rigid model of this concept. However, such centralising tendencies are a charge laid against the Labour Party. Namely that its co-ordination of centralised power limits the ideological autonomy of some party members.

natural oligarchical tendencies of organisation<sup>34</sup>. As such, the centralising inclination of political parties (engineered for example via party bureaucracies) '*suppresses individuality*' within them and therefore serves as a break on change and radical reform (Michels 1959 p189). These ideas have a connection with our next theme.

We have encountered the Reinforcement Politics position as an ongoing theme throughout the thesis. This position asserts that political computing will be used to effectively promote change in accordance with the wishes of elites. In this sense it can be usefully related to the 'suppression of individuality' and the reformation of politics from the dimension of the rank and file. These ideas were put to MSPs within the context of political computing. We will now examine their responses to this scenario.

#### **4.6.1 Reinforcement Politics and MSPs: qualitative accounts of Reinforcement theory**

The Scottish parliamentary system will find itself under pressure from an increasingly technocratic and centralised elite who attempt to dominate politics and public administration through political technologies. Reinforcement Politics<sup>35</sup> (Danziger et al 1982) state that the interests of controlling elites will

---

<sup>34</sup> Greene et al (2001) point out however that informatisation and distributed technologies present new opportunities for the countering of such tendencies.

<sup>35</sup> To re-cap, this approach focuses on the distribution of *impacts* from computing resources rather than on the distribution of decision control and the allocation of computing resources. This approach suggests that there is a dominant interest (or dominant coalition) within government. As such, the process of informatisation will serve the interests of this dominant faction (s) regardless of who controls the computer resources. The assumption is that the dominant interests in the organisation will fundamentally be served by the uses which informatisation is charged to advance. Hence, computing will reinforce the power and influence of the actors and groups who already have the most resources and power in the

be served by the informatisation process. Dominant interests within organisations will use computing to advance their positions. As such, political computing within the Scottish Parliament will be used to augment the position of the controlling elites within the institution itself. This position therefore challenges a number of theoretical concepts, including those that maintain that ICTs diffuse and de-centralise power and remove the orthodox control structures within organisations (Zuurmond and Snellen 1997).

The Reinforcement thesis maintains that the information architecture of a political system will centralise the process of control and hierarchy. It also sets itself in opposition towards postmodernist theories of governance<sup>36</sup>, which maintain that new forms of society-governance based interactions are emerging on a more *equal* basis than the past. So, the information architecture evolves towards a system that is *directive* rather than *reactive*<sup>37</sup>. In other words, informatisation within political organisations is implemented to

---

organisation. It is assumed that those groups that directly control the uses of computer technology will attempt to guide it in the services of the dominant values and interests of those groups already powerful within the organisation. Thus the precise effects of informatisation within government/public administration will revolve around the axis and appeals of the government. The reinforcement thesis argues that the utilisation of information within the political context of public administration ensures that it is used to serve the plans of those who wield power. So, informatisation within this theme is essentially a tool which is used by elites/dominant factions within government to (Danziger et al ibid, p173):

*' support the position or interests of those who control the governmental organisation....Computing simply enhances and extends the organisations capability to serve the interests of those who control the organisation'.*

<sup>36</sup> The new politics of interactive governance suggest (and advocate) new reflexive forms of political and inter-governmental relations (Rhodes 1997).

<sup>37</sup> Moreover, there is further evidence to suggest that the new elite driven source of power is being embedded within the information architecture itself. For instance, the reflexive capacities of informatisation are being utilised to develop operative '*decision premises*' which support the elites and augment these top- down control principles (Taylor et al 1997 p12, Bellamy and Taylor 1998.).

serve specific and controlling interests. Existing organisational powers are developed and strengthened by such projects. Those already in control use these systems (as they would any other political technology): to serve their interests. The information polity<sup>38</sup> approach fits into the reinforcement thesis, in that it emphasises *continuity* and *constancy* rather than *change*.

Accordingly, ideas concerning the efficient operations of government or public administration are preferential in practice over the more symbolic adaptation<sup>39</sup> of ICTs and their position within the new politics of information in Scotland.

The reinforcing aspects of the information polity approach stresses the ability of the system to constrain, rather than develop new and challenging forces (Bellamy and Taylor 1998). In practice what this means is that the beneficiaries

---

<sup>38</sup> This theory asserts that political systems should be considered in relation to the use of information to bolster existing power relations. Unlike those claims made for culture, or for economics, the Polity approach suggests that systems should be thought of as relatively static models (Bellamy and Taylor 1998). The five components of the information polity all centre around information based relations. There are those which revolve around the interface between the executive branch of government and public administration. The second feature is the format (now expressed under the auspices of NPM) of the government - consumer of government services nexus. Thirdly, there is the context of the relationship between government and citizens. Fourthly, the commercial and supportive technical role that exists between government and the (largely private/commercial) manufacturers of the information architecture/infrastructure. Finally, there are the important value based links between these architectures themselves and the value system which they fit into. In other words, the polity will be driven by a specific set of values and ideals. It will attach value to some practices, issues and agendas as opposed to others (Bellamy and Taylor 1998, Taylor 1998).

<sup>39</sup> The concept of the overloaded state/big government is an example of a symbolic reactive response. It leads the conception of modernisation/transformation into a market based analogy whereby the management of state services are infused with a market ideology both as a means of transforming crisis into decisive symbolic action, and as a means of embodying new practices. For example, failures of policies are transformed into a discourse of overall crisis which must be attended to. In this method and manner the state unifies and mobilises its organisational capacities under a symbolic-discursive mode of action. For example as Miller and Rose (1993) note, in moments of crisis a unity of purpose is (re) imposed upon the structures of the state, the symbolic discursive practice of 'crisis' allows the state to re-impose unity and to re-regulate itself. As Moss (1980) notes, the state is able to impose a new order upon events and affairs under the auspices of crisis. It mobilises a type of symbolic interactionism which has the ability to persuade others of the existence of a problem, and to effectively move resources in the direction of its solution. This can be accessed via the symbolic properties of discourse and political technology.

of informatisation will be those who control their design and implementation<sup>40</sup>.

An empirical examination of the value position of the Scottish Parliament will reveal the value system of the Parliament as it relates to ICTs. In this sense:

*'information can be seen as a condition influencing the play of power'*  
(Edwards 1995 p43).

We will now examine the relationship between informatisation and Reinforcement Politics in an empirical fashion. The following Table illustrates the inter-play and focus of interests that revolve around informatisation in the Scottish Parliament. It allows us to view the connections between policy and informatisation in a quantitative fashion. The data reveals the Parliament's overall relationship between informatisation and their relation to political-social-economic values which this thesis argues is the dominant model of Scottish informatisation. In this manner then informatisation fuses together with Reinforcement Politics position.

---

<sup>40</sup> In this case it is the political elites themselves. Informatisation is therefore a control technology.

**Table 4.13 Scottish Parliamentary conducted Issues and Informatisation**

<b>Education and Training</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>29%</b>
<b>Privacy</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.4%</b>
<b>Public administration: external function</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>7.5%</b>
<b>Public Administration: internal function</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>9.5%</b>
<b>Security</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>13.5%</b>
<b>Social Exclusion</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>9.2%</b>
<b>Local Government</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2.1%</b>
<b>E: Commerce</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>19.7%</b>
<b>Scottish Democracy</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1.2%</b>
<b>Communities</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1.6%</b>
<b>Voluntary Sector</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.4%</b>
<b>Health</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.4%</b>
<b>Others</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>5.8%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>238</b>	

**Source: Griffin 2001** (URL: [www.scottish.parliament.uk](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk) cut-off point for figures is 27/06/2001)

The Table allows us to observe this 'play of power' and the decisions and values that augment it. In this instance it is those elites within the administration that seek to use informatisation to extend a specifically economic remit. Both the issues of education/training and the use of informatisation are to be observed within the context of their ability to extend the role of e-commerce and commercial concerns as expressed in terms of the content of Parliamentary debates and discussion. The above are all issues conducted within the Scottish Parliament Plenary. They are inclusive of Business Bulletins, debates and written Parliamentary Questions.

All are conducted between the lifetime of the Parliament and the ending of the Parliamentary Session in June 2001. The data reveals the high degree of Parliamentary practice(s) that are focused around commercial, education and training issues, and the concerns that the executive have with the 'security' of its information architecture and the development of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (Scotland) 2000 (which we observe in chapter six). Any radical claims therefore made for new technologies must be considered in terms of these interests.

The Reinforcement thesis suggests that within government there will be an elite faction(s) who will utilise informatisation to further their own ends and values, these empirical studies reveal the nature of such values, and some elements of their directional curve<sup>41</sup>. With the position of Reinforcement Politics as a core interview practice, the MSPs were asked to consider whether informatisation processes within the Scottish Parliament might in some ways be describes as reinforcing existing relations of power. In other words, that the foundations of democracy tend to be weakened by elite control over informatisation projects, and that ICTs therefore undermine the Parliament, yet strengthen the executive and their authority over the Scottish Parliament and public administration. This question looks at the idea that the

---

<sup>41</sup> In this sense it can be argued that democratic systems may find it increasingly difficult to come to terms with the privileged utilisation of information technology by elites (Zuurmond 1998.). In this model, the powers of political/bureaucratic elites are informatised in order to increase their capacity to scrutinise, envision and anticipate future consequences, and to place limitations upon the strategies of alternative notions and opponents (van de Donk 2000). The capacity to investigate, scrutinise and limit the options of political opponents is assisted by these informatisation processes. They are technologies of control which act against the re-distribution of power. For example, as Poster notes: '*The mode of information generates new structures of domination*' (Poster 1990 p87).

overall tendency of ICTs within existing power structures is to use any new political technology to advance its own cause<sup>42</sup>. In other words, the Michelian strain within political structures, and the Parliamentary system as a whole, will use the development of new technologies (of whatever hue) to limit radical change. As Michels expresses this format of political order:

*' Organisation is, in fact, the source from which the conservative currents flow over the plain of democracy, occasioning there disastrous floods and rendering the plain unrecognisable' (1959 p22).*

The Reinforcement Politics scenario, and the validity or otherwise of Michels claim will now be discussed in the context of the Scottish Parliament.

An analysis of these notions and themes revealed the following data from MSPs.



**Table 4.14: MSPs and the Reinforcement Politics position: Political Computing and the Scottish Parliament.**

**Supportive of the Reinforcement Politics position = five (25%)**

**Opposing the Reinforcement Politics position = twelve (60%)**

**Giving equal accord to both = three (15%)**

*'I think the overall tendency of any institutional elite is to use new developments to reinforce existing relations of power. Just as the overall tendency of others is to use them to undermine existing relations of power....there are lots of other factors which determines who makes the most of their opportunities.'*

**Scottish Labour Party MSP.**

*'Powerful information can be retained by elites....but on the other hand participation can be increase.'*

**SNP MSP.**

*'Possibly reinforcement. It is possible to observe powerful elites forming...using developments within I.T. to consolidate their power.'*

**MSP - Single member of Parliamentary party.**

*'With the rise of the new media there is the potential for political parties to let members co-decide/decide on party decisions without interference from party leaders.'*

**Liberal Democrat MSP.**

*'I think that these technologies could be used by the executive to undermine the opposition. They control the technical resources in terms of the infrastructure. In this sense it is possible to see the technology as representing their interests over and above others.'*

**Conservative MSP.**

---

<sup>42</sup> At the expense of opponents of course.

The data reveals the ambiguous application based results of informatisation. The Reinforcement Politics theory is up -held by a small (yet significant) minority. Overall however, the Parliamentarians had faith in the democratic potency of ICTs, and their ability to further democracy. The final section of this chapter reveals the overall democratic position of the Scottish Parliament in terms of its informatisation dimensions. It is to this section that we now turn.

#### **4.7.1 Conclusion: Competitive elitist democracy: a hierarchical top-down model of Scottish politics and informatisation**

The chapter examined a range of opinions and concerns from political elites within the Scottish Parliament. In doing so it attempted to illustrate the positions identified at the opening of the chapter concerning electronic democracy. The data revealed that there is a largely negative attitude towards *direct democratic* (or teledemocratic) forms such as referendums and citizen initiatives. On the other hand, MSPs did offer a serious commitment towards *representative* political reform through informatisation. For example, by increasing access to governance via ICTs, and by the creation of innovative forms of interaction between citizen and representatives. MSPs recognised that the source of a new legitimacy and a new politics of participation, lay in offering more space to citizens and their interests. In addition, there was recognition that the Scottish Parliament should seek to create greater access to government, and to involve civil society in the collaborative ventures of governance, the sharing of tasks and indeed responsibilities. It was also recognised that the technical momentum of informatisation, and its increasing

position as a tool with which Scottish civil society might employ in opposition to established political interests, was a possibility. In the following Table however, we examine the overall democratic benefits that informatisation might produce given the necessary uptake. In this sense it looks at the process from a different set of perspectives. The right hand side of the Table is a summary of the principal themes raised. The left hand side produces the answers from MSPs into an overall category of realisable, or possible, values that informatisation may engender. MSPs were asked to consider the valuable, or otherwise, conditions of ICTs in re-engaging citizens with the democratic scheme of things, and with other values of ICTs (such as enhancing the internal communications structure of the Parliament). Questions were put within a context that suggested future possible political scenarios and developments. They were established amongst specific themes in order to examine the likely theoretical outcomes for Scottish democracy and the potential (re) - distribution of power via ICTs. For example, the respondents were asked to consider the notion that ICTs are able to promote increased democratic participation, and that the new interactive technologies might improve the responsiveness of the Scottish Parliament towards citizens. The results are revealed in Table 4.15 (see below).

**Table 4.15 Prospects for Scottish Informatisation: a summary of the positions of MSPs**

<b>Questions and percentage responses</b>		<b>Theoretical conclusions</b>
<i>1: ICTS and democratic enhancement</i>	<b>100%</b>	<b>Overall support for informatisation</b>
<i>2: In what ways? What analysis prevails?</i>	<b>100%</b>	<b>Re-legitimation and re-orientation of governance</b>
<i>3: Increasing the provision of information to citizens</i>	<b>70%</b>	<b>Democratic elitist perspective is favoured position</b>
<i>4: Increasing political participation</i>	<b>40%</b>	<b>Enhancement of participatory democracy is favoured form: a component of Transformational Politics</b>
<i>5: Speeding up communications between citizens and representatives: the external dimension of informatisation</i>	<b>40%</b>	<b>Effectiveness in relation to participatory democracy: transformational Politics</b>
<i>6: Speeding up internal communications Between MSPs and Parliamentary resources: its internal dimension</i>	<b>10%</b>	<b>Expert Discourse and structures of administration that support democracy</b>
<i>7: Sharing of political experiences</i>	<b>10%</b>	<b>Negotiations and meetings as a democratic point of reference</b>
<i>8: Reducing geographical disparities</i>	<b>10%</b>	<b>Virtual access as a democratic point of reference</b>

What the Table reveals is a summary of some of the principal themes of the research enquiry, and the responses of MSPs, as expressed within percentage terms<sup>43</sup>. The findings are ranked in ascending order of priority. Numbers one to five on the left hand scale reveal the *external* features of informatisation. This takes into account the Parliaments links and associations with Scottish civil society. Numbers six to eight are accounts of the *internal* dimensions of informatisation. These are the expressions of MSPs concerned with the value of enhancing the democratic process (and their position within it) from within the institution as it were. On the right hand side of the Table are the theoretical range of values attached to the processes. By using the methodological procedures that we have encountered both in this chapter, and chapter three, a set of conclusions are presented.

---

<sup>43</sup> They were asked to consider the general assumption that *informatisation of public services will increase both democratic efficiency and act as a cost effective political technology*. This is set within terms of the declaration of the CSG document (1998) which set out the guidelines for the ethical infrastructure of the Scottish Parliament, and as a corporate body with observable financial constraints and limits. The following themes and tensions were explored within the research question base. For instance, the relationship between democracy and administrative efficiency. In other words, the modernising agenda of the U.K. government seeks to enhance public administration and the efficient delivery of public services through the construction of a new ICT based infrastructure. Democracy and efficiency can be self enhancing variables. In other words, as the (presumed or otherwise established as fact) efficiency of a system increases then in correlative form so does democratic momentum and legitimacy (Aicholzer and Schmutzer 1999). Informatisation then at one level is concerned with the establishment of a new seamless functional rationality which allows efficiency to be optimised/maximised (Frissen 1998a, Silcock 2001). In other words, there is evidence that informatisation can strengthen representative democracy by the optimal efficiency that it can produce. The ambitions of public administration to provide greater democratic efficiency (measured against service delivery), is established as a largely economic based premise. However, as Watson and Mundy (2001 p27) note there is another dimension to this equation; the proficiency of political computing in order to *'improve the effectiveness and efficiency of democracy'*. In this sense the tensions that appear beneath the surface of electronic democratisation in the form of movements which campaign for more direct democratic initiatives (in the form of electronic democracy/teledemocracy) are narrowed in their scope of actions. The confident economic and administrative technologies which support public administration, also support parliamentary democracy.

However, we will now move on to another dimension of the research.

The following chapter explores the reformation of Scottish government via information technologies and the interactions between Scottish civil society and the established political structures. It argues that the expressions of a democracy denied<sup>44</sup> (a consistent theme of post war Scottish politics, as we noted in chapter two), clash with the efficient delivery of public services.

This is evident within the desire to reduce the costs of public administration whilst extending political participation. In this sense 'entrepreneurial' government is in conflict with the new politics of participation. We examine the relations of this tension and establish a framework whereby politics in Scotland comes into conflict with these forces.

---

<sup>44</sup> A remit of the democratic deficit, as we have noted.

## Chapter Five

### **The New Politics of Agency and Institution: Sub-Politics and Participation. An audit of participatory democracy in Scotland**

#### **5.1 introduction**

This chapter argues that a new problem of order has emerged within Scottish politics. This centres upon direction and volume of permissible political communications<sup>1</sup>, and how far they should be accepted (or integrated) within the new political system. For example, the new Scottish politics is given expression by government in terms of an emphasis on democratic renewal, openness and modernisation (Blair1999). This includes attention to the means by which new ways of governance might be assisted by new electronic forms of communication. However, in doing so a new political tension becomes evident. For example, the new distributed technologies open up new sites of alternative power, and in this sense, they pose a challenge to established political spaces and structures (Grieco 2001)<sup>2</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> By the term '*permissible political communications*', I am referring to the idea that we have noted above in relation to electronic democracy/electronic democratisation. For instance, how far should the access points/electronic portals of political systems accommodate political impulses via new technologies? In other words, how far and within what limits, are democratic structures/institutions open and willing to accept communications from outwith the polity itself?

<sup>2</sup> For instance, as Grieco (2002) notes: '*The new e-forms allow for many voices in a way that conventional bureaucracy could not. The technology allows for discourse from every direction: protocols can be used to develop filters in one location but the nature of the world wide web permits any person or group from any location to raise a globalised message which can reduce the power of individual organisational filters...(and allow for the) monitoring (of) opponents' behaviour and intentions*' (Grieco 2002).

Accordingly, this chapter explores the relationship between the technologies of governance and democratic participation. It does so in terms of the future democratic potentials of informatisation. The new politics of governance (present within Scottish democracy) have been established to ensure an *interactive* reciprocity between the state and Scottish civil society<sup>3</sup>.

Practical supporting technologies aimed at encouraging political participation are being established. These are designed to resolve the polarities of orthodox representative democracy, and the political gap between elector and elected. Such ideas encompass the designs and ideological metaphors of democratic informatisation. The capacity of ICTs to produce a reformation of political and social circumstances are given credit within these positions. In this sense, the transformation of Scottish democracy is a generative feature associated with a new politics of change. Informatisation procedures seek to capture new models of democratic efficiency and the elimination of political exclusion via technological transformations, engineered by new forms of political communications. These new processes seek to adapt informatisation as a shared medium of power.

For example, the Parliament is called upon to account for their actions and methods through an endorsement of institutionalised new politics<sup>4</sup> (Smith and

---

<sup>3</sup> Much of the literature concerned with the renewal of democratic participation looks towards civil society to rejuvenate democratic practice through what Hirst refers to as 'Associational democracy' (Hirst 1994). It seeks to shift civil society-democratic relations from the background of politics into the forefront via the motive force of new social movements.

<sup>4</sup> In other words, the Scottish Parliament has set itself the declared task of renewing democracy and providing access to governance to a democracy traditionally denied (Hassan 1999). For instance, the democratisation of the state (via parliamentary and state accountability mechanisms) is integral to the new Scottish system. Such principles are clearly outlined in the CSG Report of 1998 and have provided a template for the renewal of democracy in these respects. For example, this is evidential in terms of both a Weberian



Gray 1999). Transforming the negative features associated with the democratic deficit, has been a principal feature of the new Scottish Parliament, and informatisation is said to go some way towards remedying this condition. The associated discord produced within Scottish political culture, engendered by the democratic inadequacies of previous systems, has been displaced by the thought and philosophies associated with the creation of a new Parliament, and attempts to re-integrate citizens back into the Scottish political system (Crick and Miller 1995). For instance, the democratisation of the state (via parliamentary and state accountability mechanisms) is integral to the new Scottish system. Such principles are clearly outlined in the CSG Report of 1998. Moreover, the new politics of governance (present within Scottish democracy) ensures (in theory) an *interactive reciprocity between state and social groups*: they are called upon to account for their actions and methods. The creation of mechanisms and processes designed to produce accountability are a feature of participatory democracy and the problems of political obligation and social contract (itself re-designed under the banner of New Politics).

However, this chapter asserts that there are tensions to be observed between an institution that confers a degree of openness, and a willingness to involve civil society in its political character, whilst maintaining a more dynamic

---

concern with rational efficiency, and the new set of ideal standards that revolve around governance: standards such as, openness, accountability and transparency, all reflect a concern with introducing the normative characteristics of the new politics into the system itself.

commitment towards electronic commerce. An empirical analysis of the Scottish Parliament's relations with informatisation will reveal the paradox of informatisation based rhetoric. This produces a further tension between citizen and state in the form of an established and empirical divergence.

This separation of political priorities is evidenced via an account of the Scottish Parliament's Public Petitions Committee (PPC<sup>5</sup>). An empirical analysis of the PPC reveals citizens to be less concerned with the business dynamics of informatisation, and more with matters concerning education, social justice, and health.

In addition, this chapter considers the interaction between institution, structure and action, and examines the specific political tensions to be found within these variables<sup>6</sup>. As such, it examines in detail the contribution of 'sub-politics' to these debates (Beck 1996, 1997). Sub Politics is distinct from 'politics' in that political agency is re-conceptualised, or re - constructed around individualisation<sup>7</sup>, and in so doing, politics is revitalised and re - configured around new ('sub' systemic) elements. These consist of those forms of action

---

<sup>5</sup> See [www.scottish.parliament.uk/parl\\_bus/petitions.html](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parl_bus/petitions.html) for details of members, cumulative list of petitions, subject matter and additional details of the activities of the Committee.

<sup>6</sup> For example, devolved power, the creation of civil networks and new reflexive political rationalities, encourage political and social tensions located around centralisation and de-centralisation, between centre and periphery, between vertical and lateral representations of power, 'expert' and 'lay-person' (Carter and Grieco 2000 ).

<sup>7</sup> 'Individualisation' refers to the notion that there are a new set of emerging political, social, and cultural identities (Beck 1997). These are premised upon the contradictions and complexities of an 'ante - postmodernist' age (Margetts 1999 p185). This term illustrates the ambiguities of living in a new era shaped by uncertainty and globalisation. Expressed simply, individualisation refers to the *'disintegration of the certainties of industrial society as well as the compulsion to find and invent new certainties for oneself and others without them'* (Beck 1997, p95).

which appear outwith immediate organised or institutional politics yet, as we evidence in this chapter, are beginning to make inroads into orthodox political structures. The next section examines in more detail the relationship between informatisation, future models of citizenship, and the implications of these notions for Scottish democracy.

### **5.2.1 Citizenship and new forms of democratic participation**

The new politics of information opens up new channels for discourse<sup>8</sup>, and in turn new challenges to established power sources (Carter and Grieco 2000). In this sense, access to political (and social) systems via informatisation is seen by some as providing materials with which to establish a new set of power relations<sup>9</sup> (Little et al 2001), and to others as a realisation of 'reflexive

---

<sup>8</sup> ICTs encourage this movement, or approach, by offering the means of technically enabled social networks that fragment and decentralise power and administration and which offer alternative means of expression and organisational facilities (van de Donk 1999). Numerous authors have outlined what they see as the scope of these new media for creating a more participatory society, in some visions with regular referenda and consultation exercises being employed, especially at local levels (Danziger et al 1982, Budge 1996, Castells 1996, Webster 1996, Dutton 1999). At the very least ICTs will be used, in these accounts, for more interactive articulation of political concerns, more rapid formation of interest groups, and greater attention from governments to popular pressures. But it is also likely to be applied to creating new systems of democratic participation:

<sup>9</sup> These ideas are established through a theory of alternative forms of democracy, and the utilisation of new technologies to displace traditional sites of power. For example, tangible physical boundaries and the traditional constituencies of power, are called into question (Carter and Grieco 2000). Communities of interest and meaning, and communities of resistance to centralised hierarchical sites of power, have emerged as new forms of political discourse and action emerge around the Internet (Crowther 2000). For instance, in the form of informatised policy communities and policy networks (Grieco 2000) This approach takes political form, action and process, away from the institutional and bounded components of parliament and public administration, and focuses instead on politics as a group interest based on issues and identification with outcomes. A shared policy community/universe is privileged with developing transformation, and attempts at inducing change (or conservation), rather than previous distinctions which focused upon political organisations as networks (Dowding 1994). As such, an extension of these ideas suggests that a commonality of interests built around an identification of purpose and outcome is formed. Actors within a given network will interact with each other, will exchange resources, such as information and

governance' (Rhodes 1997). In this sense informatisation revolves around new forms of governance based integrity and citizen empowerment (Vermeulen 1998)<sup>10</sup>.

Both theoretical positions occupy the common ground of political inclusion, and access by citizens to hitherto closed off areas of power.

An address capable of revealing such approaches should therefore consider the new Scottish politics of information from both perspectives of this exclusion-inclusion context. For instance, the political technology of inclusion (through organised-institutional structures, or 'reflexive modernisation/ reflexive responsibility': Dorbeck – Jung 1998<sup>11</sup>) may be thought of as a means of incorporating, and channelling, political action and dissent *through* the system rather than *against* it. As such, the political systems of the late twentieth/twenty first century increasingly appear to offer spaces for the inclusion of 'non – expert' actors and groups into those sites once singly privileged to, and occupied by, professional politicians and bureaucrats<sup>12</sup>.

---

supporting exchange built around social capital (Carter and Grieco 2000). Social actors then, transact with each other, in an exchange of resources which offer mutual benefits. Networks assisted by informatisation are a contemporary version of established notions of community, which implies a commonality of interest (Dowding 1994) and symbolic linkages (Cohen 1998).

<sup>10</sup> Informatisation aids this particular process. The emergence of new ICTs, it is argued will ensure a more open and participatory democracy. Citizens will for instance, engage in on-line debates with elected representatives and fellow citizens. Possibilities exist for a better informed electorate, and it is reasoned, a more politically active citizenry will be the result (Lyon 1988). Greater diffusion of ICTs will facilitate a commonality of democratic political interest (within many, if not all of these debates, a model of democracy, however loosely interpreted and defined is the dominant paradigm).

<sup>11</sup> See Figure 1.2 – 'Relations between Reflexive responsibility, moral governance, and the New Politics' p.18)

<sup>12</sup> Moreover, this reflexive governance/modernisation model envisages the re-programming, as it were (this electronic analogy is valuable in that informatisation policies seek to implement such ideas), of institutions still premised upon the concerns and orientations of industrial society. These institutions are, for instance, constructed upon a false rationality:

In this way competition emerges via a new pluralist form of politics within which these groups and agents contest with each other the power to form a new political agenda: this is at the heart of the sub-politics position. We attend to this feature by a study of the Scottish Parliament's Public Petitions Committee. In this way a measurement of the infiltration of sub-politics into the Scottish political system is produced in relation to what is effectively an audit of participatory democracy in Scotland. As such, it is inclusive of an index of democratisation as provided by an empirical account of the Public Petitions Committee (and *electronic democratisation*: the PPC has an e-democracy facility entitled E - Petitioner) in that the thematic content is studied and ranked in terms of the issues raised by Scottish civil society.

The case of E - Petitioner, (a web based design system that allows petitioners to submit an electronic petition to the Scottish Parliament's Public Petitions

---

the 'expert' claim to exclusive knowledge (Beck 1996). Reflexive modernisation models offer a strident alternative dimension to the propositions advanced by expert theorists. It does so by inverting expert theory from the base upon which it offers judgement. For instance, within modernity, expert theorists apply a set of conditioned and legitimised standards (ibid). These standards are themselves premised upon the claims to superior standards of knowledge/expertise, claimed by the expert groups themselves (Marsh and Rhodes 1992). As Marsh and Rhodes argue, these forms of knowledge communities are a type of network. They are built upon the empowerment of an epistemological community who exercise authoritative knowledge. Moreover, the issues of this expertise, and the institutions which enforce its directives through policy, may be further exempt from social scrutiny because of claims additionally made by these experts towards social conservatism or functionalist authority (Gellner 1979). For instance, a surface logic may be found wanting or suspect in some form, yet its inconsistencies can be explained away by stating that it has a latent function. These standards by which society is judged are essentially hierarchical and technocratic. The state internalised rationality in a Weberian sense, and political technologies in the sense expressed by Therborn (1980). This notion sees power as expressed amidst a plurality of actors, realisable via democracy but containable only through established systems, such as parliamentary democracy. Experts themselves rule through the internalisation and monopoly of technology. As such the distributed characteristics of the new ICTs challenges their authority. The realm of expertise survives and sustains itself because it does not open its processes to democratic criticism. It fears to do so lest they be rendered ineffectual (Beck 1997).

Committee)<sup>13</sup>, can be seen as a political experiment aimed at broadening out the scope and dimensions of the new politics. It is in effect an experimental '*virtual space*' (Malina and Macintosh 2000 p1) that allows access to new political territory via interactive technology.

The PPC has a remit to consider the validity of a petition and the action thereafter to be taken in its regard. The process of accepting an electronic petition is a commitment towards, not only their legitimacy, but the extension of civil society into the Parliamentary structure itself. The initiation of a new political system such as the Scottish Parliament, has its developmental roots within some additional European philosophies of governance and public administration (Kooiman 1993). We need to understand some of the background issues to such developments if we are to comprehend the new politics of information in Scotland. The establishment of the new political settlement in Scotland draws extensively from this environment. The next section gives us an account of these ideas and their relations with informatisation.

### **5.2.2 Reflexive responsibility: Scottish post-modern governance**

The new politics of European governance takes as one of its starting conditions the idea that civil society should be involved in the process of reform, policy planning and other social initiatives (Kooiman 1993).

---

<sup>13</sup> Via the International Teledemocracy Centre at Napier University, Edinburgh (the organisation responsible for establishing the participative technologies surrounding the submission of electronically based petitions to the Parliament).

The failures of previous political and monetary regimes to be either fiscally prudent or accountable to citizens outwith their concerns as a 'consumer', led to the development of new models of authority which stressed the involvement (or inclusion) of citizens as the prime movers of public policy (Hondeghem 1998, Parsons 1998). With these concerns came the new politics of governance, and its stated desire to bring civil society back into the political institutions themselves (Stoker 2000). As a way of offering incentives to this appeal, new institutions were constructed around new political emphases. For example, beyond the formal structures of an institution lie a set of ethical standards and principles<sup>14</sup>. These are a set of values which extend beyond the institutional/organisational architecture, into the informal structure, its internal form, dimensions and value systems.

Taken together, these informal and institutional mechanics constitute the 'operative reality' of institutions (Dorbeck – Jung 1998 p46). Reflexive responsibility<sup>15</sup> is an example of the new Scottish governance, and its

---

<sup>14</sup> Dorbeck – Jung 1998 (p51) identifies a set of ethical standards. They are as follows; 1) *Ethical standards should be based on principles, and principles should in turn be based on certain fundamental values*; 2) *The notion of legitimacy in depth should be applied*; 3) *Ethical standards should be based on a continuum of process and substance*; 4) *Principles and values should be contextual and time related*; 5) *Ethical standards should depart from the concept of self regulation and self control*; 6) *Within ethical standards, appropriate self correcting measures, external control and the transparency of decision making should be given priority*; 7) *Official sanctions should be imposed where institutions do not comply with their charter and external regulations*; 8) *Institutions should have an ethical charter at their disposal*; 9) *Ethical standards should be applied to public and private institutions*; 10) *Responsibility and accountability should refer both to individuals and collectives*'.

<sup>15</sup> Within this idea, society cannot be understood as a dichotomous system of hierarchies and markets, but should be seen as a complex set of private, public and private/public configurations. Pluralism and differentiation are key features. Co-production of policies, the necessity of coalition and consensus, the institutionalisation of all networks, all express this tendency within the realm of orthodox policy making. There is an increased pluralism of actors who may participate more incidentally. Instead of a top-down approach towards

relationship towards a raft of terms such as openness, transparency and accountability (these ideas are concerned with the creation of a new politics of ethics and accountability, new processes and mechanisms that ensure greater transparency of political actions and operations: Hondegghem 1998, Maguire 1998). The resignation of former First Minister Henry McLeish in November 2001 is an example of the new politics of accountability in action.

The resignation<sup>16</sup> illustrates the new codes of political conduct that are expected from public servants. The disclosure of interests and the exposure of wrong - doing take on additional political symbolism within the context of the new politics in Scotland. It has attempted to create a new ethical infrastructure for governance and the creation of new public values (Maguire 1998). It is a form of value and ethics co-ordination currently establishing itself within public administration at the European level (Hondegghem 1998).

It seeks to square the circle of social responsibility with the administrative autonomy of the institution. However, it is argued here that the new emerging models of governance are producing a clash of interests and values. These values conflict with the procedural forms of traditional bureaucracies.

For instance, the process of devolution/decentralisation that accompanies the notion of governance, brings with it a greater degree of presumed efficiency (Foster and Plowden 1996, Jessop 2000). Yet set alongside this feature, is the establishment of a set of dilemmas that are introduced as a result.

---

steering a bottom up approach is being developed (Taylor 1998).

<sup>16</sup> The Minister was deemed guilty of improprieties in relation to property.



For example, by introducing a high degree of lateral integration and the ideology and processes of New Public Management<sup>17</sup> (NPM) into the system(s), previous systems of Weberian hierarchical rationality, or bounded rationalities, have been called into question, as has one of the central conditions of bureaucracy: *planned certainty*. For instance, as Parsons (1998) notes, the previous model of bureaucratic rationality was concerned with uniformity of input and predictability of outcome. The components of the organisation were designed to operate like a machine, according to pre-established criteria and structured forms of communication (Taylor and Van Every 1993). The communications network of the Weberian model did not permit externalities into its channels<sup>18</sup>.

---

<sup>17</sup> New Public Management (NPM) is a partner to Business Process Re-engineering (BPR). The reformation of public administration and governance has been especially influenced by both NPM and BPR, which have respectively sought to introduce efficiency and cost effectiveness in government, increasing competition, rewarding bureaucratic entrepreneurs and using information technologies as a way of procuring goods and services (e - procurement), cutting costs and developing services. Moreover, it is a project which includes the attempted re-invention of the Left (Perryman 1996). The Labour party of the 1980s modernised itself and its political agenda via a 'professionalisation' of its party structures. It did so by adopting tactics not dissimilar to those of a commercial organisation operating in the private sector. This is similar to the re-design, the modernisation, agenda effectively imported from the USA, and the introduction of NPM and BPR into public administration.

<sup>18</sup> However, with the decline of the Weberian model a new system has emerged which is forced to deal with a set of clashing ethical concerns. For example, the modernist discourse of power was established upon a set of conditions, such as a generalised capacity to act (Hindess 2001), or the ability to utilise a discourse of 'expertise' with which to legitimise ones actions, set for example against the power-knowledge dimensions observed by Foucault (Foucault 1980). Within this maxim a whole established set of practices are called into question. For instance, the accountability mechanisms established under traditional Weberian models. The Weberian model designated responsibility to hierarchy, in doing so it provided a clear rationale for *'the efficacy of representative politics'* (Parsons 1998 p91). The functions of these political technologies were clearly demarcated and responsibilities were defined. The discourse that surrounded these modernist structures was about *'levels and tiers of responsibility'* (ibid p91). New patterns of governance offer a set of normative accounts of responsibility which suggest that it is a shared function: responsibility is spread

The rationalities integral to it were established to exclude non - institutionalised expressions or properties. The ambition was to effectively create a '*monopoly of knowledge*' (Taylor and van Every *ibid.* pxvii). This is now shifting, and the monopoly of previous expert regimes is called into question by the new processes of informatisation and distributed discourse<sup>19</sup>. Demands whose demarcations were readily established and administered by the appropriate bodies, in order to avoid '*outside pressures and manipulation*'<sup>20</sup>(Dorbeck - Jung 1998 p49) are now evident, or in the case study of the Scottish Parliament that I present, are expected.

This takes us into the argument made within this chapter that these forms of new political pressures are effectively squeezing democracy from below.

---

out and dispersed. As such, new mechanisms of accountability are required to remedy this situation. One of the dominant discourses that has become established in the confines of governance and the Scottish Parliament is that of 'inclusion' (see for example, CSG Report 1998). Regulation is concerned with the establishment of largely independent choices and decisions premised upon the establishment of trust and a transparency of action, which helps achieve it as a working maxim. For example, the establishment of the PPC can be seen as a mechanism to produce trust in the absence of previous methods and cultures of democratic accountability. As Parsons expresses it (1998 p93) '*an organisation which is subject to regulation is also subject to the privilege of trust*'.

<sup>19</sup> The interactive discursive formats (around which new models of governance are formed), and the capacity of the new technologies to produce countervailing sites of power is the opening theme in this section. The new tools of distributed discourse now threaten the states historically privileged political intelligence, and its monopoly of the specialised skills necessary for administration. Moreover, the ability of individuals to monitor the actions and deliberations of political elites is dramatically enhanced (Grieco 2002)

<sup>20</sup> However, the limits to the bureaucratic structures discussed above can be re-formulated in another way. Zuurmond (1998) for example, argues that the limitations of the bureaucratic model (its bounded spheres, and its reach) have been overcome via informatisation. The bureaucratic machinery, rather than becoming obsolete and replaced by a configuration of networks, is in fact the subject of its own ICT based modernisation. Co-ordination and control replace societal forms of self steering (Frissen 1998a). It is characterised by the development of a strong centralised state with privileged access to an integrated communication system which grants it enormous potential and purpose in terms of surveillance and control: power is vertical, hierarchical, not diffused.

Flexible bureaucracies are producing an expansive political community.

As the extension of civil society into the polity proceeds apace it may produce tensions in the form of distributed political ambitions and impulses.

The Scottish political system is a test case for such ideas. As such, we will examine the concept of an expansive political community within a number of specific areas. Firstly, we explore the Scottish Parliament's Public Petitions Committee. This gives us a measurement of political participation and, this thesis argues, is a fore -runner of more direct democratic initiatives<sup>21</sup>. Then we examine a critical tension within Scottish politics. The democratic ambitions of Scotland are considered within the framework of past chapters (specifically chapter two), these ambitions are contrasted with an empirical measurement of the Scottish Parliament's attention to ICTs. A quantitative account of the informatisation process in the Scottish dimension reveals it to be primarily an economic variable.

This produces a further set of tensions centring around the abilities afforded by informatisation to extend democratic purpose and actions. I will argue that

---

<sup>21</sup> Direct democracy is strongly associated (within political theory) as a paradigm of self governance (Held 1998). Its exponents regard it as essentially non hierarchical. For instance, for Becker and Slaton (2000) part of the strength of direct democracy (or '*quantum democracy*' as they term it: this concept valorises its symmetrical power relations) is its relatively lateral framework. It is non-hierarchical in comparison to representative democracy, which exercises power in a pyramidal fashion (as do the bureaucratic public administrative architectures which serve it: Frissen 1998b). Power, information and science then are all forms operating from the top down. Information is hierarchically privileged. However it is argued, within direct democracy the defining political set up is lateral and premised upon the notion of self governance and participatory democratic politics. A movement towards direct democracy takes a step towards the new paradigm of politics, and the realisation of its other components (Becker and Slaton 2000).

informatisation is chiefly concerned with developing a new form of economy, rather than a new democratic politics of ICT based participation. Having done this we will then review the likelihood of more aggressive direct democratic demands imposing upon the Scottish polity. The thesis argues that increasing demands for new and more inventive forms of representation are likely to be a keynote theme of future Scottish politics. By admitting into the contemporary political system, novel forms of participation, tensions are created in terms of the limits and dimensions of a new politics of interactivity and agency. The PPC offers an example of these ideas.

However, to fully comprehend the admission of citizen based impulses into the Scottish Parliament, we need to understand some additional features regarding the development of European governance, and in particular the impact of economic philosophy into its new steering mechanisms and institutional designs. This will be established within broader European shifts and the accompanying political culture. These ideas lead us to an understanding of the background detail faced by the establishment of a new set of political and social imperatives. The aim of these new political principles is to position values which suggest *integrity* (accountability, responsibility, openness etc), next to principles which suggest *efficiency and entrepreneurial governance*<sup>22</sup>. In doing so this initiates a political tension itself a component of

---

<sup>22</sup>The idea of 'entrepreneurial government' is closely associated with the New Public Management (NPM) school of the 1980s and 1990s. This is a term given to public sector reform projects throughout the above time span. It can be related in turn to the discussion of the politics of governmental modernisation that we encountered in the previous chapter. For example, as Heeks (1999 p12) notes: '*when the ideology of the New Right met the traditions*

these broader re-alignments. The next section addresses these ideas.

### 5.3.1 From citizens to consumers: the economy of democracy

The tensions referred to in the previous section are evident in terms of the post war transition of 'citizens' to 'consumers' (Dorbeck - Jung 1998). The state itself has arguably led the way in this regard: faced with a set of demands to cut (or prioritise) expenditure it has shifted from a strong social constitutional mechanism for the allocation of resources and values, towards a system which integrates free market powers into its steering mechanisms. The precise forms of this interaction, and the terms of dominance between the two variables here (citizen and state) is unclear, but there has been an interaction of some importance (Maes 1998). This supports evidence that European political culture has been steadily evolving in this direction since the late 1980s. The following Table illustrates this transition (Table 5.1).

**Table 5.1 The transition of European political culture: 1960s-1990s**

<b>Sixties/seventies</b>	<b>Early eighties</b>	<b>Late eighties</b>	<b>Nineties/21<sup>st</sup> C</b>
Belief in governance	Aversion to governance	Possibilities of governance	Self governance
Representative democracy: citizen model is dominant	Libertarian impulses: consumer concept is defining model. Primacy of the individual	New politics of alternatives. Politics of reaction to democratic deficit(s) Re-discovery of 'community'	Belief in devolution and sub-politics. New Institutionalism. Transformational Politics: Institutions as the agencies of community

**Source: Griffin 2002 (Adapted from Kickert 1993 p203).**

---

*of public administration, the result was the development of 'new public management', of which 'reinventing government' is but a recent fraction'.*

The Table illustrates how it is that contemporary forms of governance assisted participation have their roots in the citizen - consumer agenda of the 1980s, and in particular associated attempts by public service managers to emulate private sector management techniques (Thaens et al 1997). Other reasons for the transition are linked to organisational politics, and can be positioned within those administrations which (threatened with reorganisation) sought to reassert their legitimacy by demonstrating close links with the communities that they served<sup>23</sup>. New means of enhancing public participation can be seen as a way of re-enforcing their democratic credentials. The NPM agenda has successfully altered both the model of public service provision and the concept of citizen participation, which in turn has moved through a series of classifications which we shall now explore. The conception of the *citizen as a consumer* or customer is the first of these notions.

It developed as a result of the infiltration of entrepreneurial philosophies into public administration and government (Lenk 1997). Such philosophies argued that the provision of public services and social goods were organised through politically inspired and controlled bureaucracies (Dunleavy 1991).

The argument that public administration was self serving and autocratic developed through the ideas offered by Friedman and other monetarist economists, who themselves developed the concerns and notions of von

---

<sup>23</sup> Either by the rhetoric of NPM, or by alternative strategies which aimed at re-affirming the public sector ethos set against NPM (Pratchett 1999)

Hayek<sup>24</sup>. These challenges to bureaucracy were formulated around the idea that efficiency (and in turn savings to the citizen) could be calculated and achieved by the adoption of market mechanisms. New processes of allocation and delivery would open up the protected and stagnant sections of government to reform (Margetts 1994).

This model of public finance efficiency is increasingly being considered (and expressed), in terms of the savings made possible to the electorate by informatisation. Effectively, it contradicts the classical conception of the citizen as voter. For example, during the immediate post war era an understanding prevailed of the citizen as a rational endorsement of political policy, who channelled his/her political motivations through political parties who in turn captured as it were, resources and privileges for their voters.

The legitimacy of such a system is premised upon a Weberian rational - legal model (Maes 1998), and a high degree of political mediation between parties and citizens<sup>25</sup>. However, there is the related conception of the citizen as a '*producer of social surplus*'<sup>26</sup> (Maes ibid p115). This theory defines the citizen as an ultimately active political/social actor, whose mobilised commitment to particular causes can be captured by a number of collective forces, such as

---

<sup>24</sup> These ideas were disseminated via the financial press, and from there on in into more populist media, and then the popular consciousness (Parsons 1990).

<sup>25</sup> Parties integrate and mobilise citizens into the democratic process. In so doing, the citizenry identify both with the system of party democracy, but also with the democratic system itself (Dalton and Wattenberg 2000b).

<sup>26</sup> In table 5.2 this is given detail by the term '*the citizen as opponent and partner*' (Maes ibid p116), this is a reference towards the ambivalence of the state-citizen relationship. There are shared responsibilities and points of conflict. Yet nevertheless, citizens are given recognition that they produce a social surplus which can be translated, through the field of sub-politics,

new social movements. In this sense the issue of sub - politics enters into the equation inasmuch as this field of political innovation brings with it both threat and opportunity for government. The competitive nature of the citizen-governance axis is introduced in a different sense. This can be described as the opponent/partner model<sup>27</sup>.

In this model the citizen enters into a new form of contract and obligation towards the state: In other words, a collective social responsibility is evident, and acted upon (see Table 5.2 below). The trajectory of the citizen and his/her relations to the state are detailed within their post war setting in the following Table. In this manner they complement the ideas that we encountered above in relation to the transition of European political culture from the 1960s to the 1990s. The Table provides us with another set of variables, and a new explanatory form of the changing relations of citizenship. It is the changing nature of the relations between the citizen and the state, their mutual expectations and obligations, incentives and demands that is offered. In addition, it illustrates a further set of points concerning more recent developments that guide us towards an understanding of the democratic deficit, and a wider political vacuum that can be occupied by political actors.

---

into opposition or engagement with government/state.

<sup>27</sup> According to Maes (1998) there are two essential forms of state recognition of the citizens interests that of 'opponent' or 'partner'. 'Partner' based politics means government recognition that it cannot act alone in a certain capacity. It must compromise, or negotiate through institutions, in order to implement its chosen policy. 'Opponent' based politics on the other hand comes into play when no institutions exist, no apparatus is in place, to channel 'social innovations' (Maes ibid p115).



**Table 5.2. Models of citizenship and participation**

<b>The citizen as:</b>	<b>Voter and subject of law</b>	<b>Tax payer and client/consumer</b>	<b>Opponent and partner</b>
Premises:	Citizens elect political leadership. Neutral bureaucrats execute policy: responsible to political controls. Citizens obliged to obedience and subservience.	Relative impact of elections. Maximisation of votes. Maximisation of utility. Citizens want value for money.	Solidarity. Civil society is responsible. Citizens are co-responsible.
Applications:	Party democracy, citizen participates via political parties.	Core duties and privatisations, fragmented political and administrative organisations. 'calculating citizen'.	Political, administrative and social innovations as a social project. Citizens are primarily members of civil society: also voters and customers. Government facilitates and stimulates.
Results:	Voter is represented, voter is object of law.	'Calculating' citizen is object (and sometimes subject) of policy and service delivery.	Citizen is subject and object of policy and service delivery.

**Source: Griffin 2002 (Adapted from Maes 1998 p116).**

The Table presents a model of changing state - citizen connectivities. It is conceived of as an interactive process, and progression, between these two features. The relative collapse of distinct social classes and the organised representation of interests has given rise to a new subjectivity within social - political relations. It is to this that we will now divert our attentions. We will relate them to the Scottish political dimension in terms of the working relations of the Scottish Parliament towards the new politics of agency. We also introduce the concept of individualisation as a further explanatory device.

### 5.3.2 The political vacuum and sub-politics

The logic behind the sub – politics position (and the argument that sustains it within its Scottish context) is that the vacuum established between, or in the case of neo-liberalism *by*, new regimes is capable of occupation. This is a reference to what Beck considers as the '*opportunities of sub-politics*' (1997 p101). A new politics can emerge from within these spaces. Indeed, he points to the themes which can be observed during the Thatcher era as evidence of this. The collapse of consensus (which the new Scottish politics is rhetorically keen on re - creating), the retreat to a privatised life - style, a new consumerism, the retreat of the state, are all evidence of the creation of a political vacuum. That this vacuum has been recognised by the new politics of the Third Way and its emphases on communitarianism, is also a recognition of the new forms of politics that are increasingly operating outwith the state, beyond formal political institutions and systems.

The state wishes to re - capture as it were, these groupings and alliances, and channel their interests through new mechanisms operating at the level of governance. The equation of *politics* with *state* has been undermined by markets, and the system of parliamentary rule has been called into question by new social movements (Giddens 1994, 1998, Beck 1997).

In this sense, what the new politics asks of the system is to legitimise itself through its new collective forms and its new technological dimensions.

Political innovations (the modernisation of government for instance) have to be

supplemented with *social* innovations (Maes 1998). This in turn produces another set of conditions. These revolve around the new political principles of governance: these are explored below within the context of a *new politics of partnership*, and the increasingly strident demands for modern democratic mechanisms and institutions. It is this that we will now address.

### **5.3.3 The new politics of expression and negotiation: the re-programming of institutions**

The concept of *Modernising Government*<sup>28</sup>, so much a part of the New Labour policy project, attempts to address the reformation of civil society and its democratic scope. However, the emerging Scottish model of governance must also be located within the additional centralised policy outcomes engineered by the United Kingdom government. The new political settlement of devolution is integral to this modernising agenda. However, in Scotland, the scope and form of political technology is itself being not simply modernised, but rather re-invented, in the shape of the Parliament itself, and the new political context of the Union. With this re-invention, new concepts and practical supporting technologies of political participation are being established. The supporting technology enables new forms of political agency to emerge.

For example, devolved power, the creation of civil networks and new reflexive political rationalities, encourage political and social tensions located around centralisation and de-centralisation, between centre and periphery, between

---

<sup>28</sup> 'Modernising Government' (the 1999 White Paper of the same name can be found at: <http://www.citu.gov.uk/moderngov.htm>.)

vertical and lateral representations of power (Carter and Grieco 2000 ).

In this sense then, the modernisation of government is specifically linked with a set of underlying values. The nature of such values and proclamations are increasingly related to the citizen in terms of the *efficiency* of informatised political institutions.

Both these concepts go together in that governmental efficiency<sup>29</sup> can be seen as potential democratic safeguards against perceived forms of radicalism and extremism (Watson and Mundy 2001). As such, an observation that the state can employ ICTs strategically to raise its democratic profile, to adapt successfully to social and political change, and as a way of offering resistance towards the designs of radicals is a valid one.

Set within such designs and demands are a new politics of expression (Beck 1997). This is multi - centred, and extends beyond the formal confines of political systems and hierarchies. The new politics (the sub-politics) goes beyond these modernist definitions of hierarchically defined systems, career based political forms and formal institutionalised responsibilities. The replacement of formal organisations with a hierarchical power/knowledge base of rational action, by a consensus model, is of particular importance. The opinions of individual citizens are sought alongside those of established authorities. In this sense then, informatisation plays an increasingly dominant

---

<sup>29</sup> In this instance, 'efficiency' can be seen as a means of raising the ability of citizens to interact with government and their representatives, (increasing citizens influence upon the political process and a standing in the level of legitimacy accorded: Barker 1994, Depla and Tops 1995), and raising the democratic profile of institutions. Moreover, it can be viewed also as a means of accessing the concerns and interests of citizens, by using interactive web-

role in giving citizens access to government.

It is both threat and opportunity, in that it challenges the established power variables and bases through action and distributed sites of power and discourse, whilst offering up a vision of a new interactive and responsible polity that governance can exploit as innovative and expansive.

However, the distribution of alternative discourses produces a new theory of political opposition and a democratisation of knowledge and dissenting voices. Let us now examine these points in greater depth.

#### **5.3.4 The democratisation of critique: informatisation and reflexivity**

With these ideas in mind we must consider the idea that a reflexive society effectively *democratises criticism*. This type of society challenges scientific method and authority in terms of its sole right to pass judgement. The institutions which police and promote such issues are politically obscure and unaccountable. They are in urgent need of reform, the democratisation of civil society must move apace it is argued (Beck 1997). Pyramidal hierarchies, rational modernist bureaucracies, and technocracy are insufficient in terms of their democratic management, and too rule bound to be creatively and reflexively democratic (Doran 1994).

In addition, the expert's epistemological premise (upon which society is judged) is called into question. In its place a theory of societal self - critique emerges. This form advocates critical reciprocity: that is, it offers a democratisation of both critique and responsibility. One of the ways in which

this takes shape is through a re-fitting of institutions, and a redefining of *'the boundaries between sub - systems'* (Beck 1997 p121).

New systems must be developed (so the theory argues), which are more collaborative and co-operative in scope. This scheme has a core modernisation agenda which stresses the need to re-engineer democratic structures, and also to socialise the policy process, increase the responsive nature of democracy, and to give space to citizens and interest groups in the design and implementation stages of policy (CSG Report 1998)<sup>30</sup>. New forms of consensus must be established between civil society, science and industry (Beck 1997). The claims to explicit and un - contestable expertise must be diminished also, as must the hierarchical administrations that support such epistemologies.

Moreover, *negotiative institutions* must be established which allow participation from groups and individuals hitherto marginalised by the position and establishment of the experts. Publicly available dialogic politics is the key to disclosing the operation of politics. Political discourse should be placed within the public sphere (Schalken 1998).

However, having discussed some of the theoretical positions let us now explore them within their Scottish dimensions. We will examine how the new

---

<sup>30</sup> This idealist dimension is given prominence throughout the Report and forms a central component of the new Scottish politics of information.

Scottish system proposes to create a new, and more active, format of political agency. The above ideas and concepts are in some important ways established within a practical sense by the new institution at Holyrood.

### **5.3.5 The transformation of political agency: sub - politics and the Scottish Parliament**

The new political systems of the late twentieth/twenty first century (such as the Scottish Parliament) increasingly offer spaces for the incorporation of politically motivated individual actors and groups into the political agenda.

An analysis of the Scottish Parliament's Public Petitions Committee (PPC) will reveal the process of these new forms of governance. This in turn should lead us to consider a methodological exposition of the notion of participation and informatisation, as a component of sub - politics. In addition, Parliament /Executive interactions (which are engaged in a collective policy making sense) offer a way of testing the new Scottish model of governance in terms of its commitment to a sub - politics of participation. In this sense, the degree to which the Parliament/Executive are active in their consideration of collective and individual concerns is a measure of the infiltration of sub - politics into the Scottish system.

The circumstances in which these initiatives emerge provide the context for both their primary purpose, but also for the organisational and political interests they serve. In this sense then, institutions are not neutral, rather they

are important variables in determining the outcomes of human action (Lange von - Kulesa 1997). This is important because very often the technical slant of a guiding principle(s) such as BPR/NPM (which I argue are a point of tension within the new Scottish politics of information), will suggest that institutions are apolitical, rather than the conduit of and for political values (Bellamy and Taylor 1998). For example, the citizen - consumer agenda of the 1980s focussed participation around empowering service users, giving them more say in the way services were delivered. The move towards consumer oriented consultation was partly linked towards the new right ideology of the conservative governments of the 80s. However, the move was also part of the broader transformation of public sector management in the 1980s which stressed private sector methods were superior, and placed emphasis on understanding customer needs (Foster and Plowden 1996). This demonstrates a very different emphasis on public participation from the previous models that we have identified (see Tables 5.1 and 5.2 above). Moreover, these ideas are important because political - economic agendas, and the initiatives developed around them, have had an enduring effect upon current ideas concerning participation. The continuing emphasis upon consumer - oriented consultation focuses participation upon improving quality of public services for example ( Bellamy and Taylor 1998).

More distinctions can be made around the concerns of different participation mechanisms, some are focussed directly on a particular decision (for example



a referendum), while others are aimed at developing policy or contributing to policy debates. Similarly, other initiatives delegate power while others may guard against any such delegation. Some initiatives aim to redress political inequalities within communities, by providing opportunities for disadvantaged and marginalised groups (Pratchett1999).

For example, in Scotland the issue of exclusion from the decision making process is a key feature of Scottish political culture during the latter part of the twentieth century. As such, there is recognition by the Parliament that political and social exclusion is of one of the key policy areas to be addressed.

It is a keynote theme running throughout a wide ranging set of government related documents (CSG 1998, Scottish Parliament Research Paper No. 42 1999, Scottish Parliament Subject Map, Feb 2000,)<sup>31</sup>. In order to understand these processes we should consider those institutional mechanisms that aim to re - distribute power through political technologies.

---

<sup>31</sup> Coleman (1999a.p21) notes that there are opportunities which the new technologies afford in terms of allowing citizens to engage more actively in the policy making process. For example, the use of new technologies which have the potential to allow: *'Public consultation on draft legislation and issues being considered by select committees'*. More adventurous forms of participation attempt to build political competence through particular initiatives. Consumer oriented consultations, such as customer complaints schemes and service satisfaction surveys have more limited democratic ambitions, and simply seek to put service providers closer to service users. More recent innovations however, address the democratic dimension by seeking to raise the political profile of certain groups and to provide an alternative means of political participation. Such elements have a counterpart in terms of the issues which surround the concept of information equity. In other words, there are two broad spheres of intelligence to be considered. The first of these is access to the PC hardware itself and the technical literacy which is required to access information. The second component is the quality of information itself, and the economic or public information quotient which determines provision of information. In other words, access (and quality of available information ) to the new ICTS is recognised by many as uneven '*We cannot allow technological exclusion in government, and as an Executive we are committed to spreading access to all communities across Scotland'* (McConnell J. [www.scotland.gov.uk/c21g/c21g.asp](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/c21g/c21g.asp)).

The following section now addresses these themes in relation to the PPC.

#### **5.4.1 Public Petitions and the Scottish political system**

The establishment of a petition can itself be considered as a way of measuring participation and democratic responsiveness (CSG Report 1998). In this respect, the PPC can be seen as an early indication of the scope and filtration of the New Politics and its associated ideas into the new political system in Scotland. Democratic interactions between citizen and polity are generally limited to electoral circumstances (this in itself does not constitute either an expansive test of democratic participation or citizenship, nor is it a useful form of political socialisation in terms of consistency of citizen output: Parry and Moyser 1994), so a systematic analysis of these interactions provides us with a means of measuring the nature of such involvement and participation.

Moreover, the petitions themselves can be seen both as a form of indicating the value preferences of citizens and interest groups when no political agenda is hitherto established on their behalf. They themselves establish the agenda. In this sense, public petitions such as those submitted to the PPC, can be seen as a form within which citizens attempt to establish a political outcome via the creative usage of political technologies. These notions are an integral part of Transformational Politics (Schwerin 1995) that characterises and infuses the new Scottish political order<sup>32</sup>. Transformational Politics seeks new

---

<sup>32</sup> That which Dorbeck-Jung (1998) defines as inhabiting the terrain of a moral institution.

forms of political agency, and new innovative political technologies. We will now examine them in their Scottish context.

#### **5.4.2 Public Petitions as a democratic audit of Scottish governance**

In attempting to resolve the Scottish democratic deficit of the post war era, contemporary politicians have extended the concept of political participation, and political agency (Hassan and Warhurst 1999). It is now resident within the Public Petitions Committee which acts as a mechanism for the receipt of the interests of Scottish civil society. Moreover, it is an example of an institutionalised mechanism for receiving input from citizens, and utilising it in a democratic framework. The concept of open politics is attached to the PPC, and the Scottish Parliament as a whole, in that its processes are available via its website. This brings political access to the institution itself directly into *some* citizens homes. In this sense, power has a new domestic form and forum in that MSPs can be emailed, and petitions sent on line via the International Teledemocracy Centres online petition service (E-petitioner). This is a practical experiment based around ICT in terms of its ability to foster a culture of digital democracy and the integration of sub-politics into the parliamentary system. However, only 14% of homes in Scotland have email or Internet access (see Table 5.3 below) As a result this explains the initially low usage of electronic based petitions (of 365 only 4 were transmitted electronically see Table 5.4). Moreover, all were received from organisations or pressure groups with a stake in operating the set - up as a form of

promotional politics. Both Tables reveal that Scotland is not an 'e-ready' society.

**Table 5.3 Access to the internet from homes in Scotland by class:  
Figures for Scotland**

	High income areas	Middle income owners	Low income owners	Better-off council	Disadvantaged council estates
All households	27	21	15	8	7
Households with computer/PC	53	51	47	35	38
Base: All households	1,683	2,135	1,310	2,406	1,623
Base : All households with computer/PC	847	851	406	551	311

(Source: *Scottish Household Survey Report (1999)* [[www.scotland.gov.uk/shs](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/shs)]  
(15/4/2001@1300))

The Table reflects the problems that a society such as Scotland faces. Principally, the figures for internet take-up show that it is a class based medium. The value of the internet as a means of improving political access is therefore limited. For example, the figures show that (taken as a whole) only twelve per cent of those living in council supplied homes and flats have access to a PC. The comparable figures reveal that this base measure of computer premised activity is limited to these classes. The comparison for those occupying high income class households and access to PCs show that this figure rises to fifty per cent. In addition, the availability of the internet within council flat households is in the region of four per cent.

In Scottish homes within higher income areas, this figure stands at around twenty two per cent.

(Source: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/news/2000/02/se0253.asp>)

**Table 5.4**  
**Electronically Submitted Public Petitions**

<b>E-petitions submitted to Scottish Parliament's Public Petitions Committee</b>				
<b>Title of petition</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>Start date</b>	<b>End date</b>	<b>Current status</b>
<b>Cubie proposals on tackling student hardship in Scotland</b>	NSA & NUS	19/5/ 2000	31/10/2000	Closed
<b>Globalisation and Health related issues</b>	World Development Movement	7/11/2000	27/11/2000	Closed
<b>Tackling the digital divide</b>	Craigmillar Community Information Service (CCIS)	15/11/2000	30/4/2001	Closed
<b>Investigation into Scottish football</b>	East of Scotland Supporter's Association	21/2/2001	11/4/2001	closed

**Source:** International Teledemocracy Centre: [www.teledemocracy.org](http://www.teledemocracy.org). (cut off point August 21 2001).

Exposing the process by which the Parliament reacts to the delivery of a public petition will serve as a mechanism which reveals the forces (pressure groups, special interest groups, individuals etc), that are in operation behind the petitions submitted. As such, an account of the petitions should include a classification of the institutional mechanisms within the Parliament that are called upon to deal with them, and the forces behind a particular action. Moreover, the basis of citizenship is equated within Western democracies with the ability to exercise political influence through structured and legitimate

channels of representation (Sabine 1966). As such, the concept of participation is akin to recognised democratic rights and means.

For instance, the ability to participate in the selection of representative candidates for election is in most Western states, recognised and defined within constitutional limits and forms. Within the U.K, and within Scotland in particular, the ideal of participation has been formulated as a measure of the states commitment towards receiving the opinions of citizens, and as a re-distribution of power measured itself in terms of political, social and economic inclusion (CSG 1998), and as an ideal measure of citizenship itself (Webster 1998). For example, social inclusion has been a historical ideal within social policy and public administration (Taylor et al 1997). The notion of distributive politics and welfare policy has been one of its central aims.

Moreover, such ambitions have been based upon the construction of a suitable informational link between state and citizen. One which would provide the necessary infrastructure required to support a democratic society ( in the shape of external services and bureaucratic applications), and other mechanisms which might assist in the modernisation of democracy (Depla and Tops 1995). The two specific areas focused upon are the role of institutions and their interactions with ideals. The roots of the new governance and the new forms of politics that accompany it, such as the desire to increase participation (Pratchett 1999), have another additional source however. In other words, there are connections between changes and innovations within

the public sector in the form of re-engineering the machinery of government via ICTs, and the perceived need to renew citizenship and its democratic convictions via new political structures such as the Scottish Parliament (Bellamy and Taylor 1998). As such, if we adopt Sawards definition of participation (1994) which suggests that it is equivalent to concurrence in the process, formulation and implementation of public policy, then we can envisage civil society as central to such a process, this is made more relevant via the new electronic technologies now available. However, the issue of community involvement in such areas, the promotion of an interactive forum for the expression of their desires, is also recognisable in terms of its other expression within those areas of New Public Management (NPM) or its contemporary of Business Process Re-engineering (BPR). For instance, the connections are as follows: there is a common path and a common link between the:

*'citizen - consumer agenda of the 1980s and attempts by public service managers to emulate private sector management techniques'* (Pratchett 1999 p617).

Citizenship became situated on a parallel with consumerism, and the *'contract culture'* (Wilson 1999 p254), as the nexus between citizen and political authority. However, a point of tension is apparent between the consumerist agendas of NPM and the placement of such ideas and practices into the

institutions of governance. Other ideological approaches also seek to fill the gaps and political vacuums left by previous neo-liberal orders. The question I will address asks the nature of this creative tension. Moreover, it will examine the ability of citizens to influence policy within the Scottish dimension, this is inclusive of the background and contextual arrangements associated with 'new institutionalism' (Stoker 2000). In this sense, the emphasis is placed upon institutionalised conventions within a political structure to explain action and process, or its reverse. The new institutionalism observes the '*framing of collective action*' (ibid p3), this will be situated around the public submission of petitions.

Moreover, learning how and why a political decision is formed will theoretically provide citizens with a way of monitoring and influencing politicians. As such, an ICT enabled democracy has the ability to provide citizens with the means of accessing power in its operative administrative sense (Watson and Mundy 2001). This approach offers the advantage of allowing access to the interface between citizens and their representative institution(s).

The degree to which a variety of public interests and pressure groups can gain access to an institution, and the manner in which such an institution responds to pressures (in terms of their control of the political technology of parliamentary democracy) from below, is in itself an indices of its democratic performance. It also provides an account of the details of electronic access to the Parliament (made tangible via the PPC), and access details of petitions



submitted in traditional paper signatory format. It is evidential that there are some problems with the electronic delivery of sub - politics into the Scottish political system. However, their delivery is something of a test setting, an experiment in a new electronic politics which is designed primarily to come to terms with the future of such projects.

However, aside from the relative marginalisation of internet access in Scotland there is also some evidence to suggest that electronic petitions are not treated with the same degree of authority by those perhaps wishing to commit themselves to such a creation. For example see (Tables 5.5 a and b, below) which operationalise such a hypotheses in relation to Scottish community groups/Scottish civil society.

**Table 5.5 (a) Sub-Politics and the PPC: Electronic petitions.**

Scottish Community Groups/civil society interviewed (including dates)

Action on Smoking and Health (ASH): 27/06/2001	(ashscotland@ashscotland.org.uk),
Action Group (The): 28/07/2001	info@actiongroup.org.uk
Scottish Crofting Foundation <sup>33</sup> : 25/04/2001	:(hq.@crofting.org)
Highlands and islands Enterprise: 14/07/2001	An.ross@hient.co.uk
Abbeyfield Society for Scotland: 13/07/2001	Abbetfieldscotland@quista.net

---

<sup>33</sup> Previously known as the 'Scottish Crofters Union' (As of 15/11/2001 the SCU changed title to the 'Scottish Crofting Foundation')

### **Table 5.5 (a) Sub-Politics and the PPC: Electronic petitions.**

Scottish Community Groups/civil society interviewed (continued)

**Q: 'Is your organisation aware of the Scottish Parliament's Public Petitions**

**Committee? Yes=100%**

**Would you consider petitioning them in the traditional method (via paper based signatories) or would you use their electronic petitioning service?**

Traditional Methods: 40% (two community groups)

Electronic petition: 40% (two community groups)

Not relevant to this organisation: 20% (one community group)

### **Table 5.5(b) Sub-Politics and the PPC: Electronic petitions: a qualitative expression**

**Would you consider petitioning the PPC/Scottish Parliament in the traditional method (via paper based signatories) or would you use their electronic petitioning service?**

*'The use of electronic petitions would be beyond most of our client group. We couldn't presume that they would now how to access it on the Web. I suspect that it is a service open to very technically literate activists...if we were going to set up a petition then we would use a standard paper version. This way we could ensure that our clients would see it and say yes or no...the advantages being of course that you can bring the (paper) petition straight to them, or else position it where they are very likely to see it. We may even post something like a petition, then you would know how many responses you are likely to get, and could plan accordingly'. Edinburgh based community group spokeswoman.*

The above Table shows some of the initial limitations with electronically submitted petitions. However, new technologies such as these suffer from the conditions of novelty and exclusivity. Given time they may become viable alternatives with the potential to encapsulate a variety of interests that go beyond the immediate confines of traditional pen to paper formats. New technologies such as the E- Petitioning device have a potential to extend the range and vitality of a variety of distributed intentions, discourses and political – social forces (Grieco 2002).

However, the following section approaches the informatisation debate in a very different way. The emphasis now is on the *structural positioning of ICTs within institutions*. How does the Scottish Parliament deal with informatisation? What kinds of institutionally situated framework is informatisation to be located in? The following section then considers these ideas within the context of a political tension. The tension, it is argued, revolves around whether informatisation is primarily an instrument(s) of democratic renewal, or an instrument for wealth generation and the adoption of new economic strategies and positions. We will now address these issues.

### **5.5.1 The Scottish Parliament: an informatised democracy or economic laboratory?**

This section examines Scottish democracy in terms of the Parliament's commitment towards the extension of democracy set against economic interests. The rhetorical extension of political inclusion is contrasted against commercial concerns as manifested within the Parliament. This provides a unique form for analysing the scope and form of the Parliament's consideration of ICTs: does such an analysis reveal an overall commitment to the use of ICTs within a democratic or a commercial context? For instance, is there any evidence that they are being used to extend a market logic? In this sense, new technologies enable the active (and solvent) consumer access to a new set of markets. Known as e-commerce, these new forms allow the consumer to purchase or speculate via the internet. The vitality of this new form is readily recognised by the Scottish Executive, and the Parliament as a whole, perhaps at the expense of democratic proceedings.

For example, a considerable amount of Parliamentary affairs are devoted to the relationship between ICTs and both E-commerce and the role of ICTs within an educative and training based capacity. Parliamentary Debates/Plenary meetings (as reported in the Scottish Parliament's official Reports) revealed 370 instances of the term '*information technology*'. The term was then broken down into sub-divisions and each of the Parliamentary meetings were analysed for concepts and themes.

The following is an empirical account of the issues raised regarding ICT and the Plenary meetings since the life -span of the Parliament (from 1999 until the recess in July 2001. See for example Table 5.6. 'Informatisation and Plenary debates' below).

**Table 5.6. Informatisation and Plenary debates**

Education and Training	14
Privacy*	0
Employment	0
Public Administration: External service provision	7
Public Administration: Internal service functions	5
Security*	13
Law	0
Social Exclusion	3
Transport	0
Local government	1
E: Commerce	15
Scottish democracy and ICTs	3
Other	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>63</b>

**Source** (*URL: [http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/sch/parl\\_list](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/sch/parl_list). Cut off point for the above figures is 26/04/2001: this is the date that the research was gathered from a variety of databases within the Scottish Parliament*)

This empirical survey reveals that developments within Scottish governance and the context of ICTs are heavily centred upon the commercial/training based exploitation of the new technologies: in that the principle focus of the educational/informatisation discourse was concerned with training in respect of subsequent employment opportunities and labour market needs, the education

dimension can be considered as primarily economic rather than social in its dimensions. As such, the measurement of ICTs as an instrument of social inclusion, and the extension of political participation, are less than those which have a commercial orientation.

In some important respects this is a mirror image of the tensions resident within political institutions and the gathering forces of direct democratic politics<sup>34</sup>. For example, the exercising of consumerist principles evident via ICTs, whereby consumers can order a variety of goods and services, suggests the extension of these principles and practices through political technologies other than a parliament. Attempts to incorporate the new politics of 'citizen as consumer', and to produce efficiency within government/bureaucracy can be seen as a sign of the growing tension between the state and citizenry. The immediacy of consumer provision in this sense fuses with direct democratic formations, which demand a similar rapidity of service. The quantitative analysis revealed above, highlights the condition of informatisation within the Scottish Parliament. Plenary debates are those allocated spaces of time given over to matters concerning the Parliament's devolved powers. The time given is indicative of priorities and the application range of ICTs. Electronic commerce takes precedence with education and

---

<sup>34</sup> The argument here is that new forms of political interactivity are likely to produce new forms of protest premised around the direct democratic possibilities, now afforded by informatisation. Cross (1998. P133) offers a combination of the following themes regarding ICTs in their public decision making format, i.e. teledemocracy: (1) Overcoming obstacles of size and population dispersion that make direct democracy impossible (2) Permitting a greater number of citizens to participate by reducing the burdens to participation (3) Increasing equity in public decision-making by reducing inequalities in availability of

training coming a close second. *\*'Privacy' is concerned with ICT issues that revolve around freedom of information and 'open government'.*

These have a democratic remit in that they allow for more access by citizens to government/public administration. *\*'Security', refers principally to the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (Scotland 2000) which we deal with in some detail in the following chapter. Note the contrast in the time attended to such issues. It is evidenced that powers of surveillance are afforded priority over those concerning privacy and freedom of information based issues. Similarly, questions and issues raised about the application of ICTs within a specifically Scottish field were limited to three. Similarly, 'Transport' as an issue, despite its research profile and strong associations with virtualisation and the opportunities available for distance negotiation (see Grieco 2001, 2002) does not feature at all.*

As way of summary it can be argued that the evidence suggests that informatisation is substantially concerned with profit and economic returns, and with surveillance rather than any democratic qualities. We will now consider an alternative set of empirical positions. In the next section we will examine how the condition of sub - politics is useful in comparing, and contrasting, a set of impulses principally from Scottish civil society into the Scottish polity. The following approach offers an index of democratisation as measured by the PPC.

### **5.5.2 An audit approach to public petitions and the Scottish Parliament**

The following audit approach takes the form of a multi-criteria, multi-sectioned evaluation. It is both qualitative and quantitative in form and captures the overall character of the democratic experience indicative of the New Politics. In addition, it tracks its democratic process over time. The temporal scope of the PPC is two years and ongoing in its development within Scottish democracy. The object of the study is to use the PPC as a means with which to measure democratic performance over time and through the use of multiple indicators of political choice as determined by citizens and interest groups. The study will focus on the interconnections between public petitions and political forms and outcomes.

The audit is a useful addition to the literature on democratisation and political change in that it links together a set of political characteristics, both institutional and experiential in form. The institutional form is that of the Parliament itself, whereas the experiential condition is provided by the petitioners subject matter. This can be said to capture some elements of the political attitudes which citizens perceive to be of importance. Moreover, it captures some of the political aspirations of citizens, and in some respects can be said to be a measure of the new politics from the bottom up as it were. It allows for the expression of citizens, and offers a pointer towards a new form of political participation, a new democratic order which allows citizens a methodology for asserting the direction of politics. For example, the ability to



admit, or refuse entry, into the environments of government or public administration is a key power resource.

A classification of Public Petitions submitted to the Scottish Parliament via the dedicated Public Petitions Committee, reveals the following index of submissions.

**Table 5.7 A classification of Public Petitions Submitted to the Scottish Parliament via the PPC**

Individuals	189
Pressure groups (including trade unions)	87
Community Groups	44
Business	11
Elected politicians	5
Local authorities	3
Political parties	2
Other	24
Electronically submitted petitions	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>365</b>

**Source:** (URL: [http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parl\\_bus/petitions.htm](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parl_bus/petitions.htm)) cut off point for data: 21/05/2001).

The Table reveals that the degree of economic dimension (as measured by 'Business') is relatively minor in numerical weighting. This could represent the fact that such interests are already well catered for within established political channels (this point is borne out by Table 5.6 for example). However, the considerable number of petitions submitted by *individuals* bears some

testimony to the use of this new political technology by them. We can deduce from this, and the evidence presented above, that business interests are adequately represented through orthodox structures and practices, whereas individual concerns are arguably less so. However, this Table only gives us a numerical base. To understand sub - politics in greater detail we need to consider the relative outcomes of such petitions. For example, whether the participants are individuals or members of an interest group will highlight whether or not the system is open to individuals who do not have the strength or the financial impact of groups to base their claim and to assert legitimacy. Moreover, the type of individual petitions raised, and the degree of measured empirical response will uncover the nature of public interest and the Parliament's willingness (or ability: for some petitions may touch on areas which are reserved matters, such as defence or social security for example) to deal with such issues This can be determined by an audit of the Parliamentary Committee's that Public Petitions were referred to for further action, negation, or consideration. This is presented in Table 5.8 below.

A classification of Public Petitions Submitted to the Scottish Parliament reveals the following index of submissions. This provides us with a means of comprehending process and outcome, and an analyses of Beck's theory of sub - politics as a measure of democracy via the PPC. The Table illustrates the direction of petitions in terms of where they were directed to. In this way we can produce an understanding of their relationship to the concerns of

individuals, as measured against the most appropriate Scottish Parliamentary Committee's.

**Table 5.8. The Scottish Parliament, Public Petitions and their Committee based destinations**

<b>Audit Committee</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Education, Culture and Sport Committee</b>	<b>473</b>
<b>Enterprise and Lifelong Learning Committee</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>Equal Opportunities Committee</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>European Committee</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Finance Committee</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Health and Community Care Committee</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>Justice (Committee No.1)</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Justice (Committee No.2)</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Local Government Committee</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>Procedures Committee</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Public Petitions Committee</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Private Bills Committee</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Rural Development Committee</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Social Justice Committee</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Standards Committee</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Subordinate Legislation Committee</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Transport and the Environment Committee</b>	<b>136</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1086</b>

Source: URL: [http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/official\\_report/cttee/.htm](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/official_report/cttee/.htm).)  
(Cut off point for data: 1/06/2001)

Each Committee was checked in turn via the Parliament's database for its dealings with public Petitions, and their dissemination towards specific Committee's. This gives an indication of the concerns expressed by citizens

for particular issues, and the mechanisms in place to deal with them by the Parliamentary system. The petitions are subject to referral by the PPC to those additional committee's who have a bearing and expert remit upon their process through the political system. As such, we can begin to understand how it is that there are connections between the issues felt by citizens and their substantiation through the new political system. In this manner the PPC serves as a new complex of democratic participation and as a new form of '*generative politics*' (Giddens 1994 p15). The theoretical underpinnings of generative politics are a way in which to usefully site the PPC, and are worthy of additional analysis. For example, as Giddens notes this theory asserts the necessity of providing:

*'the material conditions, and organisational frameworks, for the life-political decisions taken by individuals and groups in the wider social order. Such a politics depends on the building of active trust, whether in the institutions of government or in connected agencies....generative politics is the main means of effectively approaching problems of poverty and social exclusion in the present day'*

Giddens account of generative politics provides us with a set of linkages between the beginning and end of this chapter. For instance, the new politics of the late twentieth/twenty first century is premised upon the extension of citizens into the decision making machinery of governance.

It is theoretically committed to ending social exclusion via a new politics of dialogue with its citizens. An extension of the theme of dialogue reminds us of the declared intent of informatisation policies within governance, the interactivity between citizen and state is said to undermine the hierarchy of power relations, and to produce in turn a new politics of discourse which is open to all. This chapter has revealed that despite the rhetoric of informatised politics, this is not the case. However, the principal features of generative politics serve to remind us of the stated ambitions and logic of twenty first century governance.

Generative politics can be represented in table form (see Table 5.9.)

**Table 5.9**  
**Generative Politics: outcomes and means to ends**

<b>Declared outcomes</b>	End to the asymmetries of power, derived from hierarchical and directive dynamic.	End of social exclusion, and market based disparities. Dissolution of traditional 'Expert/Client' relationship.	New representation of interests. Achieved via the design and content of policy by those whom it affects.	Devolution of power. Direct route to power sites. A commitment to openness and accountability (PPC as example).
<b>Means to achieve outcomes</b>	Rejection of both bureaucratic socialism and authoritarian populism.	ICT enabled dialogic democratic politics.  Establishment of Scottish Parliament's Public Petitions Committee.	New forms of political agency.  'Intelligent' political and urban development. Bottom up information flow.	Creation of disparate sites of political power. Creation of a new politics, including new political structures. Participation in public agenda setting and debate. Reinforcement of opportunities for deliberation.

**Source: Griffin 2002 (adapted from Giddens 1994)**

The Table offers a typology (and a template) of the New Politics. It establishes the declaration of political and social outcomes. Its desire is to increase the provision of new forms of agency and devolved sites of power. It is premised upon the rationale of distribution, interaction and political – social dialogue. The politics of consultation, deliberation and openness accompany such ambitions.

### **5.6.1 Conclusion**

It has been argued in this chapter that Informatisation can be understood as a technology with which civil society is able to penetrate the political and social environment. Participation takes on the new political form of sub - politics, itself characterised by decentralisation, and the replacement of co-ordination and hierarchy, by new forms of network logic and engagement. Such notions suggest the varying degrees of change that may be produced by informatisation projects. As such many argue, informatisation will revolutionise the political future, new technologies will produce radical shifts in the direction of politics. Centralised power will become devolved or regionalised, and traditional models of hierarchy within public administration (and citizens relationships with experts, and their privileged access to knowledge) will be steadily challenged ( Carter and Grieco 2000, Frissen 1998a).

Within such an understanding of the new politics, the PPC can be seen as a model of sub - politics. It allows non - experts to assert their claims within a refutation of elite theory and within a pluralist conception of political right and

capacity (Hindess 2001). These include forms of information architecture such as those which allow or facilitate new forms of political interactivity<sup>35</sup>.

However, the chapter revealed another dimension to the newly informatised Scottish Parliament. Its principal concern is with the use of ICTs to advance a new economic direction. The chapter argued that by an examination of the petitions submitted to the PPC, this feature is not a reflection of broader concerns as detailed by citizens. Therefore there is a paradox (a tension) between the rhetoric of Scotland's new democracy and its declaration to informatise civil society.

In the following chapter we concentrate on the challenge to the new Scottish politics as presented by the emergence of a new 'information union'. In this sense, challenges are posed to the political - informatised potentials of both the Scottish Parliament, and the powers of the distributed technologies.

---

<sup>35</sup> This feature is concerned with the changing relationship(s) between state and society. Moreover, these ideas are furthered by Loader (1998) who develops the post-modern concern that location, identities and time are increasingly relativist in formula, and that computer mediated communications produce a tension within the established areas and arena of politics. His idea suggests that physical locations and the modes of legitimacy accorded to political structures and modernist technologies (such as parliamentary/representative democracy) are challenged by new technologies, which allow participation from a distance.

## Chapter Six

### A New Information Settlement: Wiring up the Union

#### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter argues that there is a new union of information emerging across the U.K. The devolution of power and the abilities afforded by ICTs to re-distribute it, and de - centralise hierarchy, are positioned against another set of indicators that suggest the opposite. Namely, that informatisation is a political technology currently being used to re-assert the authority of the centre over the periphery, and the development of a full Information Union across the United Kingdom. This chapter hypothesises that without the ability to extend informatisation across the U.K. the devolution project would have remained dormant. Political powers, having being re - distributed through the Devolution project, are being re-composed through political technology<sup>1</sup>. As such, the hypothesis operates at two specific levels. The first of these involves us considering the concept of an '*information union*'. We examine his idea in relation to Infocratisation theory (Zuurmond 1998).

---

<sup>1</sup> The Scottish Parliament's interface with Scottish society is set against the 'Continuist' approach (Miles et al 1988), this perspective sees the political and socially related outcomes of ICTs as the product of interconnected change built on previous technologies. For instance, successful comparisons can be drawn from past experiences with other electronic technologies and their applications as they relate to outcomes. This perspective emphasises that the main features of society are likely to remain unchanged (largely so) unless they are led by a politically charged movement (direct democracy for instance). This approach is considered within the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000, (hereon as: RIP) in that the distributed technologies of ICTs now allow an increasing challenge to the central authority of power (wherever it is located). As such, an information union, and its counterpart of the RIP, can be located within the continuist tradition in that they re-formulate power through technology. For example the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000 (@\_ HYPERLINK <http://www.parliament.the-stationery-off.uk/pa/1d999000/1dbills/061/200061.htm>) places the surveillance powers of the Scottish police and the National Criminal Intelligence Service, and the use of covert human intelligence sources in Scotland, on a statutory basis.



The second hypothesis argues that in order for the state to extend its informatisation powers it must also operate at the *micro-level* of social relations. Both theories are advanced on two specific fronts, the macro and the micro: this chapter evidences both<sup>2</sup>. Firstly, in terms of the political technologies of informatisation and their usage within the concept of the infocracy (that we observed in chapter 3). These infocratic ideas relate to the attempts currently under way to re - assert the primacy of the United Kingdom over a newly devolved Scotland. The new Scottish historical moment (the birth of a new democracy), is the subject of new control technologies, and the advancement of common informatisation policies, that limit its autonomy. We examine the production of a new mode of government that aims to use informatisation to integrate the circuitry of devolved decision making into the wider U.K. scheme of things. This is the object of macro informatisation policies.

Having done this we then go on to explore the power of the state in terms of its desire to control distributed discourse, and the attendant micro power relations that accompany it. The power of the integrated mainframe over the PC is a related theme to the above in the following fashion. The relationship between the individual and geographically disparate campaigners, political activists, and grass-roots organisers are to be marshalled and constrained by developing political technologies.

---

<sup>2</sup> As Rose (1999 p5) points out, this distinction between micro and macro sites of power is controversial, it perhaps establishes an unnecessary polarity for the following reason: *'the 'macro-actor' is not different in kind from the 'micro-actor', but is merely one who has a more reliable chain of command'*. My purpose however, is to illustrate the manner in which this informatisation based chain of command is employed within political rationalities.

The pursuit of integration, and the centralising ambitions of the U.K government is applied then to micro actors. They too are to be synthesised within new infocratic technologies. This is achieved via the positioning of strident new legal requirements (evidenced via the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (Scotland) 2000<sup>3</sup>, which ensure that all internet service providers must channel their communications through the Government Technical Assistance Centre (GTAC).

We explore these dimensions theoretically, via a detailed analysis of Michel Foucault's concept of 'Panopticon' and 'Diagram'<sup>4</sup>.

---

<sup>3</sup> The Bill for the Act of the Scottish Parliament was passed by the Scottish Parliament itself on the 7<sup>th</sup> of September 2000. It received the necessary Royal Assent on the 28<sup>th</sup> of September 2000. The Justice and Home Affairs Committee was the lead Committee in terms of the Bill moving through its stages before becoming an Act. It offers near unlimited powers for the police and other state security forces to intercept all electronic communications. It enables the interception of real time internet and email communications (without a warrant in many instances). The interception of communications is placed upon a statutory basis and allows for national security issues to be defined in non specific terms of engagement. The Act regulates for the interception, acquisition and the disclosure of encryption packages used by internet service providers. The RIP Act is a control technology akin to the model espoused by Beniger (1986). The mode of discipline that is transmitted throughout society is done so in a series of micro-physics based relations. Its purpose is functionalist in that it seeks to produce order from an integrating discipline that has the legal authority to survey at will, and the political technologies available to it in terms of its ability to re-produce a structure now called into question through sub-politics. The mainframes of central government are designed to out-perform their micro-PC counterparts.

<sup>4</sup> The Panopticon and the Diagram are separate, yet related concepts. The former (a tangible entity evidenced by Jeremy Bentham's prison structure) has a major position within Foucault's work (1991b). The relations between these ideas and this chapter is that the Panopticon was/is a device used to '*spatially partition*' (Foucault, 1991b p195), and to bring under constant surveillance the inhabitants therein. In this way the conduct of those contained could be policed. All actions are supervised: '*all events are recorded...in which an uninterrupted work....links the centre and the periphery, according to a continuous hierarchical figure, in which each individual is constantly located...all this constitutes a compact model of the disciplinary mechanism*' (ibid. p197). The strong association here is the linkage between centre and periphery which is the major theme of this chapter. This is the new Information Union of the title. However, there are other components within this thesis. The co - ordinating form between macro and micro is supplied by fusing the concept of the Panopticon with the 'Diagram'. In this sense we have a totality of theory that allows us to link the experience of informatisation (as understood at the micro level by citizens) with the macro information Union as applied through the machinery of state and the modernisation of government. The government of the individual: the conception of governmentality is established by these concepts. As a political technology the internet has, up until now been disparate and

This chapter re - composes these ideas within their Scottish (and ultimately their United Kingdom) context. In this sense the information union nears its theoretical completion. It gathers up its subjects/citizens through a range of their life experiences and synthesises them via informatisation. In other words, the organisation of informatised authority (at the level of Scottish governance and public administration), ensures macro unity of purpose, and limits the position of alternative devolved politics. Simultaneously, those actors whose discourse and social - political affairs were disparate, or distributed, are now re - integrated into the state's circuitry. The manner in which this is done is in terms of their relationship to the *new politics of surveillance* emerging across the United Kingdom. For instance, as Giddens (1987 p309) notes in relation to the macro - micro axis discussed above:

*'Control of information, within modern, pacified states with very rapid systems of communication...can be directly integrated with the supervision of conduct in such a way as to produce a high concentration of state power'.*

These ideas are used in terms of their relationship to new developments within the Scottish political settlement since devolution.

---

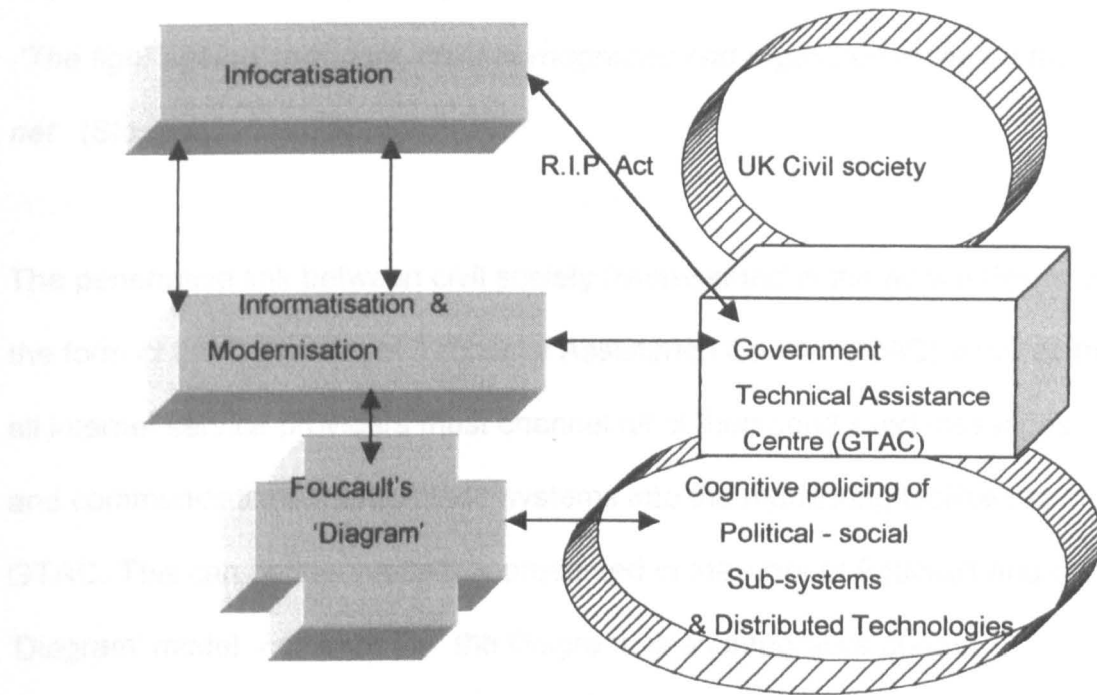
dissolute, allowing users unprecedented media - escape from state control. The reaction to this has been to employ other political technologies to re-establish a new '*web of social relations which can be made visible and subject to normalising interventions*' (Rose 1999 p131). The Diagram captures the essence of such relations. This is a theoretical set of formulae which operates at the level of government (or according to Jessop is characterised by the mode of production which '*pervades all social relations*': Jessop 1990 p230). The concept of the Diagram is used to illustrate the spread of technology through all social relations, it is: '*a diagram of a mechanism of power reduced to its ideal form: its functioning, abstracted from any obstacle, resistance or friction, must be represented as a pure architectural and optical system: it is in fact a political technology that may be detached from any specific use*' (Foucault *ibid.* p205). This new architectural system is now evidenced by the information architecture, and its legal control through the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000. This is the connection.

Foucault's theories are applied to the new Scottish politics of information. As such, it is being argued that problems surrounding political autonomy centre upon the distributed powers of information. For the state, this produces problems in terms of integration and co - ordination. Policies on different levels of government cannot be fine tuned. Integrated systems cannot be correctly adjusted. Individuals cannot be adequately policed. Informatisation on the other hand, promises to resolve such tensions and contradictory impulses. As we will see, this is a component of the new Scottish politics of information.

In addition, this chapter argues that RIP extends politics into the dimensions of 'governmentality': whereby agencies (or technologies) of behavioural control extend from the realms of governance into the minds and actions of social actors themselves (Foucault 1991a): this is achieved through a triad of powers which should be considered within the RIP/infocratisation/Diagram equation. I represent this complex within the following Figure. In this sense RIP/infocratisation closes the information loop which civil society has developed in an autonomous fashion and design.

It can be given expression in the following figure (see Figure 6.1 below):

**Figure 6.1 The Union of Macro and Micro**



**Source: Griffin 2002 (adapted from Foucault 1991 and Zuurmond 1998)**

Figure 6.1 can be explained in the following fashion. It should be observed as an equation that proposes union and re - integration of the state's sub-systems. It evokes a sense of emerging unity and imposition over the distributed discourses (and the political – technologies that support them). The concept of the Information Union is characterised by the top left form (Infocratisation). Here, informatisation should be considered as a control technology that oversees the modernisation of government. In addition, the R.I.P Act provides the necessary penetration of civil society by the state in that R.I.P effectively allows the state to oversee, and intercept, all emails.

The Scottish Justice Minister (Jim Wallace) and the English Home Secretary (Jack Straw) both argue that the supervision of internet traffic is a vital requirement of modern policing and that it will assist in:

*'The fight against terrorism, child pornography and organised crime on the net'* (Stanyer 2001 p358).

The penetrative link between civil society (represented in the above Figure in the form of the Government Technical Assistance Centre: GTAC) ensures that all internet service providers must channel all of their conducted messages and communications through their systems into the monitoring facilities at GTAC. This can be theoretically represented in the work of Foucault and his 'Diagram' model. For example, the Diagram, is an integrative control technology which operates in structural as well as cognitive forms<sup>5</sup>.

It does so in the following manner. It is a:

*'modality for (the exercise of power), comprising a whole set of instruments, techniques, procedures, levels of application, targets: it is a 'physics' or an anatomy of power, a technology...taken over by specialised institutions.'*

(Foucault, 1991b, p215)

---

<sup>5</sup> The central relevance of this is that the 'problem' of government is historically related to questions concerning its legitimate functions, its art and practice. There are further reasons for exploring these points in relation to some of the themes that we have encountered up to this moment. For example, in relation to both rationality and the autonomous political machinery of state. For instance, as Foucault notes (1991a p87), *'How to govern oneself, how to be governed, how to govern others, by whom the people will accept being governed, how to become the best possible governor – all these problems, in their multiplicity and intensity, seem to me to be characteristic of the sixteenth century, which lies to put it schematically, at the crossroads of two processes; the one which shattering the structures of feudalism, leads to the establishment of the great territorial, administrative and colonial states; and that totally different movement which, with the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, raises the issue of how one must be spiritually ruled and led ... (and to a ) double movement .....of state centralisation on the one hand and of dispersion of religious dissidence on the other'*.

Power in this sense is produced by the existence of interception based political technologies. The state's ability to capture the details and interactions of civil society operates as an integrative device, and as a form of cognitive policing. The networks and relations of power that are evolving around the Information Union, and its legal powers, are designed to re-integrate disparate technologies and political spheres of subversion<sup>6</sup>. These ideas can be further understood by an advancement of the Foucaultian concept of governmentality<sup>7</sup>. This is fused together with the Panopticon in order to

---

<sup>6</sup> As we observed in chapter five much of the literature concerned with the renewal of democratic participation looks towards civil society to rejuvenate democratic practice (Hirst 1994). Moreover, such ideas seek to shift civil society-democratic relations from the *background* of politics into the *forefront* via the motive force of new distributed technologies and new social movements. These new social movements, whose continuum of politics (or its denial) operate from anarchist/libertarian to radical direct democratic. Its electronic, PC literate, politically charged counter-cultural ambitions are characterised by a '*public sphere of subversion*' (Sobchack 1996.p83). Their new ethos of democracy focuses on the renewal of civil society at one end of the same continuum, and its complete detachment at the other. Moreover, it is charged with possessing the technological ability to both liberate, and disseminate information through unfettered distributed technologies. In this sense we have a contemporary conception and implementation of modernist visions surrounding the nature and practice of political protest (Della Porta and Diani 1999. P172). For example, The '*hackers and crackers and cyberpunks*' (Sobchack Ibid) are following on from a tradition of political activism and radicalism which emerged during and immediately after the French Revolution, but which now have contemporary methods of electronic communications with which to further their political aims: '*In addition, media such as television, fax and the Internet have transformed the ambitions and capacity for intervention of social movements*' (Della Porta and Diani ibid).

<sup>7</sup>By 'Governmentality' Foucault is making reference towards the shifts and changes within the: '*art, or practice of government, the doctrines of governance*' (Gordon 1991 p3). These are inclusive of a shift in the usual comprehension of state theory, within which the institutions of the state (its properties) modify the conditions of *government*. As Gordon (ibid p4) notes: '*State theory attempts to deduce the modern activities of government from (the) essential properties and propensities of the state*'.

For Michel Foucault the opposite is more accurate, the changing pattern of the state is composed as a result of changing governmental practices. Governmentality is concerned with such methodologies of administration. His theories are of use to us inasmuch as they chart the history of such practices, and the ideological characteristics which government utilises to act in the name of 'truth' and 'principle'. There is again here a political paradox which Foucault alludes to: namely how to encourage the growth of the individual who resides within the state, and how it might be that their development might work to assist the state itself, in the science/art of its actions. However, how does a state manage such a task when there now exists the technical means/potential available for the problems of political, social and economic steering, to be resolved through direct computer mediated means? In other words, as Edwards (1995 p39) notes: '*ICTs make it possible to overcome the physical barriers to direct democracy*'. The intention of processes such as RIP is to place limits and constraints upon these forms of organisational transcendence.

produce an additional understanding and operationalisation of the Diagram concept. Taken together these ideas relate to the notion of Scottish civil society (and the democratic conditions and aspects of informatisation) being subsidiary features to the over-arching relations of infocratisation. Moreover, the added conception of cognitive policing as a form of political technology in its own distinctive right serves to penetrate the conduct of individuals through a fusion of action and thought, thus producing a level of conformity (Fromm 1960, Poggi 2000). In this sense the notion of internet policing (one of the central tenets of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act – Scotland, 2000) contributes to the preservation of an orderly structure at the level of civil society itself<sup>8</sup>.

The Act is an attempt to consolidate authority, and the power relations that flow through the networks, via an assemblage of laws and practices.

The Act is designed to undermine the distributed political character of new technologies. The complexities of cyber-spatial information networks

---

<sup>8</sup> For instance, this argument suggests that the convergence of ICTs will facilitate a new version of Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon (Foucault 1991b, pp195-228). Within this model a new set of *'disciplinary mechanisms'* (ibid. p198) emerge. These are centred around the notions that the *'Discipline and Punish'* (Foucault 1991b) maxim that Foucault develops, is evolutionary. In other words, that with the advent of the information age, the diffusion of ICTs brings with it an extension of the state's ability to subject society and its citizens to ever more sophisticated forms of surveillance (Schalken 1998 p160). It surveys therefore at the level of traditionally understood spaces, or locations, for example in the case of CCTVs which can be understood as a *'technology of political control'* (Webster 1998 p93). Moreover, power and surveillance are also operationalised in the manner of a control which operates upon the space of information flows. The latter term is used to illustrate methods of surveillance which go beyond (or can be used to extend) traditional spaces such as those forms of computer-mediated surveillance technologies. These are an extension of Giddens (1987) conceptions of surveillance as a form of gathering data, and as a means of supervising and monitoring people/citizens. For example, the gathering of data can be considered in terms of either the accumulation of data as a recorded by-product of information gathered for other specific purposes, or information whose primary purpose is that associated with the surveillance and control of citizens by technocratic elites (van de Donk and Tops 1995). As the state becomes a more efficient and voracious consumer of information, then the danger of state abuse regarding information also expands. Although Freedom of Information (and Data Protection Acts exist), there are other developments which operate to assist the state, perhaps at the expense of the citizen, in their data gathering operations.



threaten to undermine the established boundaries of the nation – state, and its administrative-power space(s) (Guehenno 1995, Frissen 1998b). For instance:

*'In the age of the networks, the relationship of the citizens to the body politic is in competition with the infinity of connections they establish outside it'.*

(Guehenno 1995 p19).

That the state is reacting to the diffusion of technologies, and the discourses that accompany them, is evidential in a number of ways<sup>9</sup>. In the first instance attempts to regulate the internet, via legislation such as the RIP Act, are part of a global state based reaction to the diffusion of power: the micro-physics of power<sup>10</sup> to which Foucault (1991) refers. For instance, as Frissen (1998b p114) notes, the widespread development of PCs limits the central nodality of

---

<sup>9</sup> For example, if traditional 'old politics' was understood to have operated within the configurations of territorial resources and the process of territoriality (the means which individuals and collective agencies, such as the nation - state, social/political actors etc define and control space as a means to a social/political end), then ICTs assist in the construction of a new politics: a politics of information, a new politics of space including new sites and new discursive forms. Increasingly these are centred around the dissolution of space into flows (Castells 1996). Power too becomes contested then around, and about, these new spaces. Theorists ranging from Foucault (1991b) to traditional neo - Weberians such as Giddens (1987) have long emphasised the importance of controlling space as a means of operationalising and maintaining social and political control. Now however, such control becomes problematic, the site of authority becomes (arguably) diffused and vertical in form, rather than strictly geographical and horizontal as in previous models.

<sup>10</sup> The 'Micro-Physics' of power is a reference to the idea that power is dispersed rather than centrally contained: if it is located *only* at the centre then it cannot operate. To be successful power must be re-produced through a variety of networks and spaces. Here lies, again, the idea of governmentality (Foucault 1991b). This theory maintains that the conduct of individuals is realised through '*programmes, techniques and devices which seek to shape conduct so as to achieve certain ends*' (Rose 1999 p21). Government, or governance, then should be considered as an '*emergent pattern or order of a social system (which tries to) diagnose an array of lines of thought, of will of intervention, of programmes and failures, of acts and counter-acts*' (Rose *ibid.* p21).

My thesis asserts that it is the intention of the RIP to act as an instrument of 'governmentality'. New lines of authority link up the subject with the law in this regard. The powers of surveillance act as a form of cognitive policing, as we shall see.

government/public administration<sup>11</sup>. This limiting effect encourages a diffusion, or a re-distribution of power. In his own words:

*'ICTs now support decentralisation and decreasing scale...Central control of big mainframes can be replaced by mechanisms... of local empowerment'*.

Struggles such as these are a direct response to the relative shift in political advantage that the polycentric design of the internet arguably engenders (Ravetz 1997). In other words, governments around the world are enlisting legal proceedings and technological advances to control the content of internet discourse. The application of state policies are attempts to restore traditional lineages of power<sup>12</sup> and political geography onto otherwise non-integrated political technologies such as ICTs<sup>13</sup>.

---

<sup>11</sup> Hood's conception of '*Nodality*' (1983 p6) is a reference to the states positioning at the centre of information networks.

<sup>12</sup> By 'traditional lineages of power' I am making reference to historical conditions. Surveillance and control are in effect historical technologies which operate, within Hoods conception of the apparatus of state, as a form of *detecting tool* (Hood 1983 ) with which it gauges the strength of its own operations, and those of other states, via political intelligence (Foucault 1991a). The science(s) of state and its mode of notational intelligence gradually re-presents itself in the form of a new political vocabulary: the discursive character of governmentality (Miller and Rose 1993).

<sup>13</sup> The concept of the Diagram can be considered yet again within such ideas. For example, (as Hunter 1993, notes), as the emergence of a particular coterie of political technologies which fixes the conduct of those who govern. This exercise of systematic administration, its regimented forms and techniques, converts the action of power into a rational configuration. Normative and speculative goals are considered via an eternal optimism, which suggests that the social, political or economic field of government can be realised via the available strategies of political calculation and public administration. These fields are subjected to technologies and practices which aim to: '*construct the social world as arenas of action*' (Johnson 1993 p151). 'Action' in this sense might then be considered within the fields of informatisation and the political and administrative reflexivity that computerisation engenders. The reflexive component within this equation is supplied by informatisation. For instance, the fabrication of the social world as a route map of possible action(s) is transformed via the computerised/informatised systems of government and bureaucracy. New informatised infrastructures allow in greater depth and detail, the electronic extension of power. The rationale behind such ideas are situated within a series of initiatives designed to defend the political integrity of the state in an increasingly globalised world (where the nation state loses the ability to retain control over its political geography). Therefore, explanations for the position of Infocracy (Zuurmond 1998) become more tenable than before, and more composite when examined from within the Scottish dimension. Here we can evidence the

Moreover, the convergence of digital media allows the state to:

*'Develop a technological infrastructure through the integration of separately developed computer systems'* (Margetts 1999 p45).

These two seemingly separate actions are in fact directly linked in that state power becomes capable of superseding and effectively countering the distributed technologies, and the political practices that accompany them. This position then goes against much of the prevailing trend within both ICT based research, and within conceptions of governance. These positions argue for the dissolution of the political centre and new dispersed configurations and patterns of power. These have been enhanced, these theorists claim, by ICTs (Becker and Slaton 2000, Malina 1999a). However within the U.K, recent governmental ambitions suggest a new form of political unification, an attempt to re-unite relatively disparate and devolved agencies. The next section attends to these details.

---

intentionalities of the RIP Act, again within the Foucauldian conception of Diagram as resident within values, power and systems. There are further related components here. We can observe the desire for infocratisation, serving as an ideal type and realisable through the RIP/Diagram, as a control technology akin to the model espoused by Beniger (1986). The mode of discipline that is transmitted throughout society is done so in a series of micro-physics based relations. Its purpose is functionalist in that it seeks to produce order from an integrating discipline that has the legal authority to survey at will, and the political technologies available to it in terms of its ability to re - produce a structure now called into question through sub-politics.

### 6.2.1 The re-composition of devolution: the pursuit of centrist ambitions via informatisation

The new information technologies now make it possible for the state to produce a new format of inter - governmental relations based around co - ordination and integration of its activities. This theory is empirically evidenced by the construction of a new secure inter - governmental intranet (GSI@[www.gsi.net](http://www.gsi.net)) and the '*Government Technical Assistance Centre*' (GTAC). These structures allow a high degree of information exchange amongst U.K. wide departments, through a near - unitary network architecture<sup>14</sup>. One of the chief characteristics of the strategic framework for e-government across the UK is the '*interoperability framework*' (see '*e-government: A strategic framework for public services in the Information Age*' @ [www.iagchampions.gov.uk/guidelines.htm](http://www.iagchampions.gov.uk/guidelines.htm)).

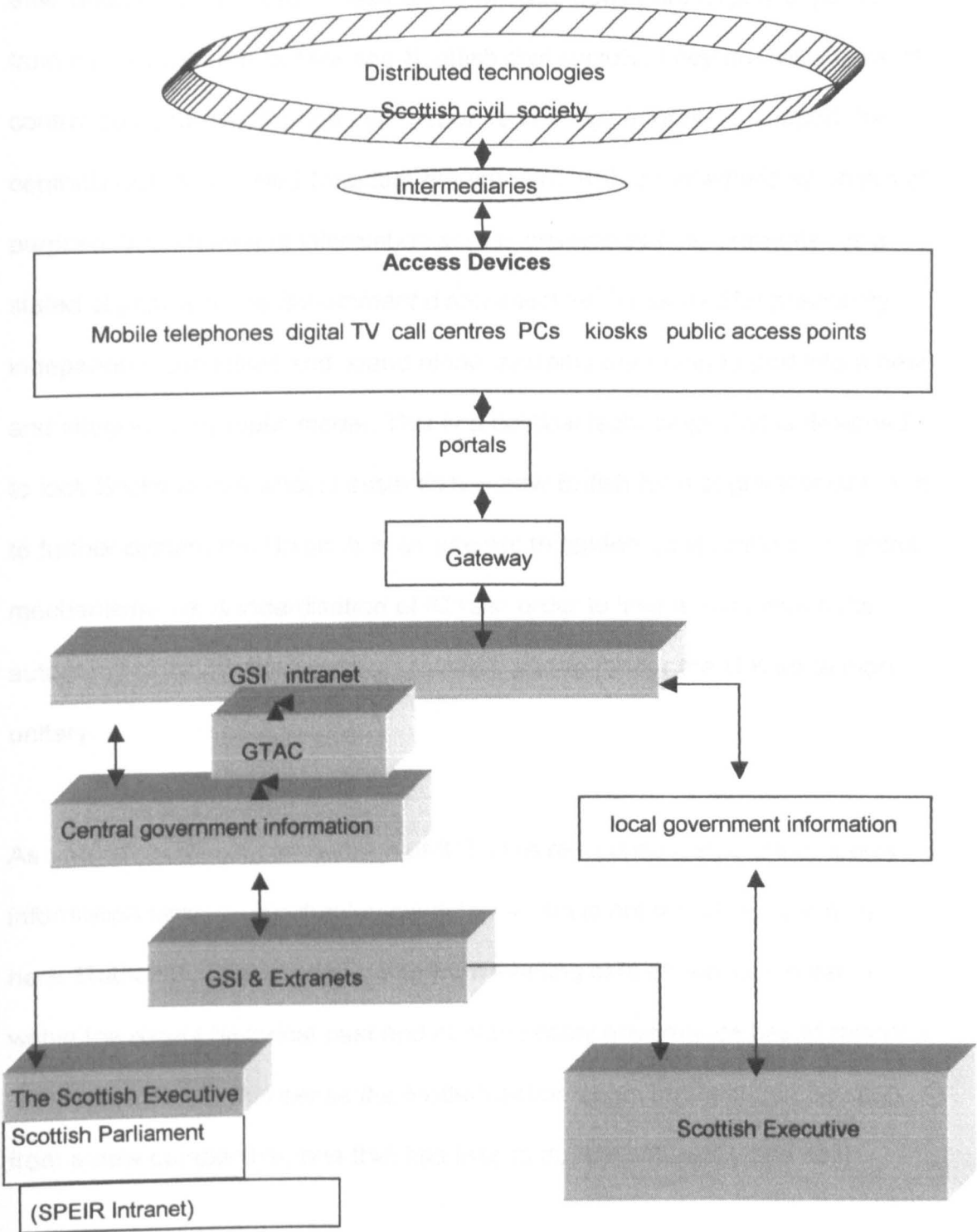
This allows for a series of U.K. wide working groups (co-ordinated by the Cabinet Office Central IT Unit – CITU: see [www.citu.gov.uk](http://www.citu.gov.uk)) to devise common technical standards, and common data exchange facilities in order to promote the conception of a joined up public sector across the UK<sup>15</sup>. For example, the Scottish Executives computer network is connected to the internet via the GSI (Government Secure Intranet) mainframes.

---

<sup>14/15</sup> The etymology of these ideas can be related to other we have encountered in previous chapters. Principally those that revolve around NPM/BPR and 'Corporate Information Infrastructures' (or CIS): this idea emerged in the 1980s. It stresses the standardisation of information systems and data processing. In addition, it has extended its reach into governance itself. This is evidenced in relation to a core concept of CIS (the centralisation of information strategies and their reconciliation within a devolved polity). In this regard my research highlights the development of a new information union across the United Kingdom. It is information interdependency, and the interconnections of people, systems, and processes that form the substructure of these corporate-political strategies (Ciborra 2000).

Furthermore, the information architecture that is emerging across the United Kingdom is evidence of plans to develop an inter – organisational polity. This information architecture can be illustrated by the following Figure, (6.2 '*An intra - systemic model of the Information Union: its information architecture*' , see immediately below).

**Figure 6.2 An intra-systemic model of the Information Union: its information architecture**



**Griffin 2002(Adapted from 'e-government: a strategic framework for public services in the Information Age' Cabinet Office April 2000)**

The shaded areas are a representation of the infocracy as they interact within their Scottish dimensions. These areas of state power are largely separated from the Scottish Parliament and Scottish civil society. They are reflections of control being routed through information technology in order to support the centralisation of a United Kingdom government, with a systematic synthesis of purpose. The sharing of information across government departments (as a stated objective of the *government direct* initiative<sup>16</sup>) means that previously independent capacities and 'stand alone' systems are being forged into a new and integrative synoptic model. This is a political technology that is designed to lock Scotland into what is essentially a new British form of government, and to further cement the Union. It is an attempt to tighten up steering and control mechanisms via standardisation of ICTs in order to limit and constrain the autonomy of the Scottish political position, and to render the U.K state more unitary.

As such, the diffusing tendencies of ICTs are re - consolidated under a new information strategy. Technological determinism is not the core reasoning here. Rather it is a deduction made from existing sets of relations present within the recent historical past and contemporary governance based relations within the UK.<sup>17</sup> In this sense the modernisation of government can be seen from a new perspective, one that has less to do with efficiency and cost

---

<sup>16</sup> For details of the E-government pan U.K framework see: [www.ukonline.gov.uk](http://www.ukonline.gov.uk), or similarly: [www.scotland.gov.uk/cru/resfinds/grf01-00.htm](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/cru/resfinds/grf01-00.htm)

<sup>17</sup> In this sense other political technologies whose principle aim is to secure the Union can be evidenced. For instance, as Bonney (1999) notes, Proportional Representation as an electoral device aimed at denying the likelihood of an overall SNP first past the post majority was a factor in its implementation. At another mode and as Enoch Powell observed power devolved was power retained by the centre (Dalyell 1977). In this very important sense then, devolution is itself to be regarded as a political technology of unification.

effectiveness, and rather more to do with the pursuit of centrist ambitions and the furtherance of the U.K. project. This is to be achieved through the establishment of a standardised information architecture linking up the U.K. We will now explore the implications of this feature.

### **6.2.2 The strategic implications of the centralising strategy**

The contribution of information technology to the Scottish political process has been chiefly, and rhetorically, focused on the distribution of access to the Parliament by citizens and civil society at large<sup>18</sup>. However, the evolving unification of the devolved administrative system has largely been ignored. In this sense the ICT strategies of the Scottish Parliament are themselves a reflection of the political settlement that observes a series of important macro-powers being retained by Westminster<sup>19</sup>.

The new union is given clearest expression by a series of initiatives such as the '21<sup>st</sup> Century Government Action Plan'<sup>20</sup> and the co-ordination of such schemes via 'Information Age Government' and the 'Digital Scotland' focus. In this sense, the composite plans to 'join up government' and to promote 'joined up services' (see for example the Scottish Parliament's 'Modernising Government' Debate of 23/02/2000

@[http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/official\\_report/session99-](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/official_report/session99-)

---

<sup>18</sup> See for example, the 'Modernising Government Programme' Scottish Parliament Subject Map: Devolution Series 1/00 22/02/2000'

<sup>19</sup> These macro-powers include broadcasting, social security policy, defence and macro-economic policy.

<sup>20</sup> The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Government Action Plan' has as its chief objectives the co-ordination of information strategies across the U.K. this relates to public services and the establishment of interoperability standards for informatisation and data standards see ([www.scotland.gov.uk/government.c21/actionplan/targeta4.asp](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/government.c21/actionplan/targeta4.asp)).



00/or050102.htm), are themselves inclusive of wider designs aimed at re-integrating devolved political and organisational structures amidst a corporate IT strategy<sup>21</sup>. Key elements of the centralising strategy are contained within the Modernising Government White Paper (1999) (see chapter five of the White Paper: *'Information Age Government'*). The White Paper stresses the need for more integrated public services and the requirements for all government departments to operate within the secure intranet system. This is a key point and is evidenced in terms of the provision of data standardisation across departments via the GSI. The GSI is the key towards an understanding of the desire for a:

*'stronger central co-ordination to ensure...that consistent standards are applied across government.. (and that) all government bodies (are) compatible across IT systems and data sets'* ('Modernising Government' @ <http://www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/moderngov/1999/whitepaper/>).

These are evidence of plans to co-ordinate an information synergy across the U.K. This is to be achieved through a process of infrastructure and information architecture re-design. We shall now address these in more detail.

---

<sup>21</sup> These strategies aim to boost cross-departmental co-operation and to build on existing inter-agency data networks such as the Government Data Network (GDN) of the early 1990s (Margetts 1999), and later developments such as the 'government.direct' initiatives of the New Labour administration of the late 1990s. This is achieved via the CCTA, the Central Computer and Telecommunications Agency (a government executive agency) who are responsible for providing collaborative access to governmental infrastructural services such as the GSI, and the GTN (the Government Telecommunications Network). These agencies perform the technical furtherance, and are evidential in supporting the case for a new union and a stronger centre of UK wide government.

### 6.2.3 Integrated infrastructures and the standardisation of information systems

Given the centralising ambitions of the Modernising Government White Paper, then it is argued that the centralisation of outcomes can be seen as the *desired* result. This chapter argues that the components of devolution, and changes within the development of the U.K state, are synchronised elements<sup>22</sup>. Plans to develop strategies and tactics aimed at modernising government are a component of centralisation. For example, the strategy document for the introduction of 'Electronic Government in the U.K.' was published on 3 April 2000 (see [www.iagchampions.gov.uk](http://www.iagchampions.gov.uk)).

The Scottish Executive produced a complementary set of strategies for devolved services North of the Border<sup>23</sup>. The strategies are united by common technical regulations (standardisation) and information integration achieved through EDI (Electronic Data Interchange) systems<sup>24</sup>.

The primary task of such technical elements is to ensure the efficiency of structured processes, such as interdepartmental information systems (Killian and Wind 1998). The tendency to create devolutionary political technologies, such as the Scottish Parliament, is off - set by these integrative and consolidated infrastructures. This acts as a counter to democratic informatisation (i.e. those policies that decentralise power and fragment it,

---

<sup>22</sup> This is achieved through an 'interoperability framework'. The interoperability framework covers three specific areas of technical policy, interconnectivity, data integration, and information access. The 'vision' of strengthening existing electronic initiatives was shared by the Digital Scotland Task Force Report of May 2000, and by the 'e-government' strategy document published under the auspices of the 'Information Age Champions' (see [www.iagchampions.gov.uk](http://www.iagchampions.gov.uk)).

<sup>23</sup> 'Information Age Government in Scotland: A draft common framework' 2000: this includes plans for the adoption of a UK wide interoperability framework.

<sup>24</sup> A new broadband initiative 'Connecting Scotland' was published on 31/8/2001. It has ambitions to produce an integrated broadband infrastructure. It aims to use the private sector

offering interactive initiatives to citizens and new innovative forms of political participation: Watson and Mundy 2001). We now shift the dimensions of our enquiry onto the evolving, centrally based, authority of the United Kingdom, and the use of informatisation to achieve a new political re-alignment. We review some of the reasoning behind this logic. We begin with the contradictions between a devolved administrative format and the development of a centralised information system and strategy. The next section examines the logic behind such notions and practices.

#### **6.2.4 The reaction against governance and New Institutionalism: towards the development of the Infocracy**

In chapter five we explored a theory of political participation which considered the possibilities for a displacement of centralised power<sup>25</sup>. Within these ideas political participation was discussed in relation to its position as a form of New Politics associated with governance, sub-politics and the Scottish Parliament. These ideas are usefully located next to such ideas as 'meta governance'<sup>26</sup> (Jessop 2000) or 'postmodern governance' (W. Parsons 1998).

---

to join up the public sector telecommunications procurement network.

<sup>25</sup> If ICTs are strengthening the displacement tendencies of politics then, as both Beck (1997), and van Dijk (2000) note the new politics shows a set of conditions which are attempting to re-integrate them back in. In other words, within Beck's notion of sub-politics there is a desire shown by some individuals, coalitions, groups and parties to extend politics into areas of social and political life not covered by the state and its remit. As such, the Scottish Parliament's Public Petitions Committee is an example of the new direction of politics: the sub-politics that Beck refers to is essentially being re-directed back through the state. In other words, the political vacuum left as a result of broader geo-political shifts, the collapse of grand meta-narratives and polarised ideologies is being filled by a struggle for 'a new dimension of politics' (Beck *ibid* p101). The question of political agency and the Scottish Parliament comes into play at this moment. For example, the PPC can be seen as an arena within which groups can assert a particular political agenda, new elements of sub-policy emerge: centrifugal tendencies are re-composed through the PPC, and its electronic submissions system.

<sup>26</sup> Meta- governance is an extension of governance based provision. It 'involves defining new boundary spanning roles and functions, creating linkage devices, sponsoring new organisations...designing institutions and generating visions to facilitate self – organisation in

For example, both such ideas are premised upon the *displacement of centralised power*, and the erosion of vertical and hierarchical forms of authority and decision making. Accordingly, there is a move away from the Weberian emphasis upon the operation of politics through the detail, direction and process of *inputs*. By contrast, the new politics of meta – governance, emphasises accountability, deregulation, openness and transparency. Successful examples of such regimes are measured by results in terms of *outputs*, and *outcomes* (Maguire 1998). As such, the erosion of the previous model has engendered new forms of service delivery, and new forms of public service values: new steering mechanisms through which the aim is to: *'improve the delivery of goods'* (Parsons *ibid.* p95). Indeed, the direction of meta - governance can be seen as a shift towards what Vermeulen (1998 p179) describes as the move from a:

*'social constitutional state ( towards) a free-market state.'*

However, the argument being presented here is that both these state forms are being relegated in favour of an infocratic state. This new infocratic model is a re-composition of a strong capitalist state which now has new control technologies available to it.

For example, as Ciborra and Hanseth (2000 p3) note:

*'According to Beniger (1986) and Yates (1989<sup>27</sup>), most technologies and organisational forms have had as their main objective the creation of more advanced control instruments – instruments that enable us to enhance and extend our control over processes in society.'*

The reaction against such a tendency is to be observed within its U.K. dimensions. There has been I argue, a consolidation of state authority in light of the newly available control technologies. Bureaucracies throughout Europe are re - wiring their political information - infrastructures and organisational capacities. In doing so they are able to offset the centrifugal political forces associated with, and the powers of, distributed technologies.

The following Table illustrates these transformations. Its main premises are highlighted vertically, and the various transitional stages can be read from left to right.

---

<sup>27</sup> Yates, J. (1989) Control through Communication. The Rise of System in American Management' (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press)

**Table 6.1 The Transformation of the European State**

	<b>Social Constitutional State</b>	<b>Meta - Governance</b>	<b>Infocratic state</b>
			→
<b>Laws</b>	Equality in treatment. Continuity. Variability. Reasonable cost.	Efficiency. Effectiveness. Economy (low cost, high output).	Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000.
<b>Executor</b>	Civil Service/Public Administration.	Civil Service-user-citizen. Public or private body.	Scottish Executive.
<b>Mechanisms</b>	Regulation.	Auto-regulation.	Reflexivity: Informatisation and information architecture.
<b>Interest</b>	Collective interest. General interest.	Individual interest. Group interest.	Efficiency and security. Monocentric.
<b>Quality</b>	Political notion/collective notion.	Individual notion. Quality is determined by customer/consumer.	Informatisation as control technology: networks.
<b>Leitmotif</b>	Balance between rights and obligations of both citizens and authorities.	Economic power and 'market worth'.	Digital Government/ Information Age Government.
<b>Basic principle</b>	Neutrality and objectivity function in terms of general interest. Policy support. Policy execution. Policy correction.	Neutrality and objectivity function in terms of the individual interest. In search of policy according to the laws of supply & demand.	Centralisation and Rationalisation. Creation of an Information Union.
<b>Policy</b>	Public power.	Public power/market mechanisms.	Democratic-Legal state power.
<b>Speed</b>	Planning in function of policies.	Real time.	Weakening of time-space constraints.
<b>Basic values</b>	Transparency, flexibility, juridical protection, confidence, disinterested service, general interest. Service is rendered regardless of the economic power of the user.	Standards and criteria Openness, choice, accessibility. Individual interest. Deregulation. Service provision is considered within market conditions.	Strengthening of state interests, higher integration as counter to the distributed technologies, their power relations and globalisation.

**Griffin 2002 (adapted from Vermeulen 1998 p179, and Zuurmond 1998)**

In this theoretical model the variety of shifting approaches (from government to governance), is usefully highlighted. Within these dimensions, accountability and regulation are policed via a system which combines traditional forms of public power, epitomised by bureaucracy in its original framework, and by a new mode of governance which sets bureaucracy alongside market mechanisms amidst the establishment of NPM values. However, the meta-governance model has an informatised component. For instance, older forms of government have shifted and have been displaced by that which some authors refer to as a ICT premised '*virtual organisation*' (Dutton 1999 p120). This model of governance is informatised and computer network based, it attempts to govern at a distance by adapting to previous ideological contexts (such as those engineered by the New Right), it accepts or promotes the concept of steering mechanisms and social - political participation, shared responsibilities, and the co-production of policy via these networks (Frissen 1996). The organisation itself is a network of collaborative designs, based around the electronic interchange of data and information, and co - ordinated via the market (Dutton 1999).

However, the search for new forms of rationality, and the desire to control both the internal dimensions of state policy, as well as the new distributed technologies, have brought about the emergence of the infocratic state. It seeks to extend its informatisation based capabilities through an extension of its '*reach or scope*' of actions (Ciborra 2000 p22). This new infocratic model is a reaction to the new situational context of power that informatisation presents.

The effects of new technologies will, it is argued, produce a new politics of location, citizenship, and democratic values (Grieco 2002). For example:

*'The distributed character of the technology, the distributed access to that technology and the distributed leadership structures which emerge in this context have consequences for the distribution of identity. In a globalised information context...communication exchange(s)...have radically overtaken the matching capabilities of any specific place' (Grieco 2002<sup>28</sup>)*

These promised shifts in the balance of power, and the new political forms that accompany them are being attended to by the U.K. state in other ways which are nevertheless related to informatisation. This is evidenced by the RIP Act (Scotland). It is an attempt by the state to match, control and re-locate the distributed 'capabilities' of these transient sites and spaces. For example, the need for new legislation is defined in the following way:

*'The U.K. and the Scottish Executive argue that the law governing the interception of communications has failed to keep pace with the rapid growth of communications technology in areas such as...the internet' (SPICE RN<sup>29</sup> 00/30 4/5/2001 p3).*

The above statement sums up the positioning of the chapter's two major themes. Namely that there is a United Kingdom wide recognition of the need to formulate a common unified strategic reply to such features, and that this

---

<sup>28</sup> Page numbers unavailable: book not yet at publication stage.

<sup>29</sup> Scottish Parliament Information Centre: Research Note.



should be prepared within the framework of the law. The rationale behind these strategies is to out - communicate, to over - power the distributed technologies. It is to reconfirm the centres position over and above the powers of dissolution. We shall now examine this set of ideas in more detail, specifically within the context of informatisation.

### **6.2.5 The re - alignment of the centre: the authority of the mainframe**

The distributed technology thesis that we have encountered above suggests that, mono - rational, mono - centric conformations of control<sup>30</sup> and sites of power are being replaced by new forms. Informatisation, within this school of thought, facilitates such a process. 'Control', as a contrasting concept, and as an organising principle, is equally under reconsideration.

For example, as Zuurmond (1998) asserts, control is now being exerted not through previous bureaucratic arrangements, but rather via networks. The point of divergence though for Zuurmond and infocratisation theory (which I set in opposition to those who would support a theory of power distribution/dispersal), is that power is effectively centralised through

---

<sup>30</sup> We should define what is meant by 'Control', and in particular how the term relates to informatisation. In the first instance we can consider the work of Beniger (1986) who argues that technologies are used by organisations to extend control, to broaden their command over circumstances, society, the economy, and so on. The orthodox perspective upon organisations is that control will produce a positivist course of order. In this sense technology augments: *'human action and thinking (and) pull(s) the messy everyday world towards an almost geometrical or mechanical view of the ....organisation, characterised by measurable and representable forces, linkages and dynamics'* (Ciborra and Hanseth 2000 p5). Globalisation, and global political-business strategies also include an element of control as an integral feature of policy. For instance, the co-ordination of a centralised strategy through information infrastructure, can be implemented in order to: *'(increase the) geographic scope for integration of activities and policies'*: (Hanseth and Braa 2000a.p44). Moreover, and in line with our previous conceptions of informatisation (chapter three, sections 3.4.1 to 3.4.3) 'control' has a reflexive component. For instance, as Hanseth and Braa (2000b p126) note in relation to information infrastructures: *'extending and improving the control structures and technologies.....is a reflexive activity- infrastructures are reflexive. Making larger infrastructures-to obtain enhanced control means making larger and more inter-connected networks.'*

mainframe political computing. In this sense, the advocates of new modes of governance who point towards future possibilities for a polycentric political system, fail to recognise that although the state is reacting to pressures from below, ceding authority in some important quarters, it is strengthening it at other points in order to compensate. This brings into play a consideration of other pressures which are imposing themselves upon, and therefore forcing the state to react. What are they and how can we relate infocratisation to their tendencies and impacts? We shall now examine this particular point.

There has been a reaction by the nation-state to the loss of autonomy and sovereignty experienced from both above and below<sup>31</sup>.

As such, the state is losing or devolving power at one level, yet centralising it through an increased investment in information systems, at another. As such, the apparent decentralisation of politics away from political institutions such as central government and public administration, has meant that in some important respects power has shifted outwards to devolved authorities and smaller nations: from Westminster to Scotland. Politics itself is becoming displaced from once established sources and centres. Van Dijk (2000) notes that the direction of power can be seen to shift from government towards networks. These networks are aided and assisted by ICTs which increasingly enable new political, economic and social relations to form (Rhodes 1997).

---

<sup>31</sup> The conditions that contemporary states are faced with are as follows. Firstly, the orthodox model of the nation-state is under pressure, it is losing or surrendering influence, authority, sovereignty (and even the monopoly of legitimate violence), to international organisations such as the European Union, the United Nations Security Council, and the World Bank. Secondly, the nation-state yields power to devolved regions and territories. It is as Guehenno (1995) notes, an era of uncertainty for the state at these, and other levels, of its existence.

A relational system of networks threatens to replace the centrist state, the nation and orthodox hierarchical politics. However, as politics spreads away from the nation state, then other political actors are likely to attempt to fill the vacuum (Guehenno 1995). Centralisation through infocratisation then, affords the state with the capacity to act and to defend itself from these pressures<sup>32</sup>. Such strategies produce the effect of displaying lateral, devolved administrative structures, but the inward reality is somewhat different (Taylor 1998). It is in essence, a new form of technocratic administration. For example, the co-ordinating aspects of bureaucracies are improved via the mainframe systems that are now executing a variety of integrative tasks and the collation of data. The expansion of these computerised systems produces an example of Zuurmonds infocracy in action (van de Donk 1999). The infocracy is a virtual organisation, a virtual public administration which is rapidly expanding its territory at a time when the nation state is conceding such authority. As van Dijk expresses it (ibid p34):

*'The use of ICT clearly strengthens the independent weight of public administration in relationship to the government it is supposed to serve. The normative power of traditional politics loses and technocracy takes over'.*

Yet, ideas such as these mean relatively little when considered in isolation. To develop a fuller understanding of their context we must consider them not simply as control technologies, but rather in relation to what it is that they seek

---

<sup>32</sup> Poggi (1990) and Foucault (1991b) observe the political technologies associated with the policing of large groups of disparate, mobilised and newly urbanised populations during the nineteenth century. R.I.P is a historical continuity in that it seeks to establish similar conditions of order over a perception of disorder.

to control. What is their purpose? To understand this means considering the development of ICTs in a reactive sense. We will now address this point.

#### **6.2.6 The flight from orthodox politics: the developing Information Union**

This section argues that the new information union acts as a counter to the centrifugal forces of online politics and E- collectivism (Greene et al 2001).

The impact of distributed technologies has aided:

*'A new generation of pressure groups'* (Grant 2001 p337).

These groupings revolve around a series of internet based challenges to established sites of political power and authority. For instance that the internet affords such a challenge is evidenced by the following quote:

*' Electronic adjacency provides opportunities for new enhanced forms of solidarity.....(and at the global level) enables the ready connection of those with similar aims at minimal effort...the old understanding of physical proximity as the primary precondition for solidarity is....under challenge: virtual organisation is a new and important key in the process of synchronisation of political and industrial relations movements'* (Greene et al 2001: @ [www.geocities.com/unionsonline/e\\_discourse.htm](http://www.geocities.com/unionsonline/e_discourse.htm))

These new movements range from direct cyber activists in South Korea mounting campaigns against 'corrupt' politicians and public officials (Donald 2000), to anti – globalisation protestors in a series of city demonstrations

throughout the world. New social movements such as these are presiding over a different conception of globalisation, one epitomised by:

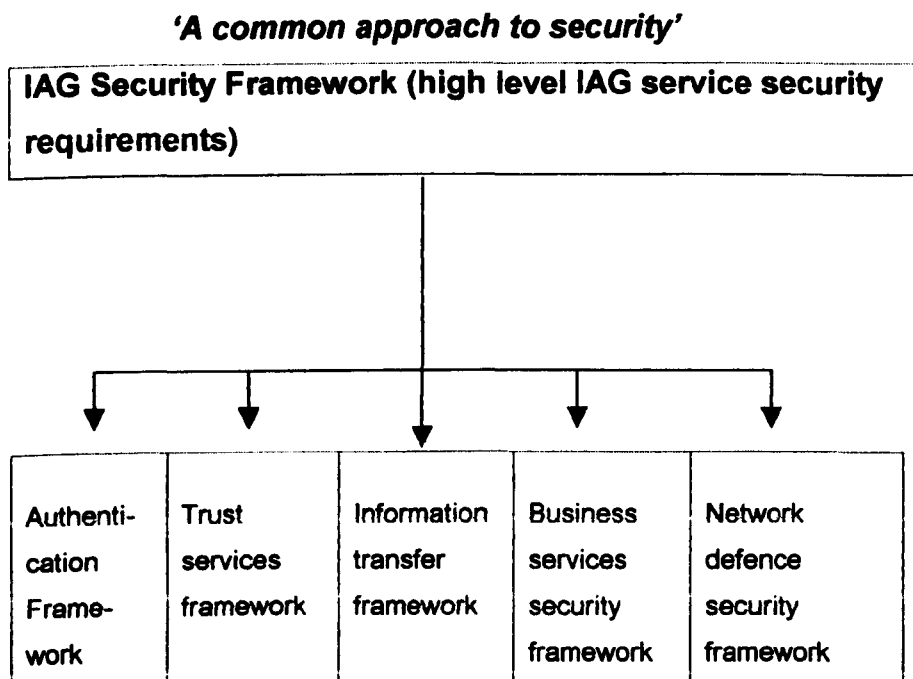
*'Globalisation from below - an international multitude which challenges the idea that the global surfaces of the world are inter - changeable' (Ainger 2001).*

In addition, the use of distributed technology to produce other forms of challenging organisational - political discourse is evidenced by the potentials that they provide to trade unions. For example, in relation to the production of a bottom – up politics based around virtual organisation and the potency of the internet for organisational and motivational purposes (Greene et al ibid, Hogan and Grieco 2000)

These ideas represent the flight from orthodox, closed, structural politics towards a new politics of distributed strategy and distributed relations. However, the state (and in particular the U.K. state) has responded by centralising its data, producing new surveillance methods, and the co-ordination of its devolved authorities in such a project. In this sense, these state based actions are a response to the centrifugal forces that we encountered above. The co - ordination of centralised and computerised frameworks allows the state to combat such developments. In addition, such technological exercises can be interpreted as an attempt to re - constitute its sphere of influence in an era of multi - level governance (Parsons 1998).

From this perspective it is asserted that informatisation has at its central project, ambitions to re - engineer the machinery of state, to re - design the political technologies of bureaucracy in order to offset distributed and devolutionary tendencies, within the context of the flight from orthodoxy, and the emergence of meta - governance and new institutionalism (van Dijk, 2000). In other words, the development of an infocratic model can be seen as an attempt by the state to re - produce order, and the re - positioning of itself once more at the centre of an information nodality, now challenged by the proliferation and distribution of ICTs . This can be illustrated by the following Figure (6.3)

**Figure 6.3 A Security Framework for UK Information Age Government**



**Source: 'Information Age Government in Scotland: A draft common framework' (2000, p13)**

The Figure illustrates the security provision for government data systems in their interactions with citizens and the private and business sectors.

It has re - positioned itself at the operative centre of a defensive informatised network which is closed to the externalities of civil society. As such, the decentralising ambitions of political actors are being met by a countervailing tendency to re - centralise. This leads to a return to those ideas concerning post war models of democratic integration. Most of these have stressed state management, over the economy for example, or models of control which sought to reconcile social and political differences via either technocratic forms, or through a corporatist structure (Therborn 1980). In other words, as power is seemingly re - distributed in a variety of political forms, it is at moments of relative political emergency, reformed and recomposed by new strategies. The new information union employs such a strategy via information architecture and centralised databases<sup>33</sup>. Infocratisation is an attempt to impose a consolidated order upon these alternative configurations of power<sup>34</sup>.

---

<sup>33</sup>For instance, these can exist under the auspices of 'data warehousing'. Data warehousing is comprised of five features; (1) the centralisation of already existing data stores; (2) electronic procedures for converting data into a standardised format; (3) the creation of the information architecture that allows centralisation; (4) the implementation of information tools which allow for data enquiry and information access. (Alexander and Grubbs 1999).

<sup>34</sup> The perceived decline in political participation as measured in electoral turnout, is contrasted by the growth of the new politics of participation ( Beck 1994, Taylor and Burt 2000). Other forms of political activity and agency are emerging, and becoming more visible through the transparency of the internet. Increasingly, citizens are by - passing the older institutional political establishments and focussing their energies upon alternative strategies, ideas and political action (van Dijk *ibid.*). Within civil society, organisations emerge in the form of pressure/interest groups, who themselves display new identities and a new sense of purpose; located around alternative interests (Della Porta and Diani 1999). This in turn brings into play a political tension between representative democracy and more direct forms of political activity. Centrifugal tendencies such as those described above, are based around a participation revolution that has been gathering pace since the 1960s, but which now draws a new strength and organisational framework from ICTs. As such, participatory politics appears to be taking on differing forms. Political action has shifted from political parties who, as mediators between parliamentary democracy and citizens, have traditionally been the integrative link. Direct democratic innovations such as initiated referenda may become a feature for example of the new Scottish politics.

The state reacts to such pressures by tightening its control over its internal security practices and its control technologies. However, in order to fully comprehend the reasons for a strategy of centralisation we must attend to broader macro perspectives. The concept of globalisation is important in these respects because it alerts us to some of the principles behind state based change. It is to this that we now turn.

### **6.3.1 Globalisation and the re-distribution of political power: the flow of power through information networks**

The political process of late modernity<sup>35</sup> has begun to re-distribute political power, individual responsibility has been similarly recomposed in line with the relative decline in welfare state functions (Offe 1996). Accordingly, a new dimension of politics has shown signs of asserting its position. In a similar fashion, the context of reflexivity has been transformed in this new era into a situation whereby:

---

<sup>35</sup> The fundamental link between the transformations of modernity and the political path it tread was premised upon a set of ideas concerning Citizenship. Two conceptions of citizenship are relevant here: one as a citizen whose political virtue is supported by a set of prescribed public democratic rights. And secondly as a privatised actor within a set of interests that revolve around the separate spheres of work, industry and family. The former field is considered as a component of the political system, whereas the latter is set within the conditions of rational bureaucracy and the development of legal administration. Weber accounts for other associated features including the necessity of a money based economy; taxes and their collection; the security of administrative position by regulation; the allocation of revenue. The political format is based upon the principle of political participation and the active engagement of citizens in the process. In turn, the power that is wielded by the state is realised only via the consent of citizens themselves. These principles are then a legitimate source of political action (Weber 1987).



*'we now live in the second form of modernity where institutions (governments, corporations, etc) have to take into account the effects of, and reactions to, their actions.'* (Dahl, G.1999 p63).

Globalisation has produced two contrasting forces and tensions which, in turn have set in motion the new politics of distributed strategy and distributed relations. For example, modernisation and industrialisation created the conditions associated with the rise of the flight from orthodox politics.

Dominant conceptions of progress were effectively removed from the political sphere in that techno - economic processes were abstracted from democratic engagement and procedures. They moved ahead of democratic accountability as Ulrich Beck notes:

*'only a part of the decision making competencies that structure society are gathered together in the political system and subjected to the principles of parliamentary democracy'* (Beck 1996 p184).

In turn, globalisation effectively removes other areas of life and political agency from the source of democratic decision making. Techno-economic advances are justified not by being the subjects of democratic engagement, but rather by their removal from precisely that area of political life. That which occurs within the parliamentary political system is seen as the legitimate context of debate and action, whilst that which takes place outwith is removed, and said to exist either within the private relations of civil society, or within the remit of science and its attachment with progress.

Here we can observe the conditions that have given rise to the new politics of the late twentieth/twenty first century: distributed strategy and distributed relations. They are a reaction against those areas of social and political existence that have been protected from political debate and action, by a historical process now called into question: modernity<sup>36</sup>.

It is, as Beck describes it, a process of political '*unbinding*'. By this he is suggesting that another sub system of political agency, and new forms of political discourse that change the defining principles of politics, have emerged as a result of their lengthy separation from established political engagement and orthodox political technologies. In other words, finding now that (particularly with the demise of welfare capitalism: Offe 1984) politics has shifted away from institutions and into instead the alternative politics of distributed relations, the political system has lost a series of its functions at a critical juncture<sup>37</sup>. This in turn has led to the evolution of alternative networks and new social movements which utilise the distributive capacities of ICTs

---

<sup>36</sup> Additionally, Beck's thesis on 'individualisation' should be developed in additional contexts (see chapter five). This makes reference to political socialisation and therefore, perhaps inevitably, political agency and structure. For instance, this post-industrial position notes how individuals are required to determine their own personal biographies. Identity is problematic in that the shift in social norms and an increasingly fragmented/differentiated society has produced less in the way of constructive materials normally associated with political and historical identification. Instead it is argued, taste cultures (themselves a formation resulting from the participation revolution of the 1960s: Dahl 1999.) begin to constitute a more readily available stock of identity materials. In addition, the 'New Times' thesis of the British left wing during the 1980s supplies us with evidence of the origins of the new politics and its relations with political computing. For example, as Callinicos (1994) notes during this era shifts of a new order were evidential within political relations, working practices and information technology as a transitional element. Beck's assertion is further enhanced by the flight of politics away from previous models of political socialisation that grew in tandem with the modernist state (definitions of politics in this sense include the breakdown of a consensus as to the '*common purpose*' of political existence and the appropriate methods to pursue them; Mackenzie, 1978 p109)

<sup>37</sup> For example, within scientific conduct (and the attendant notions of 'risk' that envelop it) the control decisions have rarely existed within any meaningful democratic sense. Therefore, as society attempts to distinguish between the constituent features of risk-benefit the debates

(Lenk 1998). As such, the new politics has moved towards a growing critique of a politics that cannot, or will not attend to the *condition of political diffusion*. This has moved politics away from previously coherent centres, and out into new social movements, cyber-space, and beyond (Schroeder 1998). Within the context of ICTs then as an alternative political technology, we can observe the establishment of a new set of political principles, and a new method and practice of political discourse, that has established itself in contrasting fashion to institutional forms. Beck provides evidence of such political displacement and its alternative location within ICTs:

*'the outlines of an alternative society are no longer seen in the debates of parliament or the decision of the executive, but rather in the application of microelectronics'* (Beck 1996 p186).

It is here that the outlines of political conflict can be traced, and the emergent historical practices and applications of political technologies, best understood. However, before we address the contemporary existence of a new political technology (one that is designed to limit the discursive spaces of alternative politics), we should consider the evolution of control technologies. This will provide us with some further context with which to address the use of *informatisation as a reactive technology*. The next section considers such points and begins with an appropriate context. The work of Beniger (1986) is established with a mind towards our exploration of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000.

---

become increasingly meaningless in that they are not cast within the dominion of democracy

### 6.3.2 Classical political technologies: the development of control

Beniger (1986) offers an appropriate historical analysis. He does so within the context of the industrial revolution, yet presents it within a setting that makes more recent developments within ICTs more prescient. Beniger argues that the development of information technologies during the early twentieth century was a reaction to the relative fragility and infrastructural weaknesses of the industrial revolution. He maintains that information technology was in effect driven by a need to compose order upon the complexities of the era. The co-ordination problem was attended to by three specific innovations.

In the first instance the development of more centralised and complete formal systems of bureaucracy emerge<sup>38</sup>. These replaced partial bureaucratisation. In this sense Weber's (1978 *ibid*) assertion that bureaucratic rationalities, and their accompanying technologies, are indispensable to the development to capitalism is developed upon<sup>39</sup>. In other words, such elaborations were dependent upon the systematic and predictable procedures associated with bureaucracy as a political technology (Therborn 1978 )<sup>40</sup>.

---

<sup>38</sup> The following quote from Hanseth and Braa (2000a p42) is noteworthy in this respect: *'Bureaucratisation has taken many forms: vertical integration...multi-divisional organisation(s)... This evolution of organisational forms can be looked at as the result of the development of more powerful control systems, to harness complex processes in nature and society'*

<sup>39</sup> Technology is inseparably linked with politics, both in ideology and policy. For Max Weber it was represented by a *'bureaucratic de-mystification of the world'* (Friedrich, 1952 p27). Weber's theories can be observed in relation to contemporary explanations and conjectures about the nature of bureaucracy, and the use of science to augment its designs, in the postmodern era. For example, the ideal type of bureaucratic form and function (as Weber highlighted in 'Economy and Society' 1978) and its paradoxical offering of the rationalisation of everyday life, coupled with the threats it contained for democracy, personal and intellectual freedom(s), is said to offer a caveat to democracy in much the same way as Weber suggested. The RIP/infocratisation measures are aimed at rationalising the use of ICTs, and offer a means of establishing a new system of control at the expense of privacy (a fundamental democratic right).

<sup>40</sup> As the same author notes (*ibid*. p137), these are; 1) a functional division of labour; 2) a

In addition, Beniger highlighted the expansion of a new communications and transportation infrastructure (telephony, railways etc). This in turn was accompanied by the development of a national mass communications system starting with a national press, and evolving into television. The concept of the *control crisis* refers to the inability of the organisational processes of a society (including the variable of communication as one of the chief co - ordinating mechanisms) to adapt to the speed and complexities of the situation (van Dijk 2000, *ibid*)<sup>41</sup>.

Political and industrial technologies then, were introduced as a means to solve the crises of control that followed the industrial revolution. The historical context of this is according to Robins and Webster (1999, p4) to be located within the early years of the twentieth century, this is when the systematic gathering and analysis of information occurs in:

*'The workplace, in the organisation of consumption, and in political relations'.*

The resolution of the crises was the organisation of disparate processes of production and government. These ambitions were realised via the production of control technologies. It is this desire for control based technologies that essentially provides the contemporary motive force for the developments within ICTs and political technologies (Dutton 1999).

---

hierarchy of authority; 3) rules which determine the specific tasks of officials; 4) standardised operating procedures; 5) the formally acknowledged impersonal set of relations between officials; 6) a technical meritocracy, whereby promotion and advancement is premised upon objective criteria. In addition, as van Dijk (2000) notes, 'time synchronisation' is an important feature.

<sup>41</sup> Van Dijk (2000) considers this within the context (s) of the first communications revolution. The second 'communications revolution' to which he simultaneously refers is characterised by post-war developments within computer technologies.

In this sense, ICTs are subjected to the law of Reinforcement Politics whereby their principal innovative context is to enlarge the abilities of organisations to control their environments (Danziger et al 1982). Additionally, the information generated from the first control revolution establishes the structural requisites for the second. In this sense, the volume of information generated produces a technological momentum for its increased calculus. As such, more sophisticated methods for producing such knowledge requires information technologies of more capable dimensions. Within the contemporary context, Benigers assertion that technology was used to impose order and control upon the practices of the industrial revolution, holds true in the sense of the rationalisation of information technologies. As such, the co - ordinative designs of the RIP Act, and the centralising structures of the new Information Union share common elements.

The former expresses a desire to bring into order, to control, the multiplicity of relations and political strategies which exist in cyberspace. The latter seeks to exert control via a new logic of centralisation. This has a historical dimension. For example, the idea of a new logic, or a new politics of centralisation, is a historical feature of the United Kingdom strategy.

For example, as Nairn (2000 p108/109) notes with reference to the Union of 1707 and its contemporary guise:

*'the logic of aggregation – of putting two countries together – was indeed 'entire union' and monolithic sovereignty...Does this logic still exist? Yes...the 'sovereignty' of the Anglo-British state continues, and so does its modus operandi...Mrs Thatcher's rule greatly reinforced its centralism and unitary character. Nor has this centralism been affected by Blair's changes, other than rhetorically - he still hopes Devolution will strengthen the all-British realm, rather than dislocating it.'*

The assertion of the information union thesis is that informatisation is effectively combined with devolution as a political technology designed to reinforce political union. It is then an instrument of Reinforcement Politics. The next section will consider a political scientific theory of union. This provides us with the additional means with which to consider those theoretical ideas that suggest a new information union is emerging across the United Kingdom.

#### **6.4.1 A theory of Union: synthesis versus devolved power arrangements**

Since the post war period Scottish democracy has consistently looked towards constitutional change, this political and cultural turn was exacerbated by consistent Conservative administrations which refused to consider devolution (McCrone 1992, Brown et al 1999). As such, the new Scottish politics embodies a variety of democratic energies, formulaes and deficits.

For instance, a different set of policy values and preferences have existed alongside a very different political culture South of the Border. In this sense, Scotland has produced a long history of constitutional challenge to the established format of the United Kingdom. Sovereignty, whilst remaining unified and intact has been questioned in Scotland in ways that the rest of the U.K. has largely avoided. The 'question' of Scotland then centres around its attachment to the Union, as a symbolic entity and as a wealth producing resource (Nairn 2000). The complexities of devolution, the necessity for change within limits, encourages us to consider the position of informatisation in these processes. The argument that follows is one that suggests that the reinvention of government within the U.K. is based upon the idea that information can be made to flow throughout the system of governance in ways that challenge the integrity of its separate information domains<sup>42</sup>. Bellamy and Taylor (1998)

Informatisation has become the new focal point of order and control, and the new axis upon which the integrity of the U.K. revolves.

---

<sup>42</sup> The concept of the *information domain* is taken from the work of Thompson (1967) who established a model of *organisational domain* authority, which set limits upon the range of influence that an organisation could legitimately claim authority over. It also established a theory of interaction between co-existing (and sometimes dependent organisations) who operated within the same operational network. Organisational domains serve to both guarantee some independence then, and also to establish system oriented predictability and planned outcomes. As such, Bellamy and Taylor (1998) adopt this model, but transfer it to the information polity environment. This involves recognising the influence and ownership of the informational resources in question: their specification, format, exploitation and interpretation. The empirical condition of information domains is understood as the information contained or controlled by specific actors who can control and organise it both physically and symbolically. An information domain is existent when significant control has been established so that information can be disseminated or withheld under circumstances that are negotiated from a position of power by dominant actors. The existence of an information domain is signalled by: 'A break in flows of information... compartmentalisation of information resources... idiosyncrasies of information specifications... the hegemony of specific discourses which shape information and influence its creation and interpretation. An information domain is the carving out of a sphere of legitimate autonomy within a network of resource dependent relationships (ibid p166/167).



The maintenance of the British unitary system of politics (evident and ever present since 1707) turns on the ability of one network to operate above all others. Supportive informatised infrastructures are systems that re - route information flows between formerly discreet bureaucratic entities. In so doing they provide an answer to the contradictions between co-ordination and specialisation within bureaucracies (Killian and Wind 1998).

They flatten out political differences and enable departments to access each others information flows and resources in ways that were hitherto impossible. Devolution then is an informatised power struggle concerned with the capture of information flow(s) and control technologies. The advancing Information Union across the U.K. needs to be examined then as a technology capable of achieving the specific results and advantages of union. The Information Union needs then to be placed within an appropriate framework. Functionalism is an important theoretical perspective with regards to such notions. This is because functionalists determine the position, or existence of a situation, in relation to a theoretical understanding of *social systems as a whole*. Within Parsonian structural functionalism for instance, society is conceived of within systems theory<sup>43</sup>.

---

<sup>43</sup> Parsons (1970 p283.) gives this unity the term of 'social system'. It consists of four specific generalities of interactions, and their related units. Firstly, there are: *'individuals in roles (who) are organised to form what we call collectivities. Both roles and collectivities...are subject to ordering and control by norms which are differentiated according to the functions of these units and to their situations, and by values which define the desirable type of system of relationships. Like the subsystems of action, these four primary structural subsystems of the social system are both analytically distinguishable and concretely*

Therefore we can utilise functionalism in order to explain the reactive capacities of a system threatened by change and friction.

Functionalist theory acknowledges that most actors involved will be dedicated to the general interest. Each actor (within the accompanying theory of consensus that resides within functionalism) wants the organisational structure to be arranged in the most functional way (Hoetink 1998).

Importantly, a *central actor* will realise the necessary adjustments. If we establish devolution as a principle of organisation, rather than as a value associated with political culture, then functionalist theory offers us an insight into the perceived weaknesses that it brings. For example, devolution is not seen as optimally functional, rather it produces or exacerbates already existing limitations in steering and control. Whenever possible steering and control must be tightened and any convergence re-aligned (Killian and Wind 1998).

We will now consider the role of information within a functionalist perspective. Given that this chapter asserts the evolution of an information union, we should examine the important role that information has to play in this regard. Functionalists share a similar perspective upon information to legalist democrats (van Dijk 2000). This approach highlights the idea that there is too little information: there is never enough optimality within such structures. As such, problems centre upon the lack of exchange and sharing of information. This produces problems in terms of integration and co - ordination. Policies on different levels of government cannot be fine tuned.

---

*interpenetrating.'*

Integrated systems cannot be correctly adjusted. According to the functionalist perspective government should strive to become more unified<sup>44</sup>.

Similarly, more integration and co-ordination is advantageous for government, and ultimately society. Functionalist theories introduce the concept of '*system disturbance*' whereby influences originating from one or more components produces change and disturbance in other sub-systems (Laszlo 1972).

The states survival, its continued existence, is dependent upon its adaptive capacities. For instance, a systems ability to adapt to circumstances that present themselves, will in turn relate to the mobilisation of appropriate resources. In this way we can begin to see the Information Union as a way of coping with a form of system disturbance, personified by devolution. The system reacts to an information disturbance by re - organising its own:

*'feedback mechanisms, input receptors, information - flow channels, memory components, decision making facilities and effectors'* (Laszlo *ibid.* p107).

Informatisation personifies these notions (especially in terms of its reflexive qualities), and extends the states power in so doing. These themes are explored now in terms of political computing within the context of the new 'Information Union'. As such, the next section addresses the ideas that we have discussed above in relation to their Scottish dimensions.

---

<sup>44</sup> In this sense informatisation within the devolved perspective, re-arranges information flows away from lateral agencies and authorities and back towards established Weberian

#### **6.4.2 A new Information Union: Information Age Government in Scotland**

By establishing a common information system, a commonality of political purpose across the U.K can also be achieved. The development of devolution as a political technology has appeared at precisely the moment when it is technically possible to keep its powers in check. This is achievable via an integrated political - information network. The '*Information Age Government in Scotland (2000*<sup>45</sup>)' document provides the empirical evidence of the synchronisation and proposed joint phasing in of information - union ambitions. For instance, this is to be achieved via data sharing, a common framework of standards, and the dissolution of previously held information domains. The document sets out the principal political and technical policies and requirements for the achievement of a common cross U.K interoperability framework. It describes a unity of purpose and design which aims to achieve the establishment of a full Information Union.

As such, it positions the Scottish Executive within an overall mandatory setting amidst a series of stages and requirements. It ensures the Scottish Executive's compliance to a number of Westminster initiated policy guidelines and standards. The main strategical points are set out in Table 6.2 (immediately below).

---

bureaucratic types (Vintar 1995).

<sup>45</sup> '*Information Age Government in Scotland: A draft common framework*' (2000) Digital Scotland Initiative, [[www.scotland.gov.uk/library](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library)]

**Table 6.2 The Information Union: strategy and outcomes**

**United Kingdom strategy    Scottish Executive strategy    Proposed outcomes**

e-Government strategic framework.	e-Government strategic framework. Adoption of collective approach.	Coherence in planning and delivery of electronic services.
Provision of e-Government policies and common standards across the U.K.	Interoperability process in accordance with U.K standards (mandatory provision).	Common approach strategy. Joined up services by 2005. Ending of information domains/islands.
Common cross U.K interoperability framework.	Adoption of technical standards and requirements to U.K standards.	Increased efficiency. Joined up services by 2005. Adoption of U.K wide data standards.
Removal of hindering legislative barriers to 'Joined up Government'.	Scottish Executive will remove policy barriers to electronic services.	'Seamless' Information Age Government.
Promotion of pan U.K collective approach to e-Government.	Adoption of appropriate technical standards in line with the rest of the U.K	Creation of Scottish Government portal with links to U.K. government portal ('U.K Online')
Common approach to security matters. Standards set by Cabinet Information Technology Unit (CITU)	Adoption of Information Age Government framework for standards.	Overall improvement in general alignment of security standards. Production of smartcards; citizen authentication.
Enforcement of Data Protection Act (1998).	Adoption of Data Protection Act of 1998.	Assurance of Public service compliance with Act.
Government Secure Intranet (GSI) to be improved to accommodate Joined up Government.	Extension of GSI to all agencies and departments within Scottish Public Administration.	Improvement in sharing and re-using of data. Provision for Scottish local authorities to join GSI based Extranet.
Modernising Government (White Paper of March 1999) set targets for all new public sector records to be electronically stored and received by 2004.	Adoption of cross U.K standards for Scottish Public Administration and National Archive of Scotland.	Greater inter-departmental working collaborations. Common procurement strategies Common provision of e-skills for public sector staff across the U.K.

**Source: Griffin 2002 (adapted from 'Information Age Government in Scotland' 2000)**

The above Table examines the planning process that is associated with the development of electronic government in Scotland and the United Kingdom. Its analyses leads us deeper into the territory of the approaching information union. The Table observes the technical detail concerning the advancement towards common standards and frameworks. The supportive information technologies are designed to ensure maximum compatibility and co-ordination<sup>46</sup>. Common data standards are engineered in order to promote inter-departmental processes and to ensure the delivery of a near unitary system of information integration.

---

<sup>46</sup> As Bellamy and Taylor (1998) note, information has a political element, and can be analysed at three levels; information as a political resource; information as exemplifying the established organisational standards; and information and institutional bias. Information as a Political resource for example, conceives of information as a tool which enables tasks to be undertaken, decisions to be made, or outcomes to be calculated. However, needing information which is held by others, (in order to achieve objectives for example), is a source of dependency. On the other hand, storing or keeping information that is required by others is, by contrast, a source of power. Informational asymmetries (the unequal possession of informational resources) lie at the heart of contemporary organisational power relations (Greene et al 2001). They can be thought of as being centred around issues which are designed to either control or to reduce dependency. Semantic as well as physical control can be used to restrict access to resources (Bellamy and Taylor *ibid*).

Information as exemplifying the established organisational standards, is concerned with the ways in which the specification of information resources (and the patterning of information flows) reflect and represent the procedural rules and normative conventions of governance. The ways in which they give tangible form to the expectations that control behaviour and define relationships for instance. The semantic significance of information in organisational politics is thus highlighted. It is not enough to simply possess it. It matters by whom it is possessed and how it is understood (Foucault 1980). It is therefore important how it is formatted, presented and communicated. This leads us into the third dimension of information politics as highlighted by Bellamy and Taylor: information and institutional bias. In this format information is seen as existing within its '*communication or storage medium*' (*ibid*. p165). This means that its form, and the use to which it is put, is integrated into the medium itself. This is a form of reflexivity within informatisation. Moreover, it is only communicable if the political (or otherwise) interpretations of its meaning are a shared resource. In this way, a common inter-operative framework will ensure that information delivered within such a network will provide centrality of purpose. Within our U.K. perspective the thesis argues that this will ensure a commonality of institutional outcome, within a given set of variables that is.

The Government Secure Intranet (GSI) complex provides the systems integrated ontology and integration functions at both the macro and the micro relations that we observed above<sup>47</sup>. The planning process is designed to create a system which offers internal transparency to *intranet* users. These users will eventually be able to access a largely homogenous database: thereby avoiding organisational premised information domains/islands. The proposals contained within the 'Information Age Government' Scotland document (see '*Information Age Government in Scotland: A draft common framework*' (2000) Digital Scotland Initiative, [[@www.scotland.gov.uk/library](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library)] 2000), seek to modernise government by unifying its post -devolutionary public administrative structures. Evidence from the proposals contained within the document suggests that the unification of information flows is perceived to be correlative to increased levels of efficiency, streamlined functionalities, and a more cost effective management of government interoperable resources and public services.

For example:

*'A common framework for the .U.K...(will be developed by)... an interoperability framework that provides policies and standards for achieving*

---

<sup>47</sup> As Frissen (1998a,b) notes, informatisation projects revolve around the controlling of social relations, rather than control of the physical environment. Within Zuurmonds infocracy (1998) the informatisation process renders bureaucracy effectively invisible. Formalisation and standardisation are removed from the surface and displaced into the information architecture itself. The information union uses surveillance techniques (often with public approval) and cost -efficiency strategies to advance its position. In other words, it uses the maxim of increased service delivery (including policing) and cost effectiveness to the tax payer-citizen, to further the project. Quality of services and complaint mechanisms provide the logical development of such processes, and can be related to the citizen through such terms. These informatised relations regenerate the possibilities of the nation state, they renew the primacy of space and territory and give a new dimension to those elements of political geography

*interoperability and information systems coherence across the public sector. It is a cornerstone framework policy for the U.K government strategy, and as such adherence to these policies and standards by U.K bodies is mandatory...The Scottish Executive is involved in consultations about these technical standards and....advocates their adoption....in Scotland...it will enable more rapid progress to be made in Scotland than if separate solutions were to be adopted': 'Information Age Government in Scotland: A draft common framework' (2000 pp7-8).*

The thesis contends that the broader political designs are to assist in the production of an information union: thus enlisting the adaptation of ICTs as an integrative set of political technologies designed to cement the United Kingdom project in the twenty first century. The breaking down of organisational boundaries is exemplified by the establishment of one stop shops (members of the public can obtain a variety of services via one portal). The administrative agencies present themselves as one integrated service.

The documentation also highlights the need for inbuilt information security mechanisms and goals<sup>48</sup>. These ideas and policy arrangements are given further drive and focus by the *21<sup>st</sup> century government* initiative. This policy form gives precedence to the modernising elements of informatisation<sup>49</sup>.

---

placed under threat by globalisation and post-modernisation, de-territorialisation and virtualisation.

<sup>48</sup> According to Joshi et al (2001) there are three key components of such a multi informational infrastructure. These support the interoperation of the political holistics. They consist of a joint collective security network which is established via a series of the following principles: confidentiality; this ensures that information is not disclosed without proper accreditation. There is also the concept of integrity; this ensures that governmental information is not tampered with by external or illegitimate sources.

<sup>49</sup> See: '21-st Century Government for Scotland': @<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/c21g/c21g.asp> by (the then) Scottish Executive Finance Minister Jack McConnell. 29/3/2000 @



This feature is, in line with similar U.K wide governmental targets, committed to establishing a feasibility programme for online services in Scotland to be delivered by 2005. The U.K wide strategy is provided by the *e-government strategic framework*<sup>50</sup>. Published on 3/4/2001, it provides a U.K. framework for ICT related issues, including commonality of standards, and guidance upon implementation. The framework is designed to ensure a coherent overall covering strategy for all U.K governmental departments. For example, by achieving a coherence of standards that relate to technical data based guidelines. These will assist in the development of a common interoperability framework. This interoperability offers a common approach towards data sharing.

This in turn will be achieved via the GSI and the development of a secure information system (described by the IAG document as a '*community intranet*', *ibid.* p16) which will link up U.K government bodies and agencies to each other. This proposal came from the Cabinet Office Central IT Unit (CITU@ [www.citu.gov.uk](http://www.citu.gov.uk)) and the Central Computer and Telecommunications Agency (CCTA@ [www.ccta.gov.uk](http://www.ccta.gov.uk)). The aim of the initiative is to promote and support joined up government, to provide a common research base, and to reduce duplication of data. The Scottish Executive<sup>51</sup> works closely with reserved areas of the devolution settlement in terms of its ambition to:

---

[http://www.scotland.gov.uk/news/press2000\\_04/se0406.asp](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/news/press2000_04/se0406.asp)).

<sup>50</sup> Links to this document (and other related data) are to be found at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/government/c21g/actionplan/target4.asp>, and at *E-government: a strategic framework for public services in the Information Age*: Cabinet Office April 2000 @ [[www.iagchampions.gov.uk](http://www.iagchampions.gov.uk)]

*'Ensure maximum linkages between reserved and devolved services'* ('IAG in Scotland: A draft common framework', *ibid.* p6) .

An interview conducted with a senior member of the Scottish Executive revealed the following quote in respect of this (see Table 6.3 below)

**Table 6.3 A new interoperability framework: the commonality of the U.K project**

*' We ( the Scottish Executive) take the e-GIF (e-government interoperability framework) as a whole currently, and we will mandate it in Scotland as far as we can, and recommend it. Beyond that, Scotland retains its right to vary from e-GIF, but clearly interoperability is important and we would only vary if it was absolutely imperative for Scottish interests.'*

**Source: Griffin 2002, interview with senior member of Scottish Executive.**

Previously domain based computer networks are to be merged to this end.

The quotation evidences further the move towards synopticism via informatisation. It is in effect a holistic synthesis, its ambition is to produce a co - ordination and integration of efforts via a unitary (or near unitary) information architecture. The presumption may be made that a commonality of purpose and goals is an additional feature. The IAG document provides collective documentation and evidential data concerning these ambitions.

---

<sup>51</sup> The Scottish Executive joined the GSI framework in 1999.

It provides the protocols and technical standardisation necessary to produce the extension of political computing<sup>52</sup>. For example:

*'The U.K governments e-government strategic framework...provides a U.K framework for guidance and standards....designed to promote coherence in planning e-services by public sector bodies, and covers security, authentication and privacy; technical and data standards to help achieve interoperability and best use of information resources; and projects to develop infrastructure services...'*

**('IAG in Scotland' 2000 p5)**

In this instance it is designed to administer control and power over devolution, and to offer systematic direction to the historical Scottish moment.

As such, the co - operative architecture and the exchange of information/data, will (in theory<sup>53</sup>) wear down any boundaries and separate information

---

<sup>52</sup> The notion of political computing should be regarded historically. For example, Nora and Mincs (1981) work can be related to science and the re-construction of society within added historical dimensions. Moreover, as Crick (1986) notes, the whole concept of re-making society is a derivative of scientific law - it is applied towards an understanding of society and of a scientific method to move it in a given direction. It is an ideological notion, scientism, that considers science as the only legitimate branch of human knowledge. Government then applies such a theory towards society. Surreptitiously, or falsely as Popper (1963 p45) would argue, when applied within the context of science acting as '*an instrument of far-sighted politics*'. In other words, the technological methods of prediction are the basis of a form of social and political engineering. They suggest a pathway of actions open to the pursuants of a specific design. Within this feature of historicism lies the principle of '*operative forces*' (ibid.) and the construction of institutions whose remit is to assist in the development of social forces, or indeed to restrain them, or to guide the laws of social development via '*technological sociologies*' (ibid p48). As such then, the political technology which at one level extends the opportunities for enlargement of the democratic principle, can be said to operate paradoxically in that at another level it restrains and narrows such forms. So, within historicism then aims can indeed be achieved, but never strictly according to the plans and methods created for them. The paradox of the political technologies is that they cannot account for unintended consequences of their actions and initiatives.

<sup>53</sup> Bellamy and Taylor (1998) offer a challenge to synopticism and the idea of information integration. For instance, reinvention or modernisation of government strategies are built

domains. Additionally, significant attention is given to security issues. These are indicative of the challenges which face a multi - domain information environment. A secure information infrastructure is also required in light of a heterogenous information environment (rather than separate domains which are less permeable), they also offer a useful contrast between the authority of the state to intercept the electronic communications of its citizens and business interests, whilst rendering its own operations as far as possible, impervious to similar processes.

However, we will now explore another component of information integration. The following section will approach the government's commitment to electronic government/information age government from a different perspective. This section then explores the ability of the state to legally intercept the electronic communications of its citizens and the abilities this affords it in terms of countering in a different (yet related) way the power of distributed technologies.

#### **6.5.1 The New Politics of surveillance: the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (Scotland) 2000**

In this section we will examine the New Politics of surveillance. This will be achieved through an analysis of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (Scotland) 2000. The following exploration of surveillance offers an account of the centralising tendencies and the authority of the U.K government within the

---

around the idea that information will flow un-problematically throughout the system. Separate and largely autonomous information domains (or 'Islands' as the Information Age Government' Paper terms them) will disappear. However, established bureaucracies may be unwilling to surrender their spheres of influence, and relative autonomy.

practices and politics of cyber-space. We examine the imperatives of state control in relation to the new politics of distributed technologies. As such, this part of the chapter develops the logic pursued in the preceding sections, and the reasoning behind the new politics of surveillance. Initial conceptions of surveillance capacity (as a developing state technology) are evaluated within a context of the state and the collection of information.

This produces empirical evidence of the relations between political computing and the citizen state interface. Whereas previous components of this chapter explored informatisation at its macro level, the following sections detail its involvement at the micro sphere of political relations.

This is a necessary condition in that without the means to link up these elements the infocratic polity would be less efficient. In effect, the following sections offer an account of the complexities of surveillance as they are applied to the micro - physics of political - social relations. Power as a medium of control is to be thought of as an energy that flows through the communication networks. Once distributed technologies are recomposed and reformed, and their power drastically reduced (it is argued here) via the centralising authority of GTAC<sup>54</sup>. The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act is the means by which a legal framework is provided for:

*'the constant monitoring of the entire British population ( which gives) the state powers to control our lives and behaviour.'* (Mackay 2000)

---

<sup>54</sup> GTAC: the Government Technical Assistance Centre. All internet service providers are legally obliged to channel their communications through this system. See Figure 6.2 'An intra-systemic model of the information union: its information architecture'.

The state is using a combination of legal enforcement and informatisation to reframe its power in relation to the distributed technologies. It does so via the centralised authority of 'Mainframe' political computing, whose function (in this instance) is to connect up the distributed and the devolved, the nonconformist and the doctrinal, to the developing infocracy. As Rose (1999 p5) notes in relation to the historical context of the state, it seeks to multiply its:

*'Circuits of power...within a whole variety of complex assemblages.'*

Informatisation is the means by which such a strategy is currently being pursued. However, the following section offers a brief account of the Act and a summary of its main components. The Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000 was introduced as a Bill on the 25<sup>th</sup> of May 2000 by the Minister for Justice Jim Wallace<sup>55</sup>. The Scottish Parliament's Justice and Home Affairs Committee was the lead Committee, in this sense the Committee reported to the Scottish Parliament on the Bills progress and principles. The Scottish Executive ensured (with the assistance of the Justice and Home Affairs Committee), that the two Anglo – Scottish Bills (both of which were making their way through their respective parliament's) were compatible across the U.K as a whole. The R.I.P. Act replaces the Police Act of 1997 and reforms the use of covert investigatory powers that the state is able to wield.

---

<sup>55</sup> The United Kingdom version of the Bill (House of Commons Bill number 64) was introduced to the Westminster Parliament on the 9<sup>th</sup> of February 2000.

The chief purpose of the Scottish Act is to:

*'Regulate the use of surveillance and covert human intelligence sources by relevant public authorities in Scotland.'* (Report of the Justice and Home Affairs Committee stage 1 Report on the R.I.P. (Scotland) Bill 1 SP Paper 141 @[www.Scottish.parliament.uk/official\\_report/cttee/just-00/jur00-05-02.htm](http://www.Scottish.parliament.uk/official_report/cttee/just-00/jur00-05-02.htm))

The Act has, as a further statement of ambition, the desire to:

*'Place the surveillance powers of the Scottish Police and the National Criminal Intelligence Service, and the use of covert human intelligence sources in Scotland, on a statutory basis.'*

(Scottish Parliament Information Centre Research Note RN 00/30 4/05/2000).

The Act deals with the interception of electronic communications and, like its U.K. counterpart, regulates the interception and disclosure of communications data. It does so by making it illegal for internet service providers to keep secret the encryption keys of their customers and clients<sup>56</sup>. The state is now able (legally) to intercept communications being transmitted via commercial and private networks. This includes the transmission of data travelling through personal computers. Warrants for the interception of such

---

<sup>56</sup> This in turn up-dates the 1985 'Interception of Communications Act' which allowed the statutory interception of postal and telecommunications material (It operated in tandem with a series of similar intrusive legislation laws and strategies; The Security service Act 1989; The Intelligence Services Act 1994; The Security Services Act 1996; The Police Act 1997). The R.I.P Act repeals this/these previous Acts of Parliament. The RIP Act also replaces the 'Interception of Communications Act 1985' and is intended to modernise the powers of state intelligence in a new information age: (Source: SPICe Research Note: RN 00/30)

communications are to be issued by the Secretary of State. The following Table (6.4) offers a summary of the Acts main components.

### Table 6.4 The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (Scotland) 2000

<b>Part</b>	<b>Provisions</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
<b>Part 1 chapter 1</b>	<b>Deals with the interception of communications and the disclosure of communications data.</b>	<b>In the interests of national security.</b>
<b>Part 2</b>	<b>Deals with intrusive surveillance by covert means and methods.</b>	<p>" "</p> <p><b>For the purpose of preventing or detecting serious criminal activity.</b></p>
<b>Part 3</b>	<b>Makes provisions for the investigation of electronic data which is protected by encryption processes.</b>	<p>" "</p> <p><b>For the purposes of safeguarding the economic well being of the U.K or for circumstances deemed fit by the Secretary of State.</b></p>
<b>Part 4</b>	<b>Deals with the functions of the Intelligence Services.</b>	" "
<b>Part 5</b>	<b>Miscellaneous and supplemental.</b>	" "

**(Source: SPICe Research Note: RN 00/30, 2000)**

Effectively the Act offers a strengthening of the states plans to establish a secure communications system. It also offers security for the states own information systems in that the surveillance of state communications by illegal means is cast within new statutory circumstances.



This adds additional support to the existing political order. In addition, it provides a legal framework for the electronic surveillance and monitoring of the U.K population. It offers near unlimited powers for the police and other state security forces to intercept all electronic communications. It enables the interception of real time internet and email communications (without a warrant in many instances) and allows for national security issues to be defined in abstract terms of engagement. The Act regulates for the interception, acquisition and the disclosure of encryption packages used by internet service providers. The U.K government and the Scottish Executive argued that the law had failed to move in tandem with a rapidly changing communications environment. The vitality of the Internet, its privately networked logic, and its largely un - policed character, has given direction to a new legal requisite (Stanyer 2001). The growth in distributed technologies has produced a political vacuum that the state now wishes to occupy.

The use of electronic communications by anti - globalisation activists in Genoa during the G8 conference in July 2001, and the co - ordination of anti - fuel tax demonstrations in a similar manner, provides a context within which to situate such legislation. In Scotland, the Scottish Crofters Foundation have formed electronic internet based links with the International Peasant's Farmers Union ('Via Campesina'). This is in turn linked with the Brazilian land reform group the M.S.T (Landless Movement of Brazil) and gives some illustration of the unifying political ability of these distributed technologies.

Other reasons behind the initiation of the Act can be found within the telecommunications policies of previous administrations. For example, the state has lost the dominance it gained over private telecommunications operators during the 1960s (Dutton 1999). Since the advent of wide - spread telecommunications privatisation during the 1980s, the state has surrendered this advantage. It now seeks to redress the balance in some respects. In containing the private sectors communication assets it is able to do so. In this sense the state effectively *re - nationalises information* through legal - democratic means of interception, indeed the possibility of such a function curtails the actions of the private sector when they might be deemed to be in opposition to the states economic concerns. It effectively restores the primacy of politics to telecommunications.

In doing so it offers a new conception of state intervention in an era characterised by state withdrawal or 'partnership' conditions. An understanding of the distributed discourse/technology condition should take into account the idea that such autonomist processes are symptomatic of a move towards what Ciborra (2000) terms as '*drift*'. Control therefore is a difficult science. Unexpected situations, outcomes, and processes occur. The challenge for the state therefore is one of '*strategic alignment*' (Ciborra 2000 p5), whereby it does all it can to retrieve its powers of steering. In the following sections we examine how this is achieved, through a theoretical account of R.I.P. It is examined in the immediate instance within the context of informatisation and the additional powers that it offers to the state.

## 6.5.2 Political reflexivity and political computing: the formation of new electronic power relations

We have observed the tension between the distributed technologies and distributed discourse in relation to centralised government and the conditions of power that they wish to control. So far we have noted that the state seeks to re - integrate these disparate communications networks into its field of command relations. The suggestion is then, that through legal means and methods of enforcement, the state will counter any challenges to its hegemony through political computing. The centralisation of the states information network allows it to observe and to intercept any countervailing communications. We should now give some consideration as to how this is achieved. What specific advantages does the state possess that allows it a measure of advantage over distributed discourses?

The state has prevalence in some important respects. Its centralised position of inspection (Foucault 1991b), and its position at the core of the social – political network (Hood 1983) allow it to make use of what Dunsire (1993) refers to as ‘collibration’<sup>57</sup>. Moreover, the state has the ability to produce

---

<sup>57</sup> Dunsire (1993 p31) makes reference to ‘collibration’. This concerns the interplay of mutually unbalanced forces: they can be tightened within one realm and slackened in another. Moreover, collibration refers to the idea that the process of decision making within governance is itself a form of self regulating political mechanism(s). The decision process is itself the product of isostasy (multiple conflicting tensions: Dunsire *ibid.* p29), the art of state then, the political technology of power, is comprehending the moment when intervention on behalf of one force rather than another will bring about the intended end. For example, the securing of alternative political interpretations can produce such a position. Recent events in Genoa (at the World Trade Summit in July 2001) offer a way of considering these notions. The violent actions of radical anarchists was ignored by police, despite the fact that a strategical balance, and offensive majority was theirs. However, in order to advance their position, they attacked the non violent Genoa Social Forum (Monbiot 2001). This is an example of securing the intervention of opposing forces on behalf of the state in that the attention of the media is focused upon the violence of extremists, where the ambitions of the ‘dispossessed’ are to be clearly witnessed, whilst the organising passive dimensions are brutalised. Conflict is demonised and organisation pacified.

*reflexive data*. In this sense the volume of information generated produces a technological momentum for its increased calculation. More sophisticated methods for producing knowledge set in motion greater requirements for ever more capable technologies. In this sense the state can use informatisation as a political tool with which to produce advantage over its non reflexive counterparts. These ideas concerning informatised reflexivity are given substance via the following quote:

*'Decision algorithms (are) embedded in the software. Data entry in computer screens is followed by decision making by the computer. Knowledge based systems...derive conclusions based on the information entered into the system'* (Zuurmond 1998 p265)

In addition, the '*storage capacity*' of the state is greatly enhanced by ICTs (Giddens 1987 p5). This is a vital resource in terms of technology enabling the state to generate, as it were, more political power. The storage dimensions that a state can apply, can be considered in terms of both surveillance and other '*mechanisms of domination*' (ibid. p35). It is the states ability to store information and knowledge, that allows it to control and to advance its position (Hood 1983). For example, through temporal and spatial control devices that enable the extension of information based power<sup>58</sup>.

---

<sup>58</sup> These themes can usefully be expanded upon via the work of Dandeker (1990) who observes the strong relationship between surveillance by the state of its subject population and the environments that they inhabit. Centralised information control by the state via rapid communications systems, constitutes one institutional component, from four, of modernity. Other components of modernity that relate to these themes are identified by Giddens (1987). These are: (A) A centralised state administration with a monopoly of the legitimate means of violence. (B) Large scale business enterprises dominate. (C) Division of labour is co-ordinated by rational technologies. This is increasingly achieved by ICTs. (D) Rational

Power is generated from centralised political structures and spreads outwards. However, the political geography of distance acts as a barrier to rule and the compliance of populations. The greater the distance apart, the longer time taken to effectively police 'wayward' populations. Informatisation on the other hand now allows centralised control to reach outwards more efficiently. There are other distinct advantages that the state possesses, and which in turn are useful indices of a power - informatisation relationship. They include the capacity of the information system to store, and to fine - tune the data which has been collected. The greater the degree of refinement available to an organisation then the higher the ability to model interventionist/control policies or: *'technical efficiency and predictability'* (Lyon 1994 p29). This in turn can be placed within the concept of centralisation.

The centralised access now available via ICTs allows the summoning of information from any given point in the network. This can be used and adapted to cross reference data. The integrative capacities of new computerised networks (and their increasingly common data standards: Raab 1998) can be read as a negative shift towards a more authoritarian society and associated security practices (Deibert 1998, Webster 1998, Lyon *ibid*)<sup>59</sup>. In addition, there is the *velocity* of the flow of information. How long does the surveillance information take from the moment of its gathering, its transferral from source to centre, and then its processing into knowledge that can be

---

bureaucracy is the principal administrative form.

<sup>59</sup> Control technologies include electronic monitoring devices, these assist in the interception of electronically transmitted data transactions: profiling of citizens with 'typical' questionable activities and so on. The GTAC system is capable of intercepting all information electronically submitted information going in or out of the U.K.

used to supervise and/or analyse behaviour?<sup>60</sup>. The next section addresses these points through the application of Michel Foucault's theories in relation to the new politics of surveillance in Scotland.

### **6.6.1 The work of Michel Foucault: Informatisation and the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000**

In this section we make the link between informatisation, the knowledge that the state possesses regarding its subjects/citizens, and R.I.P.

In this sense Informatisation involves the codification of knowledge<sup>61</sup>, and its re-conceptualisation through further computerised processes<sup>62</sup>.

This theory draws upon a historical analysis of surveillance and discipline.

For Foucault both of these concepts are accorded the status of political technologies. This is the theme which I illustrate with respect to ICTs, themselves political technologies within this Foucauldian sense.

---

<sup>60</sup> As Webster (1998 *ibid* p90) notes, the introduction of CCTV (in which the UK is a world leader in terms of its wiring up of public spaces) has much to do with 'trying to (change) behaviour sequences', rather than producing an account of criminal structures. As the same author notes (*ibid.* p93), the European Parliament 'Scientific and Technological Options Assessment Unit' classed CCTV as a 'technology of political control' in 1998.

<sup>61</sup> As Foucault notes (1980) there is a symbiotic relationship between power and knowledge: power correlates strongly with knowledge. The power/knowledge axis is for Foucault an essential component of all social and political relations. Within the condition of governmentality (*ibid.* 1991a) it refers for example to a flow of power that is pluralist and ultimately reversible: therefore governmentality aims to regulate the conduct of individuals by alerting themselves to the importance of internalising such practices. The 'knowledge' feature of this axis is the realisation of power through discourse(s). It is discourse that constructs and effectively distinguishes power as 'real' and representable. (Foucault 1980, Hindess 2001, Jessop 1990).

<sup>62</sup> Transactions once hidden below the surface of social affairs are made transparent and given meaning through informatisation (Taylor and Van Every 1993). Within the idea of surveillance there are ideas concerning how information is gathered and kept, collated and used to supervise the activities and conduct of subjects and citizens (Giddens 1987). This can be achieved in covert or overt form. The former can be characterised as consisting of information that is surrendered voluntarily, perhaps as part of a bureaucratic exchange relationship (Hood 1983), such as the recipient of state security benefits who submits information in order to receive welfare. The latter (covert gathering of information) can be achieved via technical devices such as Foucault's panopticon thesis (Foucault 1991b).

The informatisation of bureaucracies brings with it the possibility of a new technocratic situation (Snellen 2001). For instance, the principles of technocratic rationality observe the condition that set objectives can best be met by replacing human subjectivity with a form of technology (perhaps a political technology) that enacts the same processes but with greater supposedly objective refinements. The technological transparencies revealed through the political computing designs that we have encountered within the reflexive component of informatisation (as illustrated in chapter three), are acted upon without further human involvement. Thus, the contention is that these reflexive forms produce new political/bureaucratic positions, but perhaps not democratic ones<sup>63</sup>.

However, we will now introduce a further critical element to the equation. The concept of Foucault's '*Diagram*' model allows for the expansion of the above ideas concerning surveillance and information gathering. The Diagram theory is up - dated to include informatisation as an additional feature<sup>64</sup>.

---

<sup>63</sup> As van Dijk (2000) Foucault (1991a) and Taylor (1998) all note, the registration of information is a historically constant feature of the state. In this sense twenty first century, or postmodern, public administration will be no different. Registration can be defined as the collection of information by the centre. The gathering and storage of information is established against the surface appearance of meta – governance (which suggests devolution and regional/localised autonomy), yet the advanced registration techniques of government are being used first and foremost to further the states own power interests. This is achieved by the wholesale collection of information by the state itself (through census, tax returns, social security declarations for instance), and its exchange of information with other agencies. For example, the registration of political opinion is pursued as a strategy within political marketing and market research. The crossing of boundaries that are a staple form of meta governance suggest that there are similarities of purpose between private and public sector interests in many fields: one of which is information.

<sup>64</sup> Foucault's historical thesis observes the states means of registering and locating (through bureaucratic administration and a policing of citizens) via a variety of political technologies. For Michel Foucault the individual is considered as the 'subject' of a system of knowledge at both the micro and the macro levels of human - state existence, respectively. This constitutes a political (and moral) science of control which works to locate the individual within a number of additional concerns. These are to be observed as existing within the strategies of discipline

This allows us to understand how informatisation works at the micro level. This in turn takes us nearer to a comprehensive understanding of the RIP Act which we will establish as central to this equation. Using the example of the Panopticon as a metaphor for wider forms of political technology, Foucault describes how the formulae of state control spreads throughout the social and political body. It takes on the form of a disciplinary mechanism: a set of general political principles that act as constraining devices (Rose 1999). The Diagram can be considered again within the conception of governmentality that Foucault establishes as an operative facet between the state and citizen (ibid 1991a). Foucault's treatise on power and discipline is informed by the idea that citizens will in effect internalise the norms and values that they are exposed to. This for Foucault is the absolute rationality of government: the concept of governmentality is applied to illustrate the totality of citizen/subject, and the interconnections between them and the state which strives to administer their actions. The operationalisation of this concept is further achieved through a conception of power and control which Foucault describes as 'Police'<sup>65</sup>.

---

that the state (and its related technologies) are able to apply. The science of moral control revolves around the manner in which we are positioned as the bearers of our own knowledge. These moral-scientific concerns are, for Foucault, set within the development of Modernity and the establishment of political technologies that have, as their common grounding and ambition, domains of power. These domains are disciplinary formats and strategies which range in form and practice from established fields of knowledge and their embodiment through discourse, to structural features and locations such as prisons and hospitals (Foucault 1991b). For Foucault this is best evidenced within his conception of 'Diagram' (ibid p205). 'Diagram' is the archetype of political technology: it is a configuration of power which is distinct and operative within specific formulas. It is: *'the diagram of a mechanism of power reduced to its ideal form: its functioning, abstracted from any obstacle, resistance or friction, must be represented as a pure architectural and optical system: it is...a figure of political technology that may and must be detached from any specific use'*, Foucault (ibid).

<sup>65</sup> The state and its technologies of governance are conceptualised by Foucault as 'Police': the science of control. In *Discipline and Punish* (1991b) Foucault contends that state control develops as a network of power, a cameralist political technology, capable of supervising individual conduct and their regulation. Moreover, the state is privy to a knowledge that sets it



These are mechanisms of power that enable the smallest minutiae of conduct to be observed and detailed, catalogued and conferred upon (Gordon 1991). It is the harbouring by the state of a desire to 'discipline' its subjects. For instance, for Foucault the concept of discipline is a typology of power that operates on a constant and permanent plain. The exercise of discipline<sup>66</sup> is itself manifested through the dual surveillance programmes of the 'Diagram' and the attached process of governmentality. Both these concepts are overarching and hierarchical (Foucault 1991a, 1991b). The panopticon - diagram is an amplification of power: the operative form intensifies the numerical degree of those surveyed, at the same time it has a preventative dimension which observes that its application functions to constrain<sup>67</sup>. Citizens/subjects internalise the supervisory mechanisms associated with the Panopticon. Never knowing the condition of their supervision, whether observed or otherwise, the presumption acts as a disciplinary force over behaviour and action which can be characterised as one of:

*'Power of mind over mind.'* (Foucault 1991b p206).

---

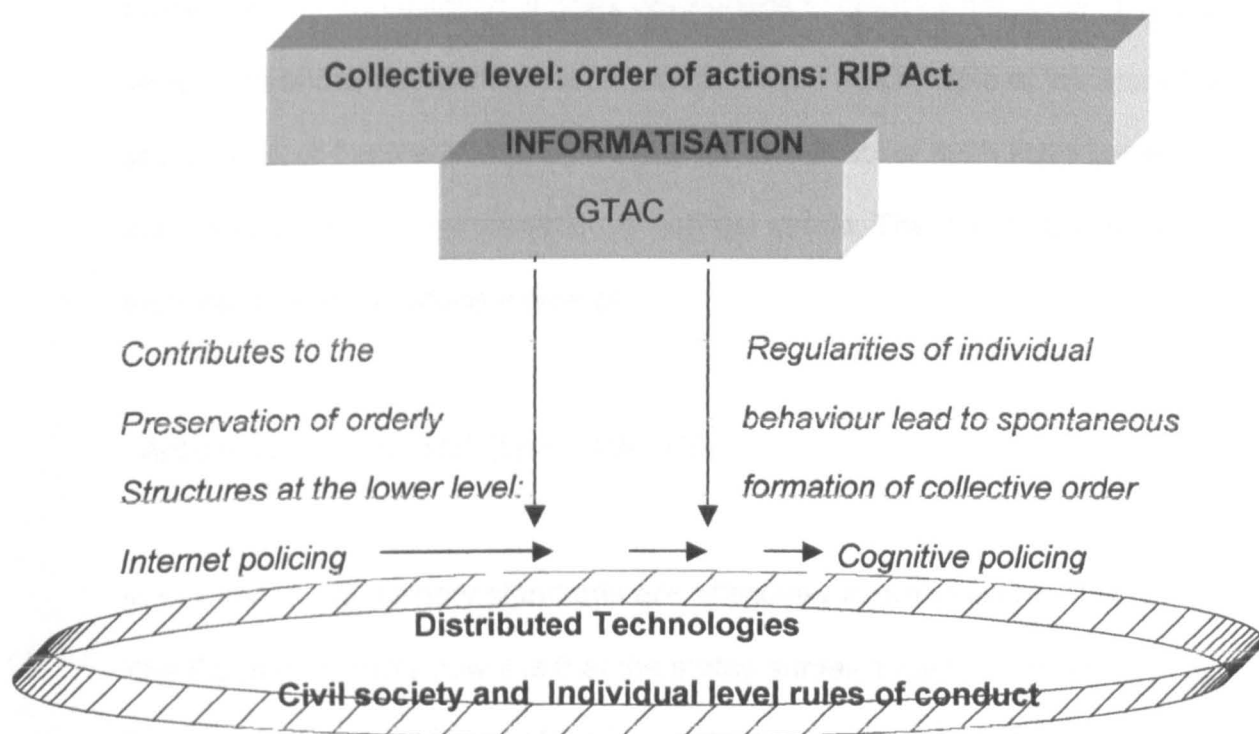
above and apart from the individual, and the future. The state is the arbiter of its own immediate context, it alone formulates the notion of sovereignty. For instance, as Gordon (1991 p9) notes: '(the state has)... *a knowledge which in part may not and cannot be accessible to the ruled, and is liable to dictate governmental acts of a singular unforeseeable character*'.

<sup>66</sup> For Foucault (1991b, p215) 'Discipline' is a host of power relations a: '*whole set of instruments, techniques, procedures, levels of application, targets: it is a 'physics' or an 'anatomy' of power, a technology*'.

<sup>67</sup> For example, the state has specific integrative features alongside the supervision of civil society (for instance via CCTVs and the construction of an electronic surveillance infrastructure (Webster 1998). This in turn can be considered in terms of Dandekers assertion that surveillance is: '*an aspect of all social relationships (and) an administrative means of reproducing a social system of rule*' (ibid p38).

This is the formal link between Foucault's panopticism and governmentality, this is the Diagram. It can be expressed within the conditions of the RIP Act in the following Figure (see Figure 6.4 'Governmentality, authority, the Internet and the RIP (Scotland) Act 2000).

**Figure 6.4 Governmentality: the Internet and the RIP Act 2000**



Griffin 2002 (Adapted from Lange-von Kulesa: 1997 p85, Greene et al: 2001, Foucault: 1991a, b,).

The Figure should be read in the following fashion. The collective order of actions refers to the states ability to intercept all email based discourse. The R.I.P<sup>68</sup> therefore works in combination with the Government Technical Assistance Centre (GTAC) to produce a level of Panopticon based order. The

<sup>68</sup> The model applies across the U.K. as whole, rather than Scotland singularly.

informatised dimensions of the state ensures that the distributed technologies are effectively gathered under one state based condition of authority.

As such, the units of information are gathered up within the machinery of the state, the citizen/subject is aware of this and the implications that it entails.

This ensures that the subject internalises, and adapts his/her (distributed) behaviour and discourse accordingly. Power then, is re - formed around a hierarchy of informatisation, it flows downwards to create what is effectively an extension of the states information architecture. The principle of transparency at the heart of the New Politics is reversed. The effect of such state based actions ensures the internalisation of political norms. These are spread via technologies and produce a type of:

*'Anticipatory conformity'* (Lyon 1994 p70).

In this sense, disciplinary standards are effectively internalised by citizens.

The Figure illustrates how it is that the states surveillance techniques operate.

The idea is that the policing of the internet (evidenced via the RIP Act)

effectively produces a form of cognitive policing<sup>69</sup>. In this sense the force of

the state is internalised by citizens. An awareness of the flow of power and the

---

<sup>69</sup> Within the field of cognitive policing there is a form of moral theory, or moral psychology. This in turn provides us with the crucial link between structure and agency. For example, the RIP Act promotes a system of normative morality, or normative ethics. The articulation of morality in an ideal sense is a component of structural functionalism in that morality, and the relationship of the individual to the broader social collectivity, must be organised by a centralising force. In this instance it is the law. In particular, moral concerns at paedophiles use of the Internet may serve as a form of embodying the 'collective consciousness'. This can be described as *'the body of beliefs and sentiments common to the average of the members of a society'* (Aron 1970 p14), and as a means with which to legitimise internet/information constraints. For instance, as Flanagan and Rorty (1990 p1) note: *'every traditional moral theory presupposes a theory of the structure of character and agency...proponents of each theory attempt to provide justifications for conceiving of morality in a way that can motivate agents and guide practical deliberation. They want to promote a specific way of life, certain sensitivities of thought and feeling, as well as appropriate actions and practices'*.

extension of the states surveillance capacities into the domestic and business environment themselves, will produce a type of self scrutiny and self policing. Thus, the state translates its powers into a new science of moral control.

Expansion of discipline in this sense means extending control over the population by refining the techniques of government, the instruments of rational control, and ever more refined political technologies<sup>70</sup> (Hindess 2001). As such, the Diagram is the overture of a specific political formation. It effects the interplay of power that passes between its points and circuits. Upon each passing is infused a set of power relations. These are impulses from the micro - physics and the macro relations of power that the state asserts in order to mobilise its order.

The state tries to establish this order over the multiplicity of diffuse discourses and powers that stem from the ICT networks in its midst. These, it contends, are a resistant set of strategies, they draw strength from their anonymity and diffusion. As Deleuze (1988) notes these micro - physical powers signify alternatives and contrasts, and in so doing offer an alternative politics.

---

<sup>70</sup> According to the theories of Weber, official state knowledge undergoes a further process of classification through which it is remade into secret knowledge (Beetham 1978). This is achieved via a further degree of evaluation. In other words, the deductive logic applied to intelligence renders it unique. There is a fundamental distinction observable here, it is the process of analysis that will produce intelligence from empirical data (Gill 1994). Gill makes two further clarifications regarding the process of information gathering, those that are concerned with an offensive strategy (which he classifies as 'surveillance' and 'persuasion', which is achieved via information gathering). The second feature relates to those methods which establish desired outcomes. The defensive counterparts in other words. These in turn are related to secrecy and evaluation: secrecy is a measure(s) used against others who would profit from a particular knowledge. Within this model a new set of disciplinary mechanisms emerge.

They are charged with power relations because they are distributed and emit discourse from:

*'Mobile and non - localisable connections.'* (Deleuze 1988 p74).

What the Diagram of RIP/Infocratisation does is to impose order upon these connections: it seeks to realign them, to produce in them again a regularity and a structural convention<sup>71</sup>. Regularity is expressed by connections that can be mapped and charted, made comprehensible and locked into a political symposium. The political equations that stem from distributed technologies are a form of discourses and statements which represent an arch, or a curvature that must be straightened and disciplined by the state through the R.I.P<sup>72</sup>. These awry shapes must have an order imposed upon them.

---

<sup>71</sup> The cognitive policing that is evidential within the RIP Act operates at the level of a social-psychological domain. The subject (the individual) is 'aware' that his internet communications are being tracked in much the same manner that Bentham's prisoners were aware that at any given moment they were the subjects of an all seeing disciplinary gaze. The R.I.P works in much the same way. It privileges structure over agency to produce discipline. For example, R.I.P works at the micro level of the individual. Here we can combine Foucault with Althusser to produce another variant on the theme of agency and structure (Callinicos 1976). For example by using Althusser's description of the ideological State Apparatus -ISA- and the Repressive State Apparatus -RSA- (whereby the RSA /ISA network operates through repression and ideological context. The RSA will work as a centralised whole, a union of purpose and direction. The ISA on the other hand operates through multiple fields of authority, sometimes contradictory, and at other moments relatively unified), we can observe a union of subject and society that itself moves us towards a further understanding of Foucault's notions of governmentality. For example:

*'We must see the political power of a ruling class as consisting in not simply their monopoly of the repressive apparatus of the state....police and so on..., but also their ideological hegemony over society.....but rather to what (could be) called the private activities of citizens, what Gramsci calls civil society'* (Callinicos 1976 p64).

<sup>72</sup> The RIP Act is an attempt to impose political order and scientific forms on the highly dynamic, complex and technical set of social-political phenomena surrounding ICTs. Governance and the political technologies available to it have failed to keep pace with these phenomena. Until recently that is. In this sense the new politics of governance has strived, but thus far failed, to attend to the developments within ICTs at the level of processes taking place outwith their immediate control. As such, other forms of governance such as steering mechanisms, interventions, alliances with the private sector and so on, are all attempts at finding solutions to complexity and diversity. The same rationale is behind the RIP.

As Deleuze notes (ibid. p78):

*'It is in this sense that a curve carries out the relations of force by regularising and aligning them, making the series converge, and tracing a general line of force.'*

The ultimate aim of the Act is to provide a legalist democratic alternative to the grass root(s) and organisational structures of new social movements and ICT based democratic/political alternatives: it is to limit the scope for political action that distributed discourses make possible. Foucault expresses this political formulae in the following fashion (1991b, p201):

*'Hence the major effect of the Panopticon: to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power. So to arrange things that the surveillance is permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its action.'*

In this sense, such ideas mirror an international trend in the states commitment towards a restructuring of its political geographies along more integrative lines and to reformulate sovereignty around the territories of cyberspace via restrictive communication regimes (Aronson 2001). The extension of various forms of global democratic/political initiatives via ICTs is challenged.

These political and information networks have a structural geographical location, and with new attention to the detail of law, can be subjected to its authority<sup>73</sup>. Power then flows through the networked relations of information technologies. Rather than being a secondary innovation, they occupy a primary position within the networks themselves, through the information architecture and the relations therein. Power, to varying degrees, becomes internalised through informatisation and as such is rendered invisible. Power operates electronically, reflexively and automatically. In this manner then, the alternative discourses that occupy the ICT networks are policed via governmentality<sup>74</sup>. Now we will draw this chapter to an end with some conclusive thoughts and a pointer towards some forthcoming themes and theories.

### 6.7.1 Conclusion

The aims and ambitions of the information union are to preserve and extend the political integrity of the U.K. This political project has been developed in relation to the devolved and distributed political technologies, which run in contrasting fashion to the centralised authority of the state. These political energies campaign within different, and up until now, relatively free standing

---

<sup>73</sup> There have been a number of cases where the once presumed autonomies of cyberspace have been subjected to the laws of the nation - state. For instance, the sale of Nazi memorabilia via an internet auction site was banned in France regardless of the physical location of the site and the laws pertaining to its position.

<sup>74</sup> Carracedo (1999) highlights how the micro - physics of power is constituted through ICTs. Cyber-sites offer a focus for the classification of an individual/group. Some sites are forbidden within certain social spaces (pornography within universities for example). Punishments are available for infractors. Sites can be categorised and catalogued and data gathered about visitors. Similar conditions exist within the workplace where ICTs enable supervisory surveillance in a panopticonal style: call centres for example where exchanges are routinely monitored and new labour relations situated around this position. Visitors to such centres are themselves often informed of this fact. Thus presumably shifting the terms and scope of the exchange in ways hitherto not possible.

political – spatial environments via ICTs. The information union promises an effective responsive measure to such challenges.

Accordingly, the devolved political arrangements afforded within the Historical Scottish Moment are re - composed, and re - ordered through informatisation. The Union is sealed in an electronic contract which effectively limits the alternative politics of those who would see its demise. Without informatisation, the new political settlement may never have occurred. In a similar fashion, the power of the distributed technologies have been regulated, controlled and integrated into a dynamic regulatory system. This system promises the state a new politics of surveillance and reflexive control. The final chapter offers conclusions to these ideas and the others we have encountered.



## **Chapter seven**

### **Conclusion**

#### **7.1 From Technocracy to Teledemocracy?**

This thesis has presented an analysis of the New Scottish Politics of Information within the newly established Scottish political system. It explored the implications of information and communication technologies for the reformation of Scottish politics within the new historical Scottish moment. This was related to the advent of informatisation and the possibility it affords for a further contemporary extension of democracy in Scotland. As such, the thesis detailed the post war technocratic era, and traced the movement into democratic deficit, and outwards, into the new Scottish historical moment. The transformation of Scottish politics was epitomised by the re – establishment of a Parliament after three hundred years of political union with England.

However, the search for a new politics of devolved government has clashed with the politics of containment. As such, the future of this settlement is finely balanced and lies somewhere between a set of contradictory, and often oppositional, political forces. This condition is exemplified by the tension between distributed technologies/distributed discourse, and those political forces that have sought to use informatisation to re - wire, or consolidate, the United Kingdom. These political forces are a pivotal feature of the new Scottish politics of information, and the thesis illustrated their centrality within contemporary governance and Scottish civil society.

In this sense the thesis has also produced an account of informatisation which placed political computing in relation to political struggle. For example, instead of locating the power of distributed technologies at the centre of the new Scottish political principal of devolution, we have highlighted the power of the 'mainframe' and its centralising aspects. Distribution of political energies and discourse has emerged as a counter to the central political forms (and identity) of the unified state. The reaction to politically distributed discourse is now evident, and evidenced by, the states composite computing programmes.

However, without an additional micro political technology, such an agenda would be limited to its own perimeters and devices. A further political technology was required to extend the (now challenged) boundaries of the U.K. state. This new (micro) technology was provided, and evidenced by, the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000 (R.I.P.). This feature provided the vital link between citizen and state, and extended the powers of the state from its mainframes into the PCs themselves, and from there it was argued, into the reflexive conduct of citizens/subjects. The states ability to intercept electronic communications (via R.I.P) has partially resolved the distributed technology 'problem', and in turn shortened the distance between alternative political technologies and their state based counterparts.

The distributed technologies have threatened to overcome this traditional equation, and seemed poised to establish new pressure points which stood in opposition to the state and other hierarchies. Yet, in line with the concept of control technologies that we observed, as one political technology emerges,

the state will seek to re - assert itself and to realign its power base via the construction of another. With such ideas in mind then, the problem of all systems (one of managing complexity, reducing system disparity, and providing limits upon uncertainties) is more readily understood. This is the dominant theme of the R.I.P.

The thesis located these concerns within the historical Scottish moment, and set them amidst the transitional features of the New Scottish Politics of Information. Post war shifts within Scottish politics were contrasted and considered within, the technocratic era of the 1950s, and the discovery of North Sea oil. The thesis explored the relationship between Scotland's industrial decline during this era, and the emergence of an economic – political deficit. North Sea Oil raised the vision of a new Scotland at a time when economic power was not automatically correlated with democratic sovereignty.

This set out an entirely new set of political relations and ideals which can be understood in relation to informatisation. The conditions for the new Information Union for example, were positioned within these evolving post war contexts and explained in this regard. For example, we developed and tracked the continuing pace of political divergence between Scotland and the rest of the United Kingdom. Accordingly, the asymmetrical political settlement of the post war era came to be increasingly questioned within Scottish political culture, and the search for a new political agreement more pronounced than ever.

The demise of technocracy in post war Scotland was established within a dialectical tension. This gave us additional insight into the shift towards the historical moment of devolution in 1999, the theories that we used helped to develop an understanding of the historical curvature of Scottish post war politics. The evolution of democratic forms since the post war years, was developed and used to explain the distinctive position of informatisation in its contemporary framework. These democratic developments were further expanded upon when we explored plans by the New Labour government to modernise its political and administrative institutions and relations. A new politics of modernisation, and with it the signs of a new political settlement for Scotland, had begun to emerge. As such, new control technologies were effectively needed in order to structure Scottish politics and to establish limits upon its separate sphere(s) of power and authority. The information union was a vital mechanism in this regard. The autonomy and dynamism of Scottish politics has been limited, controlled, and set firmly within a specified information architecture. This political framework is firmly committed to the continuation of the United Kingdom. Without informatisation, the devolution project would have been disregarded.

The thesis also examined new models of governance, and the emergence of a new information age around them, in some detail. As such, we explored the relationship(s) between the modernisation of *government*, and the transition towards *governance*. A series of patterns emerged from the combination of interactions between civil society and the Scottish Parliament, these were in turn traced and contrasted with parallel synoptic developments in political

computing. In detailing such shifts we began to illustrate some of the ongoing contradictions and impulses which informatisation carries with it.

For example, the thesis highlighted the emergence of a new politics of agency, participation, and distributed discourse. It was argued, that distributed technologies had effectively established a new set of political conditions.

These ideas were established against the background of sub - politics, and the movement of new participative forms, away from the fringes and the margins of political culture, and into the new political structures themselves.

The thesis argued in this sense that distributed computing promised (or threatened) to reform power in potentially radical ways.

Here enters the critical fusion between information technologies and democratic participation. Interactions between citizens and new social movements are taken to be more fluid, more direct and more energised than was previously possible. Distributed political discourse was conceived of as a transformational energy, capable of subverting existing power structures, including those of governance. As such, the new Scottish political process of parliamentary/representative democracy now also finds itself challenged by a set of informatised political energies. The direct democratic conception of political empowerment (that we witnessed in chapter five) through technology, is one such energy. It offers a new politics of distributed action: one that moves away from regulatory and static institutions, to a format, which its proponents argue, situates power around participative and distributive opportunities.

These evolving tensions were detailed in relation to a number of related forces and contradictions. In this sense the thesis suggested, and evidenced (in the form of petitions submitted to the Public Petitions Committee) that sub-politics were being admitted into the political system itself.

At the very centre of these debates, is the question of political – social agency, and in particular the translation of dialogue into action via new technologies. These new political – social interests seek to redirect, or redistribute the flow of power and opportunity in new ways. The new politics of distributed technological discourse aims to redress historical imbalances, and seeks to offer a politics based around informatised political practice and new conceptions of citizenship that are less concerned with political geography than previous models. Instead they seek methods of asserting the 'true' nature of public priorities. For example, those who argue for the new politics of teledemocracy, maintain that these interests can be met within an informatised framework, and that ICTs have the potential to strengthen and energise the political principles which surround democracy, participation and the pursuit of common interests.

The thesis also argued that the contribution of information technology to the Scottish political process has been chiefly, and rhetorically, focused on the distribution of access to the Parliament by citizens and civil society at large. The evidence here suggests however, that informatisation policies are largely concerned with gaining competitive economic advantage from the new technologies. Scotland is relegating the potential development of democratic informatisation, in favour of the economic virtues of electronic commerce.

To this extent the informatisation interface is more persuaded by industrial and commercial concerns than democratic issues affecting the nature and condition of governance, and a new politics of social contract.

The Transformational Politics remit of the new Scottish Parliament is being replaced by an economic impulse.

Scottish parliamentary democracy then, is conditioned by a series of political ambiguities. Democratic contradictions emerge in tandem with the new politics of information and governance. These include the degree to which new ICTs allow new measures of interactivity between citizens and their political representatives. This feature calls into question those models of democracy traditionally formulated around representative, or parliamentary typologies. The electronic democratisation of the Scottish Parliament stands in some respects at odds with an increasingly teledemocratic society. In other words, if the process of devolved authority and informatised power continues, then a *'politics of risk'* must be endured. In this sense, new technologies incorporate a concept of political risk. They do so (within their Scottish dimension) by introducing unproven political technologies into a set of untested applications. Both the technology of the new Scottish Parliament, and the ICT architecture developing around it, are essentially unqualified, and as such invite risk in a number of different ways. For instance, they open up the possibility of introducing into the Scottish political system, a form of built in obsolescence: representative (and incremental) government becomes challenged by increasing demands for greater, and more citizen based forms of political action. In other words, ICTs may facilitate citizen interactions in an

increasingly direct fashion. Those areas which were previously the province of Parliament may come to be challenged by citizen initiative premised politics, or referenda based politics. Direct forms of political activity (such as the Section 2A initiative), are likely to increase in their intensity in the coming years, and will use informatisation as a means to exert ever increasing political pressure.

As such, it is a component of the thesis that the new Scottish government is in essence being challenged from below as well as above: pressures now exist from direct democratic initiatives. This invited a more detailed consideration of how the state will limit and constrain the new politics of distributed discourse. To this end the theme of centralised political computing is the dominant one. It is argued that the power of the mainframe and the condition of political strength, that the state occupies to its historical advantage, will counter the devolved and distributed nature of power. Within the new historical moment then, there are countervailing forces and technologies whose strength lies in their ability to centralise and control disparate powers and opposing forces. We observed this in relation to the cognitive policing of Scottish civil society and the limitations imposed upon distributed technologies via the power of the mainframe. This theme was in turn contrasted and compared historically within the devolution settlement, and its re-positioning of power.

For example, the devolved Scottish parliamentary system has developed in tandem with plans to modernise and to integrate it into the information architecture of the United Kingdom. In so doing, a new informatised technocracy has been created in order to secure the future of the U.K.



In essence, the Union has been secured by a new form of mainframed - technocracy. The new information union thesis drew comparisons between a new politics of centralisation and the new politics of distributed discourse, arguing as it went that what we are observing within the new historical moment, is informatisation as a design with which to re - energise the authority of the centre: political power is contested between the PC and the centralising tendencies of the mainframe. It is the latter that is privileged with the force and energy, the weight of history, and the power to force through its centralised will despite the resistance of the devolved and 'distributed others'.

As such, the unification of the devolved administrative system into one overall entity has largely been ignored. In this sense, the thesis provided a unique and contemporary interpretation of the new Scottish politics of information. It argued that the informatisation strategies of the Scottish Parliament are themselves a reflection of the political settlement designed by the Westminster government. For example, despite the new political settlement which characterises the historical Scottish moment, Scottish politics is in a transitional phase. Its position of relative autonomy (from Westminster) and the distance placed between the new system (and its legacy of the democratic deficit) has yet to be firmly founded or established. Accordingly, it finds itself at a critical juncture whereby pressures and forces are interacting with it in demanding circumstances. Political technologies, such as the progressive movement towards an information union, are a way of integrating disparate political energies back into the United Kingdom political system once more.

Within this theme, we observed the attempts that are being made to reproduce the authority of the government - state axis within the practices (and political territories) of cyber - space. In this sense, the processes and modes of governance that we have evidenced within the workings of the Scottish Parliament were considered within another dimension: those relating to the control of new political technologies by the state. The micro politics version of this theory offered us a feature with which to link up the individual citizen (the agent, or social actor) within the states chosen political structure.

The cognitive policing of the individual and the relationship between their position and the states new surveillance techniques, were evidenced via the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act. In doing so, the thesis successfully established a sound empirical context for the placing of the social actor within the new political technologies of the state. We also provided a theory which positioned the distributed technology of individuals within the states domains. Joined up government means in this regard a 'joined up citizen', as it were. These ideas were given broader substantiation within a re - assertion of the states power. Evidence of a counter reaction by the state towards the centrifugal forces associated with globalisation and teledemocracy were given credence in this regard. The technocratic remit of power is being re - established and informatised.

As such, technocracy is re - composed through informatisation policies and practices. These theories were situated within a series of evidential based initiatives, which maintained that to defend the political integrity of the state in an increasingly globalised world (where the nation state loses the ability to

retain control over its political geography) means utilising every available (and informatised) means and method. Therefore, explanations for the position of the information union become more tenable than before, and more composite when examined from within the Scottish dimension.

This feature, which is to be observed within an increasingly informatised bureaucratic environment, introduces a new dimension of British politics, and in so doing realigns the Scottish historical moment. It moves it onto a rotational axis. The new force of political computing moves Scottish politics back towards its once fixed reference point, that of the technocratic model.

Scottish political history has been dialectically re – cast, and re – programmed through political computing.

## **TIMELINE**

### **1939 - 55: Mass participation and the campaign for a new politics. Early developments within political computing**

**1939:** The Scottish Office occupies an important role within any understanding of politics North of the Border. The Scottish Office's move from London to Edinburgh in 1939 gave stronger focus to what its new political - geography might achieve for Scotland. Its position is important for the following reasons: firstly, it is an administrative body that effectively symbolises what is arguably the high point of the technocratic era, the twentieth century. This is both the age of the 'expert', and of a belief in scientific advancement through rationality. The Scottish Office advanced its position largely after the last war. It did so in relation to its effective delivery of the new post war welfare state.

### **1945-1960s: Labour Party reforms**

The Labour Party election victory of 1945 ushered in a radical transformation of governmental policies. Moreover, these resulted in the growth of government itself, the expansion of the welfare state, and an extension of state responsibility. British politics during the 1950s were characterised by consensus, and a 'middle way' approach (similar in some respects to the MacMillan administrations ideas of the 1930s). Politics was about the efficient management of the system and was epitomised by a renewed belief in the reformation of public administration.

**1945:** Emergence of first modern computers. These are predecessors of the mainframe machines (which dominated the computing industry from the late fifties to the eighties). Two major barriers had been overcome; first, developing the capability of the machine to undertake large – scale numerical processing tasks rapidly; secondly, developing its ability to be programmed. The post war years are characterised by Western states as a whole committing themselves towards expansive bureaucracies and, in turn, drawing legitimacy from social and economic management, i.e. technocratic administration. Within the U.K there is concern with the issue of post war planning, the role of the welfare state, and state involvement in the economy, via nationalisation and various economic steering mechanisms.

**1949:** New forms of direct civil society based action can be observed.

A campaign was launched by an extra - parliamentary organisation (the 'Scottish Convention') to secure what was then termed as 'Home Rule' for Scotland, within the political framework of the United Kingdom. The amount of signatories is estimated to be between one and two million.

There was a reaction, or response, to the mass petition (formulated by the Scottish Covenant) in the form of the Balfour Commission on Scottish Affairs (1952-4) which according to James Kellas (1992 p310) made some: '*minor administrative changes*', in relation to the latent expressions and possibility of intent which the petition signified .

**1950:** mainframe computers gradually taken into business use during the fifties and sixties. Scotland's relative (British) economic decline becomes apparent. Kellas (1992) notes the perceived influence of the then new medium of Television, and in particular the engagement with commercial TV advertising, and Scottish society, during the 1950s, as influential:

*'The spread of television, particularly commercial television with its advertising appeals to this affluent society... emphasised the contrast. Scots knew that much of the new affluence had passed them by'*

**1955 - 64: Affluence versus decline, the degeneration of the Scottish economy and the beginning of political - economic divergence**

It is this moment in the contemporary political history of the Union which will first record the political divergence of Scotland and England in electoral terms. It is therefore the starting point for an account of the developing democratic deficit:

*'The first signs of the tension with England were evident in the late 1950s, when the Unionist Party started its 40 - year slide (in Scotland).'* (Brown et al ibid. p.19).

**1960:** During the 1960s, a radicalism emerged which proved hostile towards technocracy, scientific rationality, and the presumed logic of its design and practice. Inclusive of this was a reaction against bureaucracy. In short, the vitality of the era brought forth a set of principles and actions which

challenged the hierarchical assumptions and deliberations of technocratic administration. Demands are made during the 1960s and 1970s for more extensive and more participative forms of democracy including those with a tele - democratic vision, such as Erich Fromm (1960) with his radical political psycho - analysis within which an 'impaired' society can be remedied via a deliberative communicative democracy enabled by new technologies.

During the Wilson administrations tenure (1964-70) a variety of modernisation principles and rhetorical devices were developed. These centred upon three connecting points: technology, technocracy, and state - led planning within a mixed economy. It was a programme which focussed both on institutional and economic reform. In particular, special attention was paid towards investments in new technology. This approach is illustrated by the following quote by P.M Wilson:

*' We are redefining and we are re - stating our socialism in terms of the scientific revolution.....The Britain that is going to be forged in the white heat of this revolution will be no place for restrictive practices or out - dated methods on either side of industry', (Leys 1989, p79)*

As Marcuse (1968) notes, technology and science are functional in that their union operates to legitimise political power. By the end of the 1960s the mainframes are now adopted by large scale organisations, including governmental organisations who used the mainframes for

storage/management of administrative functions including A.D.P. (Automatic Data Processing).

As Bellamy and Taylor express it:

*'The mainframe computer was being used to process data which had a central, corporate functionality. It offered no challenge to the hierarchical and centralised structures by which it was surrounded. Indeed its effect was to sustain and even to reinforce those features of large - scale bureaucracy'* (Bellamy and Taylor 1998. P11)

Here we can begin to see the development of Reinforcement Politics, the Infocracy and the concept of the information union as expressed within the thesis. Failure of planning within public administration, in terms of its macro economic designs (such as the Central Scotland Plan of 1963) characterises the Scottish political era (Fry 1987).

**1968:** Edward Heath's modernising agenda set forth some of his ambitions for Scottish devolution as expressed in the *'Declaration of Perth'* in 1968 (Paterson 1998). The forces which generated such ambitions are to be found in a recent contemporary context also: the political vacuum associated with the democratic deficit. For instance, as Michael Fry notes (Fry 1987, p231) Edward Heath's Perth party statement was an attempted resolution of the emerging democratic deficiencies within the Scottish political system:



*'The charge began to be heard that (the Conservative government) imposed on the Scots measures they did not want... the Scottish party was out of tune with the dynamic, modernising image Heath had in mind to give it.'*

The ambitions that Heath proposed for Scottish political reform were however, not translated into any legislative capacity. Moreover, after his party leadership defeat at the hands of Margaret Thatcher (in 1975), any designs for devolving power to Scotland were arrested completely (Midwinter et al, 1991, p22).

### **1970 - 74: The 'Generation' of North Sea Oil, the production of new political dissent and the decline of the all - British political system**

As Scottish politics moves into the early 70s a further set of circumstances emerge. The Conservative government under Edward Heath (1970-74), introduced attempts to reform, or modernise, British political institutions. The drive behind the document (*'The Machinery of Government: White Paper 1970'*) was to instil greater efficiency as the central maxim of government. As such, there emerged a move away from technocratic forms of public administration and resource allocation, and a decisive shift towards a market led approach. This signalled the end of the previously held consensual party line held by the 'Middle Way' policy designs and rhetoric of the MacMillan government (Derbyshire and Derbyshire 1988). The issue was contentious in Scotland, and cut across party lines. As Nairn points out, it was one of a host of factors behind the drive for greater political autonomy during this moment in time, not least of which was the:

*'The most critical, and the newest, is the incursion of the oil business....this is busy creating a new material basis for political life in Scotland. The second is the decline of the all - British political system.'* (Nairn 1981. p131)

This ensures the development of a new form of democratic deficit, one that reflects a key -note of the mid 1970s: the use of an *economic surplus* (in the form of North Sea Oil) without reciprocal *political representation*. With the discovery of North Sea oil, the nationalists were able to capitalise on the potential use of the oil not only to re - vitalise the Scottish economy, but also to dispel any concerns that an independent Scotland would be able to survive in a competitive global economy. Levy (1990, p35) describes it as:

*'Oil -fired nationalism'.*

**1973:** The publication of the Kilbrandon Report in 1973 is a decisive feature within the developing historical moment, as Paterson notes:

*'(It) was a key moment in the whole three decades.. the key legacy was from its scheme of legislative devolution.....On that was based not only the Labour governments reaction in the 1970s , but the 1997 Labour government's proposals.. endorsed in the referendum of 1997'* (Paterson. 1998. P17).

### **1974-79: Changing democratic access: the referendum of 1979**

The Barnett Formula (introduced in 1978) is the term given to Scotland's share of U.K public expenditure. It is similar to those systems in federal countries where central government grants are issued in relation to need and political expediency. The Scottish Office pursued a set of block funding initiatives that it could make a reasonable case for. It is a negotiable process between the Scottish level of public administration and the U.K Treasury (Kellas 1992).

The Labour government of 1974-79 published a White Paper, which attempted to address the future political arrangements of the U.K, in November 1975 ('Our Changing Democracy': Cmnd. 6348). The guidelines expressed by the Paper proposed that responsibility for the domestic affairs of Scotland (and Wales) should effectively be handed over to elected assemblies, if and when established.

**The Scotland Act of 1978:** Proposed that a referendum was to be held to secure the establishment of a Scottish Parliament. However, there existed a requirement that at least 40 per cent of the electorate should vote *in favour* before the assembly could be presented. On the 1st March 1979 the referendum was held in Scotland, and whilst securing a narrow majority of votes in favour, the assembly did not reach the 40 per cent rule that was required.

The referendum is an important moment within Scottish political history, in that it confirmed the concept of referenda within U.K politics (after its initial introduction in the referendum on Britain's continued membership within the European Economic Community in 1975: Perman 1980). Moreover, it is seen by many (Brown 2000, Paterson 1994) as setting the defining Scottish political agenda for the following two decades. In addition, within the wider context of political participation (or non – participation) it established what might be regarded as an anti democratic maxim within UK politics in that it ensured that the:

*'final judgement of the result would take account of those who did not vote'*  
(Baur, 1980 p89).

The Conservative election victory in 1979 ushered in a new era within British politics as a whole. As Gamble (1996 p22) notes, the new regime:

*'declared its full confidence in the powers and authority of the Westminster Parliament and strongly opposed any measures of constitutional reform - including devolution of powers to regional assemblies, replacement of the simple plurality electoral system by any measure of proportional representation, and introduction of a Bill of Rights, or measures to secure more open and accountable government'.*

The election of the Conservatives produced what was to be termed as 'Thatcherism'. This in turn gave rise to a new wave of nationalism in Scotland in the 1980s and provided an impetus for the devolutionary project.

### **The 1980s: Scotland, the Union, and the EU: the re - constitution of a political project**

The Thatcher administration offered a unique new political - economic paradigm for the eighties. Thatcherism was, according to Kavanagh (1990, p12) was a matter of both *'style and policies'*. These stylistic qualities centred around a challenging political elan, which confronted previously held ideas and principles. On the policy agenda, it consisted of four main components. Firstly, monetarist principles regarding inflation were enacted, the money supply was to be rigidly controlled. Secondly, the labour market was to be 'freed' from restrictive practices and any protective legislation of workers rights. Thirdly, the envisaged 'free economy' was to be offered increased protection from the forces of law and order on the one hand, and a more aggressive militarist role on the other. The final component was a reduction of public sector finances, and expenditure. Any decrease in the provision of state services and intervention per se, it was maintained, would leave an opportunity for a more efficient private sector to fill the gap as it were (Elliot and McCrone 1987. Kavanagh *ibid*). Similarly, as Devine notes in relation to Scottish public and political affairs (Devine 1999, p591):

*'Thatcherism came to mean monetary control, privatisation, the liberalisation of free markets, reduction in trade union power and a concern to inspire a national revival of the virtues of self - help in a people perceived as too long wedded to state support and welfare subsidies'*

The philosophical extension of these ideas and their initiation into a coherent political economy is to be found under the regime known as New Public Management (NPM).

**1980:** The 1980 *'Campaign for a Scottish Assembly'* group and their ideas concerning the future of Scottish politics emerged to provide an influential base of ideas. For example, it was they who presented the Scottish Office with a declaration that further establishes the context of the democratic deficit:

*'We, symbolically representing the members of a Scottish Assembly , do bring to the notice of Her Majesty's Government that a question of democracy is at stake, and we must ask the question: 'When are you going to fulfil the constitutional wish of the Scottish people to have a democratically elected Assembly?' (Wright 1997 p43)*

The concept of 'informatisation' appears (in its European form), through the work of Nora and Minc 1981. It is an approach that has begun to describe and classify contemporary administration by reference to a new technological wave, that of ICTs and a new wave of innovations around the development and use of information and communications. Informatisation combines the

view that new ICTs are integral to an understanding of public administration. It places much emphasis upon the flow of information *in and around* organisations of governance.

Micro - processing capabilities advance. The importance of this is that the physical costs and the relative power fell and grew respectively. (Bellamy and Taylor 1998). This allows for the early distribution of technologies. The growth of software industries, and the development of user friendly products also stimulates demand. Especially noteworthy is the launch of the personal computer in the early 1980s. The importance here is that the PC:

*'permits challenges to be mounted to the very organisation of government. The microcomputer is bringing new information resources to the desktop of every government official, and is thereby delivering the potential for far - reaching changes in business and labour processes'* (Bellamy and Taylor 1998 p12).

In many respects this can be seen as a legitimisation crisis for the mainframe computers and political computing in its state based format.

By the end of the 1980s the personal computer (PC) and equivalent machines were becoming prevalent within government organisations.

This era is also the beginning of unified digital communications, or 'Telematics'. This involves sets of convergence between associated technologies (the digitalising of telecommunications and the emergence of the

microcomputer). The importance here is that a multitude of different forms of text can be carried over digital networks and converted by computers. The following quote illustrates the relevance of this feature:

*'This is the advent of telematics, by which we mean the conjoined use of computers and telecommunications, have opened the way for strong forms of distributed intelligence to be introduced into organisations. They thereby facilitate important challenges to existing ways of organising'* (Bellamy and Taylor 1998. P13).

Within Scottish politics an *'alternative political agenda'* is steadily developing, and is characterised as a feature of Scottish political culture evident from the early 1980s onwards. It is an idea formulated round an increasingly active civil society denied a representative democratic outlet, within which its opinions may be translated into power. The argument suggests that civil society effectively populated this opening through for instance the Scottish media (and political journalism). The 'result' was a broad based movement determined to formulate a new political settlement in Scotland via a devolved parliament. A new political and social context emerged within Scottish civil society and Scottish political culture, fuelled in part by the media's interpretation of the existing political deficiencies. By pointing out the limitations of the existing structures of government, and their inability to apply a legitimate democratic force, Scottish political journalism promulgated an alternative political agenda to that of Thatcherism.



After the 1987 general election a Conservative government was returned to overall U.K office, albeit with a decreased Scottish representation. Opposition to Westminster rule increases and is characterised by patterns of power that developed in opposition to those of English politics during the early 1980s. This is epitomised by the campaign for a Scottish parliament which gathered serious pace. Such power is now characterised by the historical Scottish moment of devolved governance from 1999 onwards.

During this time there are increasing demands for more distinctly Scottish political expressions. The post war consensus, particularly regarding the welfare state and its expansion, was challenged via Thatcherism in the 1980s. Strong resistance towards neo - liberalism (and a perception that a set of political impositions were unrepresentative of Scottish interests), forged a political tension in the form of the democratic deficit. Moreover, Scottish political culture, civil society, and Scottish political journalism began to promote an alternative political agenda in which the Scottish Office's political purpose was increasingly called into question. It was seen by many as a tier of government whose democratic remit had failed, and that it was an extension of a political system that did not represent Scotland.

There is a sustained scepticism regarding the democratic legitimacy of the Scottish Office, there emerges during the latter stages of the twentieth century increasing demands for more direct democratic forms of control over the policy and practice of the Scottish Office (McCrone1992).

Corporate Information Infrastructures (or CIS) also begin to develop: this idea emerged in the 1980s. It stresses the standardisation of information systems and data processing. It has relevance for the developing Information Union of the 1990s.

### **The 1990s: the finality of the British project? A new commitment to devolution. The transformation of Scottish politics**

The Conservatives were re-elected to office in 1992. Their rejection of devolution was consistent policy, even after the downfall of Thatcher in 1990. Three terms of Conservative government coupled with their near relentless desire to dissolve what they saw as state dependency, and to increase privatisation (theirs too was a programme of modernisation, but looked towards liberalisation of the economy as catalyst), was not only politically unpopular in Scotland, it also called into question the Union itself in a much more challenging manner.

With the demise of Thatcherism in 1991, and the defeat of the Major government in 1997, the incoming New Labour administration developed a more 'pragmatic' and flexible approach towards policy design and political management. New values of political action based on citizenship emerged. Centred around the idea that there are instead commonality of values between people which supersede class, the recognition of this was to square the circle for a new Labour project in many respects. In other words, they included a determination to reform institutions deemed outdated or illegitimate, whilst tempering such radicalism with an understanding that those

polices and aspects of the previous government which were functional, or ideologically consistent with New labour policies, would be retained (Flynn 1999). For example, constitutionally it was argued that a post modern social democratic philosophy (the Third Way) should have a system to match its constitutional ambitions

**1995:** Of significant interest is the formation of electronic financial innovations. By 1995 a raft of companies were using their own form of electronic money: e-cash (see [http://www.10pht.com/pub/blackcowl/patriot/national\\_id\\_card\\_4.txt](http://www.10pht.com/pub/blackcowl/patriot/national_id_card_4.txt)). These developments now begin to pose potentially serious problems for the state, in that it weakens government's ability to effectively monitor and tax such electronic transactions. The idea that there are 'private currencies' emerging which bypass governments and therefore taxation systems has important implications. They introduce a possible divergence of certain elements of the private sector economy from the state, several international non - governmental currencies already exist. These notions pre - empt the establishment of a new alliance with business, and the potential expected from a new economic dividend based around electronic commerce are evident in the dialogue between government and business, and are illustrated by the New Labour government's White Paper of 1998 entitled: 'Our Competitive Future : Building the Knowledge Driven Economy' ([http://www.dti.gov.uk/comp/competitive/e\\_comm.htm](http://www.dti.gov.uk/comp/competitive/e_comm.htm)).

For instance: *'Government's compact with business: Business must lead this process of modernisation by responding to the spur of competition and by exploiting market opportunities'* (ibid, p2).

Similarly, the role of ICTs within the 'new economy' is envisaged as a central component of the 'Digital Scotland Task Force Report' (@ May-00/TASK FORCE REPORT – FINALv1.1.doc).

**1996:** The European Commission establishes an *'Action Plan'* (Europe's way to the Information Society: COM. 1996, also referred to as the Bangemann Report). It proposed a number of specific, yet related, policy directions. These include: developing conditions within which business interests can be created and multiplied, stimulating a European wide knowledge base via education and research investment programmes, and by a closer set of social security and social policy programmes and initiatives. These are related to events of a similar nature taking place in Scotland in the shape of plans by the Scottish Executive to advance developments in the business of the digital infrastructure, and: *'21-st Century Government for Scotland'* (McConnell, @<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/c21g/c21g.asp>), including the capacity of the new Parliament to utilise ICTs in order to further the idea of citizen accessibility (Malina 1999a, Burns 1999).

### **Third Way Politics: A Political Philosophy for the Information Age**

The 1990s sees a new dimension of political thought which styles itself as the 'Third Way', a way effectively of managing the transition and tensions between the economic liberalism of the New Right which characterised the 1980s, and the Old Left, with its commitment to more direct forms of state intervention, which in turn characterised previous decades. This is the prevailing Western political philosophy of the immediate twenty - first century, and makes much of its commitment towards developing and re - inventing government, by using new technologies to implement new political relations (see the 1998 internet discussion of the Third Way @<http://www.netnexus.org/debates/3way/Default.htm>), and offering to its citizens a 'New Politics for the new century' (Blair 1999). It is accompanied by a commitment towards modernising politics and government.

Moreover, as Webster notes (1999 p228) the New politics of the 1990s sought to re-affirm the value of community through teledemocratic visions associated with the communitarian political philosophy of theorists such as Amitai Etzioni.

Following the election of a Labour administration in May 1997, the new government launched its 'Modernising Government' programme and its White Paper for Scotland<sup>1</sup>. The proposals contained and outlined within the White Paper were clarified by a two part referendum which laid down both the electorates desire for a Scottish Parliament, and its ability to raise the varying rate of tax.

---

<sup>1</sup> Eventually to become The Scotland Act 1998. See [www.scottish.parliament.uk/whats\\_happening/docs/scoact-00.htm](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/whats_happening/docs/scoact-00.htm)

There was considerable support for both features, with 74.3% voting in favour of its establishment and a further 63% who recommended that it have limited powers of taxation. (McCarthy and Newlands 1999)

**1998:** The Scottish Executive joined the Government Secure Intranet (GSI) in June 1998, thus strengthening the concept of the Information Union as a tangible feature of the United Kingdom. The New labour administration advances its electronic government programme with the publication of a new White Paper 'Modernising Government' (1999). The Paper outlines a new politics of reform and a commitment to efficiency and democratic participation.

The following sections review the main themes, commitments and stages of the White Paper.

**New Labour and Modernising Government: the White Paper of March 1999: The six stages of e - government with corresponding materials from the ' Modernising Government White Paper' identified by Griffin 2001<sup>2</sup>**

Stages of the White Paper	Framework and commitments
<p><b>1. Legislation: Inclusive of the Modernising Government White Paper of 1999.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The government's White Paper of March 1999 offers a series of core reforms and key commitments.</li> <li>• These include reforms within government policy making, whereby the emphasis is very much on the delivery of a long term strategy (as opposed to short term reactive measures), flexibility and innovation which are outlined in opposition to previously held 'bureaucratic' models of governance which stand accused of being 'closed'(Ch2, para.2).</li> <li>• These approaches are in line with the European Social Charter which calls for governments to undertake a new conception of the rights of citizens which accord with their: '<i>right to protection against poverty and social exclusion</i>' (SPICe Research Note 1999 p11)</li> <li>• Built in to these frameworks were also strategic levels of cross sectoral and departmental collaboration, including at the level of the Scottish Executive, a minister for communities, a ministerial inclusion planning body, and the creation of a Scottish Social Inclusion Network, and within the Parliament itself the creation of the Parliamentary Committee on Social Inclusion, Housing and the Voluntary Sector.</li> </ul> <p>(ibid, p12) ( SPICe 1999/7).</p>

<sup>2</sup> The Table examines these stages principally in relation to electronic government, but there are overlaps with more orthodox policy environments.

<p><b>2. Regulation.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The emphasis on new technology (given its clearest expression in chapter five '<i>Information Age Government</i>') is developed in terms of the regulation of performance management agendas of; flexibility, scrutiny and improvement.</li> <li>• For example, the following quote illustrates some of the above themes, and links in again the governments ICT commitment to :'<i>Use information ..to use performance measures to monitor and improve their organisations...(and the use of) new technology to take a more streamlined approach to managing information in the public sector</i>' (Ch.4. para.6).</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Infrastructure development: information publishing and dissemination.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter five of the White Paper aims to use new technology to bring government up to date with contemporary developments within ICTs. These are considered in line with the major business expansions involving ICTs, and the ideological focus and momentum which government must attain in order to maximise its political opportunities.</li> <li>• Moreover, the policy agenda of producing the concept of 'joined up government' aims to utilise new technologies to develop cross cutting policy areas, to propose policy innovations, to review existing policies and to liaise between the appropriate departments within an overall strategic framework. Included within this set of developments are ideas aimed at identifying: <i>'The ..challenges.. government will have to face.....and to make the most of advances in science and new technology. ..as a platform for bringing people together and forging new partnerships'</i> (Ch2 para.10).</li> </ul> <p>However, the lack of existing governmental organisation and an overall coherent ICT strategy, is taken to be a problem which must be addressed and overcome (Ch.5. para2). To achieve this end the Paper establishes some essential points of change, of which IT is to be the catalyst. For example, the successful modernisation of government (including partnerships with local authorities and the voluntary sector) hinges upon the achievement of IT enabled; <i>'joined up working between different parts of government and providing new, efficient and convenient ways for citizens and businesses to communicate with government and to receive services'</i> (Ch 5. Para 5).</p>



<p><b>4. Service provision.</b></p>	<p>The main drive of the third chapter('Responsive Public Services') concerns itself with '<i>service delivery and effectiveness/outcome achievement</i>' (Gray and Jenkins, ibid 1999 p239). Moreover, it includes a desire encountered already, to use new technologies to provide an 'integrated- service' point within which service providers should ensure that an overall picture of information for the users to access (Ch 3. Para4).</p> <p>The fourth chapter of the White Paper ('Quality Public Services') includes some focus on the relationship between the delivery of public services, their efficient management and innovation in practice. There is a concern throughout that emphasises the need to improve the link between government expenditure and the resources that are delivered (Ch 4. Para.2).The efficient management of these resources is set within the context of a comprehensive spending review, which aims to ensure that monies spent on public services should contain a commitment to 'modernisation and investment in reform'(Ch4. Para. 6).</p> <p>The objective, aside from the modernisation focus, is to prepare such plans for scrutiny and review (Flynn ibid). Moreover, there exists an emphasis upon the delivery of such services in a joined up fashion through the E-Government interoperability framework (E-GIF). This is held together by co-operation and collaboration between the Scottish Executive and the UK wide branches of government.</p>
<p><b>5. Education policies: reform of education including an educational policy component which is formulated in the shape of the National Grid for Learning.</b></p>	<p>The National Grid for Learning initiative aims to connect all schools to the Internet by 2002. University for Industry: By using ICTs the White Paper plans to offer an additional form of lifelong learning.</p>
<p><b>6. Political - Cultural information policies.</b></p>	<p>Other key commitments within the policy making chapter are centred around areas such as involving elements of both civil and civic society in the policy making agenda, developing new contexts within the devolved power blocs of the UK.</p>

## **Towards the twenty first century: The Union and the contemporary development of new political innovations/technologies**

Reforms such as the Modernising Government initiatives have a broader set of theoretical and empirical positions to attend to. For instance, these are attended to within the notions of 'joined up government'. This places an emphasis upon cross - departmental activity, solutions to problems, and cost efficient delivery. The United Kingdom informatisation process moves beyond the efficiency of service delivery, and into the realm of political process re-engineering (Snellen 1995). The information union uses the maxim of increased service delivery and cost effectiveness to the taxpayer - citizen to further the project and to advance its position and to strengthen the position of the nation state project within its U.K context. These informatised relations regenerate the possibilities of the nation state, they renew the primacy of space and territory and give a new dimension to those elements of political geography placed under threat by globalisation and post - modernisation, de - territorialisation and virtualisation ( Guehenno 1995, Frissen 1998a,b).

**2000: Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000.** This relates to those measures aimed at limiting alternative forms of discourse that pose a potential threat to the states political consistency.

## **Timeline: Models of communication and polity**

In this section I want to establish a rhythm of social change within which the New Scottish politics and governance are set. I will provide a two - fold model of state transformation within which the concept of governmental modernisation can be set. For instance, a periodisation of social change will be based on the following classifications contained within Table T.1

**Table T.1 Historical dimensions of the Scottish political system .  
Late Medieval era Scottish political system and its characteristics (c1300 – 1450)**

<b>Polity</b>	<b>Political character of state</b>	<b>Principle of legitimacy</b>
Closed.	Elite: Undemocratic.	Ecclesiastical.
Political exclusion is legitimate.	Political inclusion based on elitist principles. Scottish Parliament meets in various sites: Edinburgh, Stirling, Perth, and Aberdeen (Flexible political geography).	Hierocratic and charismatic: power sanctioned by the bearers of ' <i>supernatural</i> ' qualities. Power not readily limited by the existence of the Scottish Parliament.

**Table T.1 Historical dimensions of the Scottish political system  
(continued): Reformation period (c1500 – 1707)**

<b>Polity</b>	<b>Political character</b>	<b>Principle of legitimacy</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>Absolutist.</b>	<b>Hobbesian.</b>	<b>'Order' set in opposition to anarchy/state of nature. The principles of the 'commonweal' applied to merchant classes.</b>	<b>Beginnings of Laissez-faire/liberalism. The challenge of political literature and the conception of a new 'British' identity emerges after 1707. Growth of Protestantism.</b>
<b>Reactive and conservative.</b>	<b>Top down politics. Union of Scottish and English Parliaments in 1707.</b>	<b>Political exclusion is legitimate.</b>	<b>Emergence of civil society.</b>

**Table T.1 Historical dimensions of the Scottish political system**  
**(continued): Simple Modernity and the Scottish political system (1800 –**  
**early 1970s)**

<b>Polity</b>	<b>Political character</b>	<b>Principle of legitimacy</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
Parliamentary democracy. Political stability.	Enlightenment values, Newtonian cause and effect. The framework of the British state.	Social rights and goals. Limited franchise. Civic humanism. The 'Wealth of Nations'.	Market The birth of 'North Britain' and a challenge to Scottish identity. Later reactions include Scottish 'cultural' nationalism. Alternative political ideologies: Fascism and Marxism.
From limited to Mass franchise.	Expansion of public administration. Top down politics.	Welfare State and Technocratic administration.	Participation revolution. The discovery of North Sea Oil and the emergence of a new type of (economic – realist) premised Scottish nationalism.

**Table T.1 Historical dimensions of the Scottish political system****(continued):****Reflexive Modernity and the Scottish Historical Moment: late twentieth/twenty first century governance**

<b>Polity</b>	<b>Political character</b>	<b>Principle of legitimacy</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
Post - modern, Meta – governance.	Reflexive and Informatised.	Partnerships with civil society.	Globalisation 'Risk' society.
<p>Informatised.</p> <p>The emergence of the 'Information Union'.</p> <p>U.K project is re-vitalised in the wake of devolution via informatisation.</p>	<p>Dialogic politics.</p> <p>Generative politics.</p> <p>Model of change is supplied by new social movements and participation revolution.</p>	<p>Participatory democracy.</p> <p>Political and social inclusion.</p>	<p>Distributed technologies (and discourse) challenges limits of permitted communications.</p> <p>Alternative political agenda and the resurgence of a new politics of Scottish identity. Informatisation and reflexive self transformation produces a democratic tension between informed citizenry and existing structures.</p>

**Source: Griffin 2002 (adapted from Giddens 1994, Lynch 1991, Weber 1978).**

## **Bibliography**

- Abbinnett, R. (1998) *Truth and Social Science: From Hegel to Deconstructionism*, SAGE Publications, London and Thousand Oaks California.
- Abramson J. B. F. Arterton, C. and Orren, G. R. (1988) *The Electronic Commonwealth: The Impact of New Media Technologies on Democratic Politics*, New York, Basic Books.
- Aicholzer G, and Schmutzer, R. (1999) 'Options, Policy Issues, and Implementation of Electronic Government Services', in Armitage, J. and Roberts, J. (Eds.) *Exploring Cyber Society: Vol. 1* Proceedings of the Conference, University of Northumbria at Newcastle, U.K, School of Social, Political and Economic Sciences, 5 -7 July.
- Ainger, K. (2001) 'Stay home for a while', *The Guardian*, Comment and Analysis Section, 23/05/2001, P.17
- Albrow, M. (1970) *Bureaucracy*, Macmillan, London.
- Alexander J.H. and Grubbs J.W. (1999) *Wired Government: Information Technology, External Public Organisations and Cyberdemocracy* [<http://pamij.com/a:ex.html>]
- Alexander, C. and Pal, A. L (Eds.) (1998) *Digital Democracy: Policy and Politics in the Wired World*, Oxford University Press.
- Allen, D. (2000) 'Cohesion and the Structural Funds: Transfers and Take – Offs', in Wallace, H. and Wallace, W. (Eds.) *Policy – Making in the European Union*, Fourth Edition, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Almond, G.A. and Verba, S. (1963) *The Civic Culture*, Princeton University Press.
- Amin, A. and Hausner, J. (Eds.) (1997) *Beyond Market and Hierarchy: Interactive Governance and Social Complexity*, Edward Elgar Press, Cheltenham.
- Andersen, K.V. Ed. (1995) *Information Systems in the Political World: Implementation, use and Implications of Economic Modelling*, IOS Press Amsterdam.
- Andersen, K.V. and Danziger, J.N. (1995) 'Impacts of I.T on Capabilities, Interactions, Orientations and Values', in Andersen, K.V. (Ed.) *Information Systems in the Political World: Implementation, Use and Implications of Economic Modelling*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Andersen, K.V. (1998) 'Electronic Models in the Public Sector: Automating Democracy?' in Snellen, I.Th.M. and van de Donk, W.B.H.J. (Eds.) *Public Administration in an Information Age: A Handbook*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Andersen, K.V. (1999) 'Re - engineering public sector organisations using information technology', in Heeks, R. (Ed.) *Reinventing Government in the Information Age: International practice in IT- enabled public sector reform*, Routledge, London and New York.

Anderson, B. (1994) *Imagined Communities*, in Hutchinson, J and Smith, A.D (Eds.) *Nationalism*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Andreski, A. (Ed.) (1974) *The Essential Comte*, Croom Helm, London.

Anttiroiko, A.V. (2000) 'Towards the European Information Society', in *Communications of the ACM*, January 2001/vol 44, No.1. pp 31 - 35

Archibugi, D. (1998) 'Principles of Cosmopolitan Democracy', in Archibugi, D. Held, D. and Kohler, M. (Eds.) *Re-imagining Political Community*, Polity Press Cambridge.

Aron, R. (1965) *Main Currents in Sociological Thought: Vol 1*, Pelican Books, London.

Aron, R. (1970) *Main Currents in Sociological Thought: Vol. 2*, Wiedenfield and Nicolson, London.

Aronson, J.D. (2001) 'The communications and Internet revolution', in Baylis, J. and Smith, S. (Eds.) *The Globalization of World Politics*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Arterton, F.C. (1987) *Teledemocracy: Can Technology Protect Democracy?* Volume 165 SAGE LIBRARY OF SOCIAL RESEARCH, SAGE PUBLICATIONS, Newbury Park, Beverly Hills, London, New Delhi.

Auckland, M. (2000) 'Achieving European Competitiveness in a Knowledge Based Economy', in Stanford –Smith, B. and Kidd, P.T. (Eds.) *E-business: Key Issues, Applications and Technologies*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Avineri, S. and de – Shalit, A. (Eds.) (1999) *Communitarianism and Individualism*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Baddeley, S. (1998) 'Governmentality', in Loader, B. (Ed.) *The Governance of Cyberspace: Politics, Technology and Global Restructuring*, Routledge, London and New York, NY.



Baker, P. (1999) 'Governance, Policy, and Wires', in *The Virtual Metropolis: The Merits (and perils) of ICTs in Local Governance*, [[@http://mason.gmu.edu/~pbaker/cyberspace.html](http://mason.gmu.edu/~pbaker/cyberspace.html)] [\\_http://mason.gmu.edu/~pbaker/cyberspace.html\\_](http://mason.gmu.edu/~pbaker/cyberspace.html)]

Ball, A. (1981) *British Political Parties: The Emergence of a Modern Party System*, MacMillan, London and Basingstoke.

Baran, P.A. and Sweezy, P.M. (1966) *Monopoly Capital: An Essay on the American Economic and Social Order*, Pelican Books/Penguin Books Middlesex, England.

Barker, E. (1960) *Social Contract: Essays by Locke, Hume and Rousseau: with an introduction by Sir Earnest Barker*, Oxford University Press, London, Oxford and New York, NY.

Barker, R. (1994) 'Race and the politics of Identity and Difference', in Dunleavy, P. and Stanyer, J. (Eds.) *Contemporary Political Studies: 1994 Vol. 1*. Proceedings of the Annual Conference held at the University of Wales, Swansea. PSA Publishers.

Barrington - Moore, J.R. (1966) *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*. Penguin Books, England.

Barry, N. (1990) *Welfare*, Open University Press, Buckingham.

Barry, J. (1994) 'The State and (Citizen) of Green Political Theory', in Dunleavy, P. and Stanyer, J. (Eds.) *Contemporary Political Studies 1994 Vol. 1*. Proceedings of the Annual Conference Held at the University of Wales Swansea, PSA Publications.

Baudrillard, J. (1990) *Selected Writings*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Bauman, Z. (2000) 'A Sociological Theory of Postmodernity', in Nash, K. (Ed.) *Readings in Contemporary Political Sociology*, Blackwell Publishers Oxford.

Baur, C. (1980) 'Time to Lay Down Referendum Rules', in Drucker, N. and Drucker HM (Eds.) *The Scottish Government Yearbook 1980*, Paul Harris Publishing, Edinburgh.

Baur, C. (1984) 'The Election Conundrum', in McCrone, D. (Ed.) *The Scottish Government Yearbook 1984*. Unit for the Study of Government in Scotland at the University of Edinburgh.

Bealey, F. (1999) 'Centralization and Concentration of Power in Business and the State: Past, Present and Future', *Aberdeen Studies in Politics No.1*. Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Aberdeen.

Beck, U. (1996) 'Risk Society and the Provident State', in Lash, S. Szerszynski, B. and Brian Wynne (Eds.) *Risk, Environment and Modernity*, SAGE Publications Ltd, London, Newbury Park, New Delhi.

Beck, U. (1997) *The Reinvention of Politics: Rethinking Modernity in the Global Social Order*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Becker, T. and Slaton, C.D. (2000) *The Future of Teledemocracy*, Praeger Publishing, Westport Connecticut.

Becker, T. (2001) 'Rating the Impact of New Technologies on Democracy', in *Communications of the ACM*, January 2001/Vol. 44, No. 1 pp39 – 43.

Beetham, D. (1985) *Max Weber and the Theory of Modern Politics*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Beetham, D. (1991) *The Legitimation of Power*, MacMillan Press, Basingstoke and London.

Bekkers, V.J.J.M. and Frissen, P. (1992) 'Informatisation and Administrative Modernisation: A Comparative Analysis', in Frissen, P. and Bekkers V.J.J.M. Brussard, B. Snellen I.Th.M. Wolters, M. (Eds.) *European Public Administration and Informatisation: A Comparative Research Project Into Policies, Systems, Infrastructures And Projects*. IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Bekkers, V.J.J.M. and van Duivenboden, H.P.M. (1995) 'Democracy and Datacoupling', in van de Donk, W.B.H.J, Snellen, I.Th.M, and Tops, P.W. (Eds.) *Orwell in Athens: A Perspective on Informatisation and Democracy*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Bekkers, V.J.J.M. (1998a) 'New Forms of Steering and the Ambivalency of Transparency', in Snellen, ITh.M. and van de Donk, W.B.H.J.(Eds.) *Public Administration in an Information Age: A Handbook*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Bekkers V.J.J.M. (1998b) 'Wiring Public Organizations and Changing Organizational Jurisdictions', in Snellen, ITh.M. and van de Donk, W.B.H.J. (Eds.) *Public Administration in an Information Age: A Handbook*. IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Bell, D. (1973) *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society: A Venture in Social Forecasting*, Harmondsworth, Penguin Books.

Bell, D. (1999) *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society. A Venture in Social Forecasting* (with revised foreword by Daniel Bell: *The Axial Age of Technology*), Basic Books, New York, NY.

Bellamy, C. (2000) 'Modelling electronic democracy: towards democratic discourses for an information age', in Hofs, J. Horrocks, I. And Tops, P.W. (2000) (Eds.) *Democratic Governance and New Technology: Technologically mediated innovations in political practice in Western Europe*, Routledge/ECPR Studies in European Political Science.

Bellamy, C. Horrocks, I. and Jeff Webb (1995) 'Community Information Systems: Strengthening Local Democracy? In van de Donk W.B.H.J, Snellen I. Th.M and Tops P.W. (Eds.) *Orwell in Athens: A Perspective on Informatisation and Democracy*. IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Bellamy, C. Dutton, W. Robb, C. Taylor, J. A, and Peltu, M. (1996) 'The information polity: electronic democracy, privacy and surveillance', in Dutton, W. (Ed.) *Information and Communication Technologies: Visions and Realities*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Bellamy, C. and Taylor, J. A (1998) *Governing in the Information Age*. Open University Press, Buckingham.

Bellamy, C. and Raab, C.D. (1999) 'Wiring up the Deck Chairs?', in Coleman S, Taylor, J. A, and van de Donk, W.H.B.J. (Eds.) *Parliament in the Age of the Internet*, Oxford University Press in association with The Hansard Society for Parliamentary Government.

Beniger, J.R. (1986) *The Control Revolution: Technological and Economic Origins of the Information Society*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London.

Benn, T. (1991) ' The Case for Dismantling the Secret State', *New Left Review* 190, November/December 1991, pp127 - 131.

Berger, P.L. Luckmann, T. (1969) *The Social Construction of Reality*, The Penguin Press, London.

Berki, R.N. (1977) *The History of Political Thought: A Short Introduction*, Dent Publishing, London and Melbourne.

Birch, A.H. (1993) *The Concepts and Theories of Modern Democracy*. Routledge, London.

Blair, T. (1999) 'The Third Way: New Politics for the New Century, New lefts', *Fabian Society Pamphlet* 588, pp1-20.

Blondell, J. (1976) *Thinking Politically*, Penguin Books, London.

Blumler, J. and Gurevitch, M. (1995) *The Crisis of Public Communication*, Routledge, London.

Bogdanor, V. (1979) *Devolution*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Bohman, J. (2000) *Public Deliberation: Pluralism, Complexity and Democracy*, MIT Press, Cambridge Massachusetts.

Boix, C. (1998) *Political Parties, Growth and Equality: Conservative and Social Democratic Economic Strategies in the World Economy*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Bonney, N.L. (1999) *Scotland's Parliament: Some Social Policy and Research Implications*, unpublished research paper pp1-22.

Bonney, N.L. (2002) Scottish Devolution: What Lies Beneath? In *Parliamentary Affairs*, Vol. 73, No. 2, pp135 -144.

Bottomore, T. (1979) *Political Sociology*, Hutchinson and Co. Ltd. London.

Boyne, R. and Rattansi, A. (Eds.) (1990) *Postmodernism and Society*, MacMillan Education Ltd, Basingstoke and London.

Bowler, S. and Donovan, T. (2000) 'California's Experience with Direct Democracy', in *Parliamentary Affairs*, Vol. 53, pp. 644-656.

Bradbury, J. and Mitchell, J. (2001) 'Devolution: New Politics for Old?' *Parliamentary Affairs*, Vol. 54, pp257-275.

Braman, S. (1994) 'Entering Chaos: Designing the State in the Information Age', in Spichkal, S. Calabrese, A. and Colin Sparks (Eds.) *Information Society and Civil Society: contemporary perspectives on the changing world order*, Purdue University Press, West Lafayette, Indiana.

Brand, J. (1978) *The National Movement in Scotland*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, Henley and Boston.

Breuilly, J. (1993) *Nationalism and the State*, Manchester University Press, Manchester.

Brittan, S. (1997) 'Monetary and Macro - economic Policy in EMU', in Andenas M, Gormley, L. Hadjiemmanuil, C. and Ian Harden (Eds.) *European Economic and Monetary Union: The Transitional Framework*, Kluwer Law International, London.

Brown, A. (2000) 'Designing the Scottish Parliament', in *Parliamentary Affairs* Volume. 53, pp.542-556.

Brown, A. McCrone, D. Paterson, L. (1996) *Politics and Society in Scotland*, Macmillan, London.

Brown, A. McCrone, D. Paterson, L and Surridge, P. (1999) *The Scottish Electorate: the 1997 General Election and Beyond*, Macmillan Press Ltd Basingstoke and London.

Brown, G. (1994) 'The Politics of Potential: A New Agenda for Labour', in Miliband, D. (Ed.) *Reinventing the Left*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Brown, R. (1979) 'Bureaucracy: the utility of a concept', in Kamenka, E. and Krygier, M. (Eds.) *Bureaucracy: The Career of a Concept*, Edward Arnold Publishing, London.

Budge, I. (1996) *The New Challenge of Direct Democracy*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Burin, F.S. (1952) 'Bureaucracy and National Socialism: A Reconsideration of Weberian Theory', in Merton R.K., Gray A.P., Hockey, B. and Hanan C. Selvin (Eds.) *Reader in Bureaucracy*, The Free Press New York and London.

Burns, A. (1999) 'How the Parliament Will Work', in Hassan, G. (Ed.) *A Guide to the Scottish Parliament: The Shape of Things to Come*, Centre for Scottish Public Policy/The Stationery Office, Edinburgh.

Butler, D. and Stokes, G. (1969) *Political Change in Britain*, Penguin, London.

Calabrese, A. Sparks, C. and Spicha, S. (Eds.) (1994) *Information Society and Civil Society: Contemporary Perspectives on the Changing World Order*. Purdue University Press, West Lafayette Indiana.

Callinicos, A. (1976) *Althusser's Marxism*, Pluto Press Limited, London.

Callinicos, A. (1994) *Against Postmodernism: A Marxist Critique*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Callon, M. (1991) 'Techno - economic networks and irreversability', in Law, J. (Ed.) *A Sociology of Monsters: Essays on Power, Technology and Domination*, Routledge London and New York.

Calhoun, C. (2000) 'New Social Movements of the Early Nineteenth Century', in Nash, K. (Ed) *Readings in Contemporary Political Sociology*, Blackwell Publishers Oxford.

Campbell, D. (2000) '*Inside Echelon: the history, structure and function of the global surveillance system known as Echelon*' [[@www.heise.de/tp/english/inhalt/te/6929/1.html](http://www.heise.de/tp/english/inhalt/te/6929/1.html)]

Carracedo, J.D. (1999) 'To What Extent is the Scheme of Panopticism Useful in the Age of Global Electronic Communications to Make Sense of the Concept of Power and Surveillance?', in Armitage, J. and Roberts, J. (Eds.) *Exploring Cyber Society: vol. 1*. Proceedings of the Conference, University of Northumbria at Newcastle, U.K, School of Social, Political and Economic Sciences, 5 -7 July.

Carter, C. and Grieco, M. (2000) 'New deals, No Wheels: Social Exclusion, Tele-options and Electronic Ontology', in *Urban Studies*, Vol. 37, Number 10, pp 1735-1748.

Castells, M. (1996) *Economy, Society and Culture, Vol 1, The Rise of the Network Society*, Blackwell Publishers, Massachusetts and Oxford.

Castells, M. (1997) *Economy, Society and Culture, Vol:2, 'The Power of Identity*, Blackwell Publishers, Massachusetts and Oxford.

Castells, M. (1998) *Economy, Society and Culture, Vol: 3, End of Millenium*, Blackwell Publishers, Massachusetts and Oxford.

Christensen, T. and Laegreid, P. (1998) 'Public Administration in a Democratic Context - A Review of Norwegian Research', in Brunsson, N. and Olsen, J.P. *Organising Organisations*, Fagbokforlaget Vigmostad and Bjorke A.S, Norway.

Centre for the Study of Telematics and Governance [CSTAG] (1998) Glasgow Caledonian University, Telematics and the Scottish Parliament: Transferable Democratic Innovations, Edinburgh, The Scottish Office, Stationery Office Bookshop, Edinburgh.

'21<sup>st</sup> Century Government Action Plan' (2001) @  
[[www.scotland.gov.uk/government.c21/actionplan/targeta4.asp](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/government.c21/actionplan/targeta4.asp)]

Ciborra, C. (2000) 'A critical Review of the Literature', in Ciborra, C. (Ed.) *From Control to Drift: The Dynamics of Corporate Information Infrastructures*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Ciborra, C. and Hanseth, O. (2000) 'Introduction', in Ciborra, C. (Ed.) *From Control to Drift: The Dynamics of Corporate Information Infrastructures*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Clarke, M.G. and Drucker, H.M. (Eds.) (1976) *Our Changing Scotland: A Yearbook of Scottish Government, 1976-77*, Edinburgh University Press.

Clarke, J. and Newman, J. (1993) 'The Right to Manage: A Second Managerial Revolution', in *Cultural Studies*, Vol. 7, Number 3, pp. 427-441

- Clegg, S.R. (1990) *Modern Organisations: Organisation Studies in the Postmodern World*, SAGE books, London and New York.
- Cohen, A.P (1998) *The Symbolic Construction of Community*. Routledge London.
- Coleman, S. (1999a) 'Westminster in the Information Age', in Coleman, S. Taylor, J. and van de Donk, W. (Eds.) *Parliament in the Age of the Internet*, Oxford University Press in association with the Hansard Society for Parliamentary Government.
- Coleman, S. (1999b) 'Cutting out the Middle Man: From Virtual Representation to Direct Deliberation', in, Hague, B. and Loader, B. (Eds.) *Digital Democracy; Discourse and Decision Making in the Information Age*, Routledge, London U.K.
- 'Connecting Scotland: A new Broadband Initiative' (2001),  
@[[www.scotland.gov.uk/library](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library)]
- Consultative Steering Group (CSG) (1998) *Shaping Scotland's Parliament: Report of the Consultative Steering Group on the Scottish Parliament: Presented to the Secretary of State for Scotland*. The Stationery Office, Edinburgh.
- Coombes, D. (1999) *Seven Theorems in Search of the European Parliament*, Federal Trust Series: Future of European Parliamentary Democracy 1. Published by the Federal Trust, London.
- Cornford, J. and Gillespie, A. (1999) 'The Geography of Network Access', in Dutton, W. (Ed.) *Society on the Line: Information Politics in the Digital Age* Oxford University Press, Oxford U.K.
- Corrigan, P. and Joyce, P. (2000) 'Reconnecting to the Public', in *Urban Studies*, Vol. 37, Number 10, pp 1771-1779.
- Corry, D. Le Grand, J. and Radcliffe, R. (1997) *Public/Private Partnerships: A marriage of convenience or a permanent commitment?* Institute for Public Policy Research, London.
- Crick, B. (1986) *In Defence of Politics*, Penguin Books, London.
- Crick, B. Millar, D. (1995) *How to Make the Parliament of Scotland a Model for Democracy*, John Wheatley Centre, Edinburgh.

Croon, A. (1999) 'Making sense of cyberspace - a question of being - with information technology', in Armitage, J. and Roberts, J (Eds.) *Exploring Cyber Society, Vol. 2.* , Proceedings of the Conference 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> July University of Northumbria at Newcastle, U.K, School of Social, Political and Economic Sciences.

Cross, B. (1998) 'Teledemocracy: Canadian Political Parties Listening to their Constituents', in Alexander, C. and Pal, L. (Eds.) *Digital Democracy: Policy and Politics in the Wired World*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Crowther, D. (2000) 'Corporate Reporting, Stakeholders and the Internet: Mapping the New Corporate Landscape', *Urban Studies*, Vol. 37, Number 10 pp. 1837 - 1848.

CSIS TELEPORT, Annual Report, 1999-2000, *Bridging the Digital Divide: Delivering Digital Inclusion*.

Dahl, G. (1999) *Radical Conservatism and the Future of Politics* , SAGE Publications, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi.

Dahl, R. (1982) *Dilemmas of Pluralist Democracy: Autonomy versus Control*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London.

Dahl, R. (1989) *Democracy and its Critics*, Yale University Press: New Haven and London.

Dahl, R. (1999) 'Can international organisations be democratic?', in Shapiro, I. and Hacker-Cordon, C. (Eds.) *Democracy's Edges*, Cambridge University Press.

Dahlberg, L. (1999) 'The Internet and Electronic Democracy: Exploring Three Alternatives', in Armitage, J. and Roberts, J. (Eds.) *Exploring Cyber Society: Vol. 1.* Proceedings of the Conference, University of Northumbria at Newcastle, U.K, School of Social, Political and Economic Sciences, 5-7 July.

Dalton, R.J. and Wattenberg, M.P (2000a) (Eds.) *Parties without Partisans: Political Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Dalton, R.J. and Wattenberg, M.P (2000b) 'Unthinkable Democracy', in *Parties without Partisans: Political Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Dalton, R.J. (2000) 'The Decline of Party Identifications', in *Parties Without Partisans: Political Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.



Dalyell, T. (1977) *Devolution: The End of Britain?* Jonathon Cape Publishers London.

Dandeker, C. (1990) *Surveillance, Power and Modernity: Bureaucracy and Discipline from 1700 to the Present Day*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Danziger, J.N, Dutton W.H, Kling, R. Kraemer, K.L, (1982) *Computers and Politics: High Technology in American Local Governments*, Columbia University Press, New York, NY.

Davie, G.E. (1961) *The Democratic Intellect: Scotland and her Universities in the Nineteenth Century*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press.

Deibert, R.J. (1998) 'Altered Worlds: Social Forces in the Hypermedia Environment', in Alexander, J.A. and Pal, A. (Eds.) *Digital Democracy; Policy and Politics in the Wired World*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Deleuze, G (1988) *Foucault*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Della Porta, D. and Diani, M (1999) *Social Movements: An Introduction*, Blackwell Publishers, Oxford.

Den Boer, M (2000) 'Digital Democracy in Europe: (How) do Parliamentary Websites involve citizens in interactive policy – making?' Discussion paper for European Group of Public Administration – Conference, Glasgow 30<sup>th</sup> August – 2 September 2000.

Denning, S. and Grieco, M. (2000) 'Technology, Dialogue and the development Process', *Urban Studies* Vol. 37, Number 10, September 2000, pp1865 -1881

Depla, P.F.G. and Tops, P.W. (1995) 'Political Parties in the Digital Era: The Technological Challenge?', in van de Donk W.B.H.J, I Th. M. Snellen and P.W Tops (Eds.) *Orwell in Athens: A perspective on Informatisation and Democracy*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Derbyshire, J.D. and Derbyshire, I. (1988) *Politics in Britain: From Callaghan to Thatcher*, W&R Chambers Ltd, University Press, Cambridge.

Deutsch, K. (1967) 'Communication Models and Decision Systems', in Charlesworth, J. (Ed.) *Contemporary Political Analysis*, New York Free Press, NY.

Deutsch, K. (1994) 'Nationalism and Social Communication', in Hutchinson J and Smith, A. (Eds.) *Nationalism*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Devine, T. (1999) *The Scottish Nation 1700 – 2000*, Allen Lane, The Penguin Press, London.

Dobuzinskis, I.(1998) 'Public Administration', in Howlett, M. and Laycock, D. (Eds.) *The Puzzles of Power: An Introduction to Political Science*, Oxford University Press.

Donald, C. (2000) 'Korea steers voters cyber revolt', *The Sunday Herald*, International Section, 23/04/2000, p19

Donzelot, J. (1993) 'The Promotion of the Social', in Gane M and Johnson T (Eds.) *Foucault's New Domains*, Routledge, London and New York, NY.

Doran, P. (1994) 'Ecology, Modernity and the Globalisation of Risk, in Dunleavy, P. and Stanyer, J. (Eds.) *Contemporary Political Studies 1994, Vol:1*, Proceedings of the annual Conference held at the University of Wales Swansea, PSA Publishing.

Dorbeck – Jung, B. (1998) 'Towards Reflexive Responsibility: New ethics for Public Administration', in Hondeghem, A. and European Group of Public administration (Eds.) *Ethics and Accountability in a Context of Governance and New Public Management*. EGPA Yearbook

Dowding, K. (1994) 'Policy Networks: Don't Stretch a God Idea Too Far', in Dunleavy, P. and Stanyer, J. (Eds.) *Contemporary Political Studies: 1994 Vol. 1*. Proceedings of the Annual Conference held at the University of Wales, Swansea. PSA Publishers.

Dowding, K. Dunleavy, P. King, D. Margetts, H. and Yvonne Rydin, (2000) 'Understanding Urban Governance: The Contribution of Rational Choice', in Stoker, G (Ed.) *The New Politics of British Local Governance*, MacMillan Press Ltd. Basingstoke Hampshire, England.

Downie, R.S. (1971) *Roles and Values: An Introduction to Social Ethics*, Methuen and Co. Ltd, London.

Drewry, G. (1991) 'The Civil Service', in Drewry, G. and Butcher, T. (Eds.) *The Public Face of private Government*, (second edition) Blackwell Publishing Oxford.

Drewry, G. (1995) 'The Civil Service: From the 1940s to 'Next Steps' and Beyond', in Ridley, FF. and Rush, M (Eds.) *British Government and Politics Since 1945: Changes in Perspective*, Oxford University Press.

Dryzek, J.S. (2000) *Deliberative Democracy and Beyond. Liberals, Critics and Contestations*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Duff, A.S. (2000) *Information Society Studies*, Routledge, London and New York, NY.

Dunleavy, P. (1991) *Democracy, Bureaucracy and Public Choice: Economic Explanations in Political Science*, Harvester/Wheatsheaf New York and London.

Dunleavy, P. and Stanyer, J. (Eds.) *Contemporary Political Studies, 1994 Vol:1*, Proceedings of the Annual Conference held at the University of Wales Swansea. PSA Publishers U.K.

Dunsire, A. (1973) *Administration: the Word and the Science*, Martin Robertson and Company Ltd, London.

Dunsire, A. (1993) 'Modes of Governance', in Kooiman, J. (Ed.) *Modern Governance: New Government – Society Interactions*, SAGE Publications, London, Newbury Park, New Delhi

Du Preez, P. (1980 ) *The Politics of Identity: Identity and the Human Image*, Blackwell Publishers, Oxford.

Dutton, W.H. Blumler, J. Garnham, N. Mansell, R. Cornford, J. and Peltu, M. (1996) 'The Politics of Information and Communication Policy: The Information Superhighway', in Dutton W.H. (Ed.) *Information and Communication Technologies: Visions and Realities*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Dutton, W.H. (1999) *Society on the Line: Information Politics in the Digital Age*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Duverger, M. (1974) *The Study of Politics*, Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd, London.

Eagleton, T. (1991) *Ideology*, Verso Books, London.

Easton, D. (1964) *A Systems Analysis of Political Life*, Phoenix Press, Chicago.

Edwards, A.R. (1995) 'Informatisation and Views of Democracy,' in van de Donk W.B.H.J, Snellen I. Th. M and P.W Tops (Eds.) *Orwell in Athens: A Perspective on Informatization and Democracy*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Edwards, A.R. (1998) 'Towards an Informed Citizenry?', in Snellen, I. Th. M and W.B.H.J. van de Donk (Eds.) *Public Administration in an Information Age: A Handbook*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Eldridge, J.T. (1971) *Max Weber: The Interpretation of Social Reality*, Michael Joseph Books, London.

***E-government: a strategic framework for public services in the Information Age***  
Cabinet Office April 2000 @ [[www.iagchampions.gov.uk](http://www.iagchampions.gov.uk)]

***The Electoral Commission (U.K.)*** [[www.electoralcommission.org.uk](http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk)].

Elliot, B. and McCrone, D. (1987) 'Class, culture and morality: a sociological analysis of the New Conservatism', in *The Sociological Review*, vol.35 No.3, pp400-413.

Elmagarmid, A.K. and Maciver, W.J. (2001) 'The Ongoing March Towards Digital Government', in *Computer*, February 2001 Volume 34, No.2, pp.32-38

Etzioni, A. (1995) *The Spirit of Community: Rights, Responsibilities and the Communitarian Agenda*, Fontana Press, London.

Etzioni – Halevy, E. (1983) *Bureaucracy and Democracy: A political dilemma*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, Boston, Melbourne and Henley.

European Commission (1994) *Europe's Way to the Information Society. An Action Plan*, Council of Ministers (COM).

European Commission (May 26, 1994) *Europe and the Global Information Society: Recommendations to the European Council*, (Also known as the Bangemann Report) ISPO. Brussels, Belgium  
[[www.ispo.cec.be/infosoc/backg/bangeman.html](http://www.ispo.cec.be/infosoc/backg/bangeman.html)]

Feather, J. (1994) *The Information Society: A Study of Continuity and Change*, Library Association Publishing Ltd. London.

Finer, S. (1982) *Comparative Government*, Penguin Books, Middlesex England.

Fishkin, J. (1991) *Democracy and Deliberation: New Directions for Democratic Reforms*, New Haven, Yale University Press.

Flanagan, O. and Oksenberg Rorty, A. (Eds.) (1990) *Identity, Character and Morality: Essays in Moral Psychology*, A Bradford Book, The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London.

Flynn, N. (1999) 'Modernising British Government', in *Parliamentary Affairs*, Vol. 52, No. 4, pp. 582 – 597.

Foster, C.D. and Plowden, F.J. (1996) *The State Under Stress: Can the Hollow State be Good Government?* Open University Press, Buckingham.

**Foucault, M. (1980) 'Truth and Power', in Gordon, C. (Ed.) *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and other Writings 1972-1977*, The Harvester Press, Brighton, Sussex.**

**Foucault, M. (1991a) 'Governmentality', in Burchell, G., Gordon, C. and Miller, P. (Eds.) *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, University of Chicago Press.**

**Foucault, M. (1991b) *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, Penguin Books London.**

**Foucault, M. (2000) 'The Subject and Power', in Nash, K. (Ed.) *Readings in Contemporary Political Sociology*, Blackwells, Oxford.**

**Fox, C.J. and Miller, H.T.(1995) *Postmodern Public Administration: Towards Discourse*, SAGE Publications, Thousand Oaks California.**

**Frantzich, S. (1995), 'Government information support in a technological age', in Andersen, KV. (Ed.) *Information systems in the Political World; Implementation, Use and Implications of Economic Modelling*, IOS Press Amsterdam.**

**Friedrich, C.J. (1952) 'Some Observations on Weber's Analysis of Bureaucracy', in Merton, R. Gray, A. Hockey B, Selvin, H. (Eds.) *A Reader in Bureaucracy*, The Free Press, New York, NY.**

**Friedman, M. and Friedman, R. (1980) *Free to Choose*, Penguin Books London.**

**Friis, P (1997) 'The Danish National ICT Strategy: Transformative Consequences for Public Administration in the Information Society', in Taylor, J.A. and Snellen, I Th.M. (Eds.) *Beyond BPR in Public Administration: Institutional Transformation in an Information Age*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.**

**Frissen, P.H.A., Bekkers, V.J.J.M., Brussard, BK., Snellen, I.T.M., Wolters, M. (Eds.) (1992) *European Public Administration and Informatisation*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.**

**Frissen, P.H.A. (1996) 'Beyond Established Boundaries? Electronic Highways and Administrative Space', in Bekkers, V. Koops, BJ. And Sjaak Nouwt (Eds.) *Emerging Electronic Highways: New Challenges for politics and Law*, Kluwer Law International, The Hague, London, Boston.**

**Frissen, P.H.A. (1998a) 'Public Administration in Cyberspace: A Postmodern Perspective', in Snellen, I. Th.M. and van de Donk, W.B.H.J. (Eds.) *Public Administration in an Information Age: A Handbook*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.**

**Frissen, P.H.A. (1998b) 'The Virtual state: postmodernisation, informatisation and public administration' in Loader B. (Ed.) *The Governance of Cyberspace: Politics, Technology and Global Restructuring*, Routledge, London and New York, NY.**

**Fromm, E. (1960) *The Fear of Freedom* , Routledge Kegan Paul Ltd London.**

**Fry, M. (1987) *Patronage and Principle: A Political History of Modern Scotland*, Aberdeen University Press, Aberdeen.**

**Galbraith J.K (1967) *The New Industrial State*, Penguin Books, England.**

**Gamble, A. (1989) 'Ideas and Interests in British Economic Policy' in Gamble, A. (Ed.) *Ideas, Interests and Consequences*, Institute of Economic Affairs' London.**

**Gamble, A. (1996) 'The Legacy of Thatcherism', in Perryman, M. (Ed.), *The Blair Agenda*, Lawrence & Wishart, London.**

**Gauthier, D. (1999) 'The Liberal Individual', in Avineri, S. and de Shalit, A. (Eds.) *Communitarianism and Individualism*, Oxford Readings in Politics and Government', Oxford University Press, Oxford.**

**Gellner, E. (1979) *Legitimation of Belief*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.**

**George, S. (1999) *Politics and Policy in the European Union*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.**

**George S, and Brache, I. (2001) *Politics in the European Union* ,Oxford University Press, Oxford.**

**Giddens, A. (1972) *Politics and Sociology in the Thought of Max Weber*, MacMillan Press Ltd, London.**

**Giddens, A. (1984) *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration*, Polity Press, Cambridge.**

**Giddens, A. (1986) *Sociology, a brief but critical introduction*, (second edition) MacMillan, London.**

**Giddens, A. (1987) *The Nation State and Violence*, Berkeley, University of California Press.**

**Giddens, A. (1991) *Capitalism and Modern Social Theory: An analysis of the writings of Marx, Durkheim and Max Weber*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.**

- Giddens, A. (1994) *Beyond Left and Right: The Future of Radical Politics*, Polity Press, Cambridge.
- Giddens, A. (1998) *The Third Way: The Renewal of Social Democracy*, Polity Press, Cambridge.
- Gill, P. (1994) 'Information Control and Changes in United Kingdom Security Intelligence Agencies under Major', in Dunleavy, P. and Stanyer, J. (Eds.) *Contemporary Political Studies: 1994 Volume 1*, Proceedings of the Annual Conference held at the University of Wales Swansea. PSA Publishers U.K.
- Gillespie, A. and Cornford, J. (1996) 'Telecommunications and Regional Development', in Dutton, W.H. (Ed.) *Information and Communication Technologies: Visions and Realities*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Goodwin, B. (1993) *Using Political Ideas* (Third Edition). John Wiley and Sons, Chichester, England.
- Gordon, C. (1991) 'Governmental Rationality: An Introduction', in Burchell, G. Gordon, C. and Millar, P. (Eds.) *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, University of Chicago Press.
- Grant, W. (2001) 'Pressure Politics: From 'Insider' Politics to Direct Action?' *Parliamentary Affairs*, Volume 54, pp337-348.
- Gray, P. and Smith, C. (1999) 'The Scottish Parliament: Re-shaping Parliamentary Democracy in the Information Age', in Coleman, S. Taylor, J.A. and van de Donk, W.B.H.J. (Eds.) *Parliament in the age of the Internet*. Oxford University Press in association with the Hansard Society for Parliamentary Government.
- Gray, A. and Jenkins, B. (2000) 'Government and Administration 1998-99: Overcoming 'Conservatism' - A Job Half Done?', *Parliamentary Affairs* Volume 53, pp219-241.
- Greene, A.M. Hogan, J. and Grieco, M. (2001) 'E-collectivism and Distributed Discourse: New Opportunities for Trade Union Democracy', paper presented at the TUC/LSE Conference on Unions and the Internet, May 12, 2001. [[www.geocities.com/unionsonline/e\\_discourse.htm](http://www.geocities.com/unionsonline/e_discourse.htm)]
- Grieco, M. (1987) *Keeping it in the Family: Social networks and employment chance*, Tavistock Publications, London and New York, NY.
- Grieco, M. (2000) 'Intelligent Urban Development: The Emergence of 'Wired' Government and Administration', in *Urban Studies*, Volume 37, number 10, pp. 1719 –1721.

**Grieco, M. (2001) *A New Scottish Enlightenment: Transport, Telematics and the reduction of Social Exclusion*, Napier University Professorial Lecture, June 19<sup>th</sup> 2001.**

**Grieco, M. (Ed.) (2002) *Organising in the Information Age*, Ashgate Press, Aldershot, Brookfield, Singapore, Sydney.**

**Grimmer, K. (1998) 'Public Administration Organisations as Institutions and their Transformation due to information Technology', in Snellen, I.Th.M. and van de Donk, W.B.H.J., *Public Administration in an Information Age: A Handbook*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.**

**Guehenno, J.M. (1995) *The End of the Nation - State*, (translated by Victoria Elliot), University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, London.**

**Habermas, J. (1971) *Towards a Rational Society: Student Protest, Science and Politics*, Heinemann, London.**

**Habermas, J. (1976) *Legitimation Crisis*, Heinemann, London.**

**Habermas, J. (1984) *The Theory of Communicative Action: Reason and the Rationalisation of Society*, Boston, Beacon Press.**

**Habermas, J. (1989) *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Enquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, Polity Press, London.**

**Hacker, K. (1996) 'Missing Links in the Evolution of Electronic Democratisation', *Media, Culture and Society*, Vol.18 pp 213-230**

**Hacker, K. (2000) 'What is Digital Democracy?', in Hacker, K.L. and van Dijk, J. (Eds.) *Digital Democracy: issues of theory and practice*, SAGE Publications, London.**

**Hacking, I. (1991) 'How Should We Do the History of Statistics?', in Burchell G. Gordon, C. and Peter Miller (Eds.) *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago.**

**Hagen, M. (2000) 'Digital Democracy and Political Systems', in Hacker KL & van Dijk J (Eds.) *Digital Democracy: issues of theory and practice*, SAGE Publications, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi.**

**Hague, B.N. and Loader, B.D. (Eds.) (1999) 'An Introduction', in *Digital Democracy: Discourse and Decision Making in the Information Age*, Routledge, London and New York, NY.**



**Hakan, H. and Johanson, J. (1998) 'The Network as a Governance Structure: Inter-firm Cooperation Beyond Markets and Hierarchies', in Brunson, N. and Olsen, JP. (Eds.) *Organising Organisations*, Fagbokforlaget, Vigmostad and Bjorke AS, Norway.**

**Hale, M. Musso, J. Weare, C. (1999) 'Californian web pages', in Hague, B.N. and Loader B.D. (Eds.) *Digital Democracy: Discourse and Decision Making in the Information Age*, Routledge, London and New York, NY.**

**Hall, G. (2000) 'Social Inclusion in the Information Society', in Stanford-Smith, B. and Kidd, P.T. (Eds.) *E-business: Key issues, Applications and Technologies*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.**

**Hanseth, O. and Braa, K. (2000a) 'Globalisation and 'Risk Society', in Ciborra C (Ed.) *From Control to Drift: The Dynamics of Corporate Information Infrastructures*, Oxford University Press.**

**Hanseth, O. and Braa, K. (2000b) 'Who's in Control: Designers, Managers -or Technology? Infrastructures at Norsk Hydro', in Ciborra, C. (Ed.), *From Control to Drift: The Dynamics of Corporate Information Infrastructures*, Oxford University Press.**

**Hartmann, P. (1998) *Currency Competition and Foreign Exchange Markets/The Dollar, the Yen and the Euro*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.**

**Harvey, D. (2000) 'From Fordism to Flexible Accumulation'. Nash, K. (Ed.), *Readings in Contemporary political Sociology*, Blackwell Publishers Ltd. Malden Massachusetts.**

**Harvie, C. (1992) 'In Time of the Breaking of Nations', in *Scottish Affairs*, No 1, Autumn, pp78-82**

**Hassan, G. (1999) The New Scottish Politics, in Hassan, G. (Ed.) *A Guide to the Scottish Parliament: The Shape of things to come*, Centre for Scottish Public Policy/ Stationery Office, Edinburgh.**

**Hassan, G. and Warhurst, C. (1999) 'Tomorrows Scotland', in Hassan, G. and Warhurst, C. (Eds.) *A Modernisers Guide to Scotland: A Different Future*, The Big Issue/Centre for Scottish public Policy, Edinburgh.**

**Hay, C. (1994) 'Crisis and the Discursive Unification of the State', in Dunleavy, P. and Stanyer, J. (Eds.) *Contemporary Political Studies 1994 vol:1*. Proceedings of the Annual Conference 1994. PSA, U.K.**

**Hayek Von, F. (1943) *The Constitution of Liberty*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London and Henley.**

Hearl, D (1995) 'Britain and Europe Since 1945', in Ridley, FF. and Rush, M. (Eds.) *British Government and Politics Since 1945: Changes in Perspective*, Oxford University Press.

Heeks, R. (Ed.) (1999) *Reinventing Government in the Information Age: International practice in IT – enabled public sector reform*, Routledge, London and New York, NY.

Held, D. (1989) *Political Theory and the Modern State: Essays on State, Power and Democracy*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Held, D. (Ed.) (1991) *Political Theory Today*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Held, D. (1998) *Models of Democracy*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Hetherington, P. (2002) 'Phone voting will entice young', *The Guardian*, News Section, 10/04/2002, p7.

Hindess, B. (1993) 'Liberalism, socialism and democracy: variations on a governmental theme', *Economy and Society*, Vol. 22, number 3, pp.300-314

Hindess, B. (2001) *Discourses of Power: From Hobbes to Foucault*, Blackwell, Oxford.

Hirst, P. (1989) *After Thatcher*, William Collins Sons and Co. Ltd, London.

Hirst, P. (1994) *Associative Democracy: New Forms of Economic and Social Governance*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Hirst, P. and Thompson, G. (1996) *Globalisation in Question*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Hirst, P. (1997) *From Statism to Pluralism: Democracy, Civil Society and Global Politics*, UCL Press, London.

HM Government (1973) *Royal Commission on the Constitution*, London: HMSO, Cmnd 5460.

HM Government (1975) *Our Changing Democracy*, London: HMSO Cmnd 6348.

HM Government (1997) *Scotland's Parliament*, London HMSO: Cm 3658

HM Government (1998) *The Scotland Act*, The Stationery Office, Edinburgh.

HM Government (1998) *Our Competitive Future : Building the Knowledge Driven Economy* ([http://www.dti.gov.uk/comp/competitive/e\\_comm.htm](http://www.dti.gov.uk/comp/competitive/e_comm.htm)).

HM Government (1999) *Modernising Government*, London: HMSO, Cm 4310 (see also: <http://www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/moderngov/1999/whitepaper/>).

HM Government (2000) *The Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act*, The Stationery Office, Edinburgh.

HM Government (2000) *Social Justice: Annual Report for Scotland 2000* [ @ [www.scotland.gov.uk/library3/social/sjm-03.asp](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library3/social/sjm-03.asp)].

Hobsbawm, E.J. (1982) *Industry and Empire*, Penguin Books, Middlesex.

Hoetink, P.P. (1998) 'Visions On ICT-Induced Dynamics in Intergovernmental Relations', in Snellen, I.Th.M. and van de Donk, W.B.H.J. (Eds.) *Public Administration in an Information Age: A Handbook*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Hofs, J. Horrocks, I. and Tops, P. (2000) (Eds.) *Democratic Governance and New Technology: Technologically mediated innovations in political practice in Western Europe*, Routledge/ECPR Studies in European Political Science. Routledge, London and New York, NY.

Hogan, J. and Grieco, M. (2000) 'Trade unions online: technology, transparency and bargaining power', Paper presented at: Workshop on Cyber – ontology, at the University of North London Business School. [[www.geocities.com/unionsonline/unionsonline.html](http://www.geocities.com/unionsonline/unionsonline.html)]

Holliday, I. (1992) 'Scottish Limits to Thatcherism', in *The Political Quarterly* Volume 63, No.4 October-December, pp448-460.

Holsti, O.R. (1969) *Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities*, Adison - Wesley Publishing Company, Reading Massachusetts, Menlo Park, California, London, Don Mills, Ontario.

Hondeghem, A. (1998) 'Introduction', in A Hondeghem and European Group of Public administration (Eds.) *Ethics and Accountability in a Context of Governance and New Public Management: EGPA Yearbook*, IOS Press, Amstredam.

Hood, C.H. (1983) *The Tools of Government*, The MacMillan Press Ltd, London.

Hood, C.H. (2000) *The Art of the State: Culture, Rhetoric, and Public Management*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Hooghe, L. (1994) 'The Politics of Small States: Case Studies in Domestic Politics', in Dunleavy, P. and Stanyer, J. (Eds.) *Contemporary Political Studies*, Proceedings of the Annual Conference held at the University of Wales 1994' 1994 Vol:1. P.S.A, U.K.

Horrocks, I. (1997) 'Community Information Systems and Process Re-engineering', in Taylor, J.A. Snellen, I.Th.M. and Zuurmond, A. (Eds.) *Beyond BPR in Public Administration: Institutional transformation in an Information Age*. IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Hunter, I. (1993) 'Personality as a vocation: the political rationality of the humanities', in Gane, M. and Johnson, T. (Eds.) *Foucault's New Domains*, Routledge, London and New York, NY.

Hutchison, D. (1987) 'The Press in Scotland: Articulating a National Identity?' in, McCrone, D. (Ed.) *The Scottish Government Yearbook 1987*, Unit for the Study of Government in Scotland, Department of Politics Edinburgh University.

'Information Age Government in Scotland: A draft common framework' (2000) Digital Scotland Initiative, [[www.scotland.gov.uk/library](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library)]

Inglehart, R. (1990) 'The Nature of Value Change' in Mair, P. (Ed.), *The West European Party System*, Oxford Readings in Politics and Government, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Jamieson, F. (1994) *Foreword*, in Lyotard, J.F. (1994) *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, Theory and History of Literature, Volume 10, Manchester University Press.

Jessop, B. (1990) *State Theory: Putting the Capitalist State in its Place*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Jessop, B. (2000) 'Governance Failure', in Stoker, G. (Ed.) *The New politics of British Local Governance*, MacMillan Press Ltd, Hampshire, England.

Johnson, T. (1993) 'Expertise and the State', in Gane, M. and Johnson, T. (Eds.) *Foucault's New Domains*, Routledge London and New York, NY.

Jones, B. Kavanagh, D. Moran, M. Norton, P. (Eds.) (2001) *Politics UK*, Pearson Education, Harlow, Essex.

Joshi, J. Ghafoor, A. Aref, W.G. and Eugene Spafford (2001) 'Digital Government Security Infrastructure Design Challenges', in *Computer*, February 2001, Volume 34, No.2.pp.66-71.

Kavanagh, D. (1972) *Political Culture*, MacMillan Press Ltd, London.

Kavanagh, D. (1990) *British Politics: continuities and change*, Oxford university Press, Oxford.

Kavanagh, D. (2000) *British Politics: continuities and change*, 4th edition, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Keane, J. (2000) 'Structural Transformations of the Public Sphere', in Hacker, K.I. and van Dijk, J. (Eds.) *Digital Democracy: issues of theory and practice*, SAGE Publications, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi.

Kearney, R. (1997) *Post-Nationalist Ireland: Politics, Culture, Philosophy*, Routledge, London.

Kellas, J.G. (1976) 'Reactions to the Devolution White paper', in Clarke, M.G. and Drucker, H.M. (Eds.) *Our Changing Scotland: A Yearbook of Scottish Government, 1976-77*, Edinburgh University Press.

Kellas, J.G. (1980) *Modern Scotland*, George Allen and Unwin, London.

Kellas, J.G. (1992) *The Scottish political System*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Kendrick, S. (1986) 'Occupational Change in Modern Scotland', in McCrone, D. (Ed.) *Scottish Government Yearbook 1986*, Edinburgh University: Unit for the Study of Government in Scotland.

Kerevan, G. (2002), 'The bang that could shake up our politics', *The Scotsman*, Comment and Opinion Section, Friday, January 4, 2002, p14.

Keylor, W.R. (2001) *The Twentieth Century World: An International History*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Kickert, W. (1993) 'Complexity, Governance and Dynamics: Conceptual Explorations of Public Network Management', in Kooiman, J. (Ed.) *Modern Governance: New Government-Society Interactions*, SAGE Publications, London and New York, NY.

Killian, W. and Wind, M. (1998) 'Changes in Inter-organisational Co-ordination and Co-operation', in Snellen I.Th.M and van de Donk W.B.H.J (Eds.) *Public Administration in an Information Age: A Handbook*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

King, J.L. and Kraemar K.L. (1998) 'Computer and Communication Technologies: Impacts on the Organisation of Enterprise and the Establishment and Maintenance of Civil Society', in *Fostering Research on the Economic and Social Impacts of Information Technology: Report of a Workshop*, National Academy Press, Washington DC.

Kinney, J. (1996) 'Is There a New Political Paradigm Lurking in Cyberspace?', in Sardar, Z. and Ravetz, J. (Eds.) *Cyberfutures: Culture and Politics on the Information Superhighway*, JR Pluto Press, London.

Knights, D. and Willmott, H. (1999) 'Interpreting Conceptions of the Networked Organisation', in Dutton, W (Ed.) *Society on the Line: Information Politics in the Digital Age*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Knox, M.K. (1968) *Action*, George Allen & Unwin Ltd London.

Kohler, M. (1998) 'From the National to the Cosmopolitan Public Sphere', in Archibugi, D. Held, D. and Martin Kohler (Eds.) *Re-imagining political Community: Studies in Cosmopolitan Democracy*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Komito, L. (1999) 'Political Transformations, Clientilism and Technological Change', in Armitage, J. and Roberts, J. *Exploring Cyber Society: Vol: 2*. University of Northumbria at Newcastle, UK, School of Economic and Political sciences 5-7th July 1999.[ <http://www.unn.ac.uk/corporate/cybersociety>]

Kooiman, J. (1993) 'Social – Political Governance: Introduction', in Kooiman, J. (Ed.) *Modern Governance: New Government – Society Interactions*, SAGE Publications, London, Newbury Park, New Delhi.

Kumar, K. (1995) *From Post-Industrial to Post-Modern Society: New Theories of the Contemporary World*, Blackwell Publishers Ltd, Oxford.

Lane, J.E. and Ersson, S. (1995) *Politics and Society in Western Europe*, SAGE Publications, London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi.

Lang, I. (1994) 'Taking Stock of Taking Stock', in Paterson, L. (1998) *A Diverse Assembly: The Debate on a Scottish Parliament*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh.

Lange Von – Kulesa, J. (1997) 'Collectivist versus individualist perspectives on the institutional transitional process: some methodological remarks', in Amin, A. and Hausner, J. (Eds.) *Beyond Market and Hierarchy: Interactive Governance and Social Complexity*, Edward Elgar Press, Cheltenham.

Lash, S., Szerszynski, B. and Wynne, B. (1996) 'Introduction', in Lash S, Szerszynski B. and Brian Wynne (Eds.) *Risk, Environment and Modernity*, SAGE Publications Ltd, London, Newbury Park, New Delhi. .

Laszlo, E. (1972) *Introduction to Systems Philosophy: Towards a New paradigm of Contemporary Thought*, Harper Torchbooks, Harper and Row, Publishers, New York, NY.

Layder, D. (1998) *Sociological Practice: Linking Theory and Social Research*, SAGE Publications, London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi

Leicester, G. and Mackay, P. (1999) *Holistic Government: Options for a Devolved Government*, Scottish Council Foundation Report @ [\[www.scottishpolicynet.org.uk/scotpol/scf/publications/paper\\_5/contents.shtml\]](http://www.scottishpolicynet.org.uk/scotpol/scf/publications/paper_5/contents.shtml)

Lenk, K. (1997) 'Business Process Reengineering in the Public Sector: Opportunities and Risks', in Taylor, J.A. Snellen, I.Th.M. and Zuurmond, A. (Eds.) *Beyond BPR in Public Administration: Institutional Transformation in an Information Age*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Lenk, K. (1998) 'Policy Execution in an Age of Telecooperation', in Snellen I.Th.M and van de Donk W.B.H.J. (Eds.) *Public Administration in an Information Age: A Handbook*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Lenk, K. (1999) 'Electronic support of citizen participation', in Hague, B.N. and Loader, B.D. (Eds.) *Digital Democracy: Discourse and Decision Making in the Information Age*, Routledge London and New York, NY.

Leonard, S.R. (2000) 'Electronic Procurement', in Stanford-Smith, B. and Kidd, P.T. *E-Business: Key Issues, Applications and Technologies*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Levacic, R. (1993) 'Markets as co-ordinative devices', in Maidment, R. and Thompson, G. (Eds.) *Managing The United Kingdom: An Introduction to its Political economy and Public Policy*, SAGE Publications/Open University, London.

Levy, R. (1990) *Scottish Nationalism at the Crossroads*, Scottish Academic Press, Edinburgh.

Leys, C. (1989) *Politics in Britain: From Labourism to Thatcherism*, Verso Books, London and New York, NY.

Leys, C. (1990) 'Still a Question of Hegemony' *New Left Review*, No. 181/1990, pp.119-128.

Linklater, A. (1998) 'Citizenship and Sovereignty in the Post - Westphalian European State', in Archibugi, D. Held, D. and Martin Kohler (Eds.) *Re-Imagining Political Community*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Little, S. Holmes, L. and Margaret Grieco (2001) 'Calling up Culture: Information Spaces and Information Flows as the Virtual Dynamics of Inclusion and Exclusion', in *Information Technology & People*, Vol. 14 Number 4, pp353-367 [<http://www.emerald-library.com/ft>]

Lips, M. (1998) 'Service Delivery in an Information Age', in Snellen I.Th.M and van de Donk W.B.H.J. (Eds.) *Public Administration in an Information Age: A Handbook*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Loader, B. (1998) *The Governance of Cyberspace: Politics, Technology and Global Restructuring*, Routledge, London and New York, NY.

Lodziak, C. (1986) *The Power of Television: A Critical Appraisal*, Frances Pinter (Publishers) London.

Lynch, M. (1991) *Scotland: A New History*, Century Ltd, London.

Lyon, D. (1988) *The Information Society: Issues and Illusions*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Lyon, D. (1994) *The Electronic Eye: the Rise of the Surveillance Society*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Lyotard, J.F. (1994) *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, Theory and History of Literature, Volume 10, Manchester University Press.

MacDonald, K.I (2000) 'Use and Valuation: Information in the City', *Urban Studies*, Vol.37 Number 10, pp 1881-1892.

MacInnes, J. (1992) 'The Press in Scotland', *Scottish Affairs*, Vol. 1, Autumn 1992. pp 137-149.

Mackay, N. (2000) 'Wallace opens door to Big Brother', *The Sunday Herald*, 2/04/2000, news section p6.

MacKenzie, D. (1999) 'Technological Determinism', in Dutton, W.(Ed.) *Society on the Line: Information Politics in the Digital Age*, Oxford University Press.

Mackenzie, W.J.M. (1978) *Political Identity*, Manchester University Press.

MacLeod C 2001 'Land bill plan to let crofters own their estates', *The Herald* News Section 15/11/2001 p.7

MacWhirter, I (1992) 'The Political year in Westminster: October 1990 -July 1991', in McCrone, D. and Paterson, L. (Eds.) *The Scottish Government Yearbook 1992*, Unit for the Study of Government in Scotland, Department of Politics, Edinburgh University.

MacWhirter, I. (2001) 'Confusion appears to be the name of the game', in *'The Herald'* Comment and Opinion Section, 10/11/2001, p14.

Maes, R. (1998) ' Political and Administrative innovations as a Social Project: the Belgian Case', in Hondeghe, A. and European Group of Public Administration (Eds.) *Ethics and Accountability in a Context of Governance and the New Public Management*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.



Maguire, J. (1996) 'The Tears Inside the Stone: Reflections on the Ecology of Fear', in Lash, S. Szerszynski, B. and Brian Wynne (Eds.) *Risk, Environment and Modernity: Towards a New Ecology*, SAGE Publications, London Thousand Oaks and New Delhi.

Maguire, M. (1998) 'Ethics in the Public Service', in Hondeghem, A. and European Group of Public administration (Eds.) *Ethics and Accountability in a Context of Governance and New Public Management*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Mahon, B. (1997) 'European Information Policy: the Role of Institutional Factors', Rowlands, I (Ed.) *Understanding Information Policy*, Bowker Saur, East Grinstead.

Mair, P. (Ed.) (1990) *The West European Party System*, Oxford readings in Politics and Government, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Mair, P. (1998) *Party System Change: Approaches and Interpretations*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Major, J. (1992) in Paterson, L. (Ed.) (1998) *A Diverse Assembly: The Debate on a Scottish Parliament*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh.

Malina, M. (1999a) 'Perspectives on citizen democratisation and alienation in the virtual public sphere', in Hague, B.N. and Loader, B.D (Eds.) *Digital Democracy: Discourse and Decision making in the Information Age*, Routledge, London and New York, NY.

Malina, A. (1999b) 'Third Way' transitions: Building 'Benevolent Capitalism' for the Information Society', *Communications*, Vol: 24, pp 180-190.

Malina, A. (2001) 'E-Networks; Arenas for Democratic Engagement', paper presented to 'Community networking and perceptions of civic value conference', Piran, slovenia 12-15 September 2001.

Malina, A. and MacIntosh, A. (2000) *Towards electronic democracy in Scotland: The International Teledemocracy Centre in Edinburgh and the design of e-petitioning*, Napier University, Edinburgh: ITC Working Paper.

Mann, C. and Stewart, F. (2000) *Internet Communication and Qualitative Research: A Handbook for Researching Online*, SAGE Publications, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi.

Mannheim, K. (1982) *Structures of Thinking*, Routledge Kegan Paul, London, Boston and Henley.

Mansell, R. (1999) 'The Bias of Information Infrastructures' in, Dutton, W. (Ed) *Society on the Line: Information Politics in the Digital Age*, Oxford University Press, Oxford UK.

**Marcuse, H. (1968) *One Dimensional Man*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London.**

**Marcuse, H. (1973) *Reason and Revolution: Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory*, Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd, London.**

**Margetts, H. (1994) 'The National Performance Review, the Clinton Presidency and the Future Shape of American Government', in Dunleavy, P. and Stanyer, J. (Eds.) *Contemporary Political Studies 1994 Vol: 1*, Proceedings of the annual conference held at the University of Wales Swansea, P.S.A. Publishing.**

**Margetts, H. (1999) *Information Technology in Government: Britain and America*, Routledge Research in Information Technology and Society Routledge, London and New York, NY.**

**Marr, A. (1992) *The Battle for Scotland*, Penguin Books London.**

**Marsh, D. and Rhodes, R. (Eds.) (1992) *Policy Networks in British Government*, Clarendon Press, Oxford.**

**Marquand, D. (1988) *The Unprincipled Society: New Demands and Old Politics*. Jonathon Cape Ltd, London.**

**Marquand, D. (1984) 'Reinventing Federalism: Europe and the Left', in Miliband, D. (Ed.) *Reinventing the Left*, Polity Press, Cambridge.**

**Marx, K. (1946) *Capital: A Critical Analysis of Capitalist Production*, George Allen and Unwin Ltd, London.**

**Maxwell, S. (1987) 'The Politics of Poverty in Scotland' in McCrone, D. (Ed.) *The Scottish Government Yearbook 1987*, Centre for the Study of Government in Scotland, Edinburgh University Press.**

**Mayhew, A. (1998) *Recreating Europe: The European Union's Policy Towards Central and Eastern Europe*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.**

**McAllister, L. (2000) 'The New Politics in Wales: Rhetoric or Reality?', in *Parliamentary Affairs*, Vol. 53. pp 591-604.**

**McCarthy, J. and Newlands, D. (1999) 'Governing Scotland: Problems and Prospects: The Economic Impact of the Scottish Parliament', in McCarthy, J. and Newlands, D. (Eds.) *Governing Scotland: Problems and Prospects : The Economic Impact of the Scottish Parliament*, Ashgate Publishing Ltd, Aldershot, England.**

**McConnell, J. (1999) *European Structural Funding and Scotland* [[@www.scottish.parliament.uk/official\\_report/session99-00/or30202.htm](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/official_report/session99-00/or30202.htm)]**

McConnell, J. (1999) *21<sup>st</sup> Century Government*  
[[@www.scotland.gov.uk/c21g.asp](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/c21g.asp)] (21/12/1999)

McConnell, J. (2000) *Quality Statistics vital to the New Politics*  
[[@www.scotland.gov.uk/news/press2000\\_04/se0406.asp](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/news/press2000_04/se0406.asp)] (29/3/2000)

McCrone, D.(Ed) (1984) *The Scottish Government Yearbook 1984*, Unit for the Study of Government in Scotland. University of Edinburgh.

McCrone, D. (1989) 'Thatcherism in a Cold Climate' from *Radical Scotland* June/July 1989, pp8-11.

McCrone, D. (1992) *Understanding Scotland: The Sociology of a Stateless Nation*, Routledge, London.

McFadden, J. and Lazarowicz, M. (1999) *The Scottish Parliament: An Introduction*, T&T Clark Ltd. Edinburgh.

McLean, I. (1989) *Democracy and New Technology* , Polity Press, Cambridge.

McLean, I. (1992) 'Rational Choice and the Victorian Voter,' in *Political studies*, Volume XL, Number 3, September 1992, pp 496-515.

McLeish, H. 'New style of government brings need for reform', *The Scotsman*, Comment and Opinion Section, 15/11/2000. P14

Mecella, M. and Batini, C. (2001) ' Enabling Italian E-Government through a co-operative Architecture', *Computer*, Feb 2001 vol 34 No.2.pp-40-45.

Mennell, S. (1974) *Sociological theory: Uses and Unities*, Praeger publishers, New York, NY. and Washington.

Merton R, Gray A.P, Hockey, B. Selvin, H. (1952) *Reader in Bureaucracy*, The Free Press, New York,NY.

Meyer, M. (1979) *Change in Public Bureaucracies*, Cambridge University Press. Cambridge, London and New York,NY.

Michels, R. (1959) *Political Parties*, Dover Publications, New York, NY.

Midwinter, A. Keating, M. Mitchell, J. (1991) *Politics and Public Policy in Scotland*, MacMillan Education Ltd, London.

Miles, I. Rush, H. Turner, K. Bessant, J. (1988) *Information Horizons: The Long Term Implications of New Information Technologies* , Edward Elgar, England.

Millar, D. (1999) 'Community and Citizenship', in Avineri Shlomo, S. and de Shalit, A. (Eds.) *Communitarianism and Individualism*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Miller, P. and Rose, N. (1993) 'Governing Economic Life', in Gane, M. and Johnson, T. (Eds.) *Foucault's New Domains*, Routledge, London and New York, NY.

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

Mills, M. and Saward, M. (1994) 'Policy Communities: Theoretical Issues' in Dunleavy, P. and Stanyer, J. (Eds.) *Contemporary Political Studies: 1994 Vol:1*. Proceedings of the Annual Conference held at the University of Wales, Swansea, March 29-31<sup>st</sup> 1994. P.S.A, U.K.

Milner, E. (1999) 'Electronic government: more than just a 'good thing'? A question of 'ACCESS', in Hague, B.N. and Loader, B.D. *Digital Democracy: Discourse and Decision Making in the Information Age*, Routledge London and New York, NY.

Mitchell, J. (1990) *Conservatives and the Union: A Study of Conservative Party Attitudes to Scotland*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh.

Mitchell, J. (1993) 'Co-ordination by hierarchy', in Maidment, R. and Thompson, G. *Managing The United Kingdom: An Introduction to its Political Economy and Public Policy*, SAGE Publications/Open University Books, London.

Mitchell, J. (1999) 'Consensus: Whose consensus?', in Hassan, G. and Warhurst, C. *A Modernisers Guide to Scotland: A Different Future*, Centre for Scottish Public Policy and The Big Issue in Scotland, Edinburgh & Glasgow.

Mitchell, J. (2000) 'New Parliament, New Politics in Scotland', *Parliamentary Affairs*, Vol.53 pp 605-621.

*Modernising Government*. Debate within the Scottish Parliament's Plenary meeting of 23/02/2000

[@[http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/official\\_report/session99-00/or050102.htm](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/official_report/session99-00/or050102.htm)]

Moore, R.K. (1999) 'Democracy and Cyberspace', in Hague B.N and Loader B.D (Eds.) *Digital Democracy: Discourse and Decision Making in the Information Age*, Routledge, London and New York, NY.

Monbiot, G. (2001) 'Raising the Temperature', *The Guardian, Comment and Analysis Section*, 24/06/2001, p17.

- Moran, M. (2001) 'The Rise of the Regulatory State in Britain' in *Parliamentary Affairs*, Volume 54, pp 19-34.
- Morris-Suzuki, T. (1988) *Beyond Computopia: Information, Automation and Democracy in Japan*, Kegan Paul International, London and New York, NY.
- Moss, D. (1989) *The Politics of Left Wing Violence in Italy: 1969 - 85*, MacMillan Press Ltd, London.
- De Mulder, R.V. (1998) 'The Digital Revolution: From Trias to Tetras Politica' ,in I.Th.M.Snellen and W.B.H.J. van de Donk (Eds.) *Public Administration in an Information Age: A Handbook*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.
- Myles, A. (1999) 'The New Electoral system', in Hassan, G.(Ed.) *A Guide to the Scottish Parliament: The Shape of things to come*, Centre for Scottish public Policy/The Stationery Office, Edinburgh.
- Nairn, T. (1981) *The Break-up of Britain*, Verso Books, London.
- Nairn, T. (1999) 'A New Song for Scotland: The Making of the Scottish Constitution', in Hassan, G. and Warhurst, C. (Eds.) *A Modernisers Guide to Scotland: A Different Future*, Centre for Scottish Public Policy and The Big Issue in Scotland, Edinburgh.
- Nairn, T. (2000) *After Britain: New Labour and the Return of Scotland*, Granta Books, London.
- Nash, K. (2000) *Contemporary Political Sociology: Globalisation, Politics and Power*, Blackwell Publishers, Massachusetts, MA.
- Nash, K. (Ed.) (2000) *Readings in Contemporary Political Sociology*, Blackwell Publishers, Massachusetts, MA.
- Nisbet, R.A. (1969) *Social Change and History: Aspects of the Western Theory of Development*, Oxford University Press, London, Oxford & New York, NY.
- Nora, S. and Minc, A. (1981) *The Computerisation of Society: A Report to the President of France*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London.
- North, R.C. (1967) 'The Analytical Prospects of Communication Theory', in Charlesworth, J.C. (Ed.) *Contemporary Political Analysis*, The Free Press, New York, NY.
- Novak, M. (1991) *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism*, IEA health & Welfare Unit, London.

Nowotny, H. (1982) 'The Information Society: its Impact on the Home, Local Community and Marginal Groups', in Andersen-Bjorn, N. (Ed.) *Information Society: for Richer or Poorer*, Selected papers from a conference held at the Selsdon Park Hotel, London 25-29 January 1982. North Holland Publishing Company, Amsterdam.

Offe, C. (1984) *Contradictions of the Welfare State*, Hutchinson Books, London.

Offe, C. and Preuss, U. (1991) Democratic Institutions and Moral Resources, in Held, D. (Ed) *Political Theory Today*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Offe, C. (1996) *Modernity and the State: East West*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Office of the e-envoy (2001) *E-government interoperability framework-overview*, @ [www.e-envoy.gov.uk/publicationss/frameworks/egif2]

Osborne, D. and Gaebler, T. (1992) *Reinventing Government: How the Entrepreneurial Spirit is Transforming the Public Sector*, Penguin Books, New York, NY.

Osmond, J. (1998) 'Reforming the Lords and Changing Britain', in *Redesigning the State*. Fabian Society pamphlet 587.

Painter, C. (1999) 'Public Service Reform From Thatcher To Blair: A Third Way', In *Parliamentary Affairs*, volume 52 issue 1, January, pp94-112.

Parry, G. (1980) *Political Elites*, George Allen & Unwin. London.

Parry, G. and Moyser, G. (1994) 'More Participation, More democracy?', in . Beetham, D. (Ed.) *Defining and Measuring Democracy*, SAGE Modern Politics series Volume 36, London.

Parsons, T. (1970) 'An Approach to the Sociology of Knowledge', in Curtis, J.E. and Petras, J.W. (Eds.) *The Sociology of Knowledge*, George Duckworth & Co. Ltd, London.

Parsons, W. (1990) *The Power of the Financial Press: Journalism and Popular Opinion in Britain and America*, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, New Jersey.

Parsons, W. (1998) 'Fuzzy in Theory and Getting Fuzzier in Practice: post – modern reflections on responsibility in public administration and management', in Hondeghem, A. and European Group of Public Administration (Eds.) *Ethics and Accountability in a Context of Governance and New Public Management: EGPA Yearbook*. IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Pasquino, P. (1991) 'Theatrum politicum: The genealogy of capital - police and the state of prosperity', in Burchell G, Gordon, C. and Miller, P. (Eds.) *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, University of Chicago Press.

Pateman, C. (1985) *The Problem of Political Obligation: A Critique of Liberal Theory*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Paterson, L. (1994) *The Autonomy of Modern Scotland*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh.

Paterson, L. (Ed.) (1998) *A Diverse Assembly: The Debate on a Scottish Parliament*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh.

Paterson, L. (1999) 'Why Should we Respect Civic Scotland?', in Hassan, G. and Warhurst, C. (Eds.) *A Modernisers Guide to Scotland: A Different Future*, The Big Issue/centre for Scottish public Policy, Edinburgh, Scotland.

Perman, R. (1980) 'The Devolution Referendum campaign of 1979', in Drucker, N. and Drucker, H.M. (Eds.) *The Scottish Government Yearbook 1980*. Paul Harris Publishing, Edinburgh.

Perryman, M. (Ed.) (1996) *'The Blair Agenda'*, Lawrence and Wishart, London.

Peters, J.D. (1993) 'Distrust of Representation: Habermas and the Public Sphere', in *Media, Culture and Society*. Vol. 15, No4, pp 541-567.

Phillips, A. (1994) 'Comment: Whose Community? Which Individuals ?', in Miliband, D. (Ed.) *Reinventing the Left*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Poggi, G. (1990) *The State: Its Nature, Development and Prospects*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Poggi, G. (2000) *Durkheim*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Popper, K.R. (1963) *The Poverty of Historicism*, Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd. London

Poupa, C. (1998) 'Direct Democracy and Cyber-democracy in Switzerland', in Snellen I.Th.M. and van de Donk W.B.H.J (Eds.) *Public Administration in an Information Age: A Handbook*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Poulantzas, N. (1976) *Political Power and Social Classes*, New Left Books, London.

Poster, M. (1984) *Foucault, Marxism and History: Mode of Production versus Mode of Information*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Poster, M. (1990) *The Mode of Information: Poststructuralism and Social Context*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Pratchett, L. (1994) 'Policy Networks, Information Technologies and Local Government: Defining a Relationship', in Dunleavy, P. and Stanyer, J. (Eds.) *Contemporary Political Studies, 1994, Volume 1*, Proceedings of the annual conference held at the University of Wales, Swansea 1994. PSA Publishers.

Pratchett, L. (1998) 'Technological Bias in an Information Age: ICT Policy Making in Local Government', in Snellen, I.Th.M. and van de Donk W.B.H.J.(Eds.) *Public Administration in an Information Age: A Handbook*, IOS Press Amsterdam.

Pratchett, L. (1999) 'New Fashions in Public Participation: Towards Greater Democracy?', in *Parliamentary Affairs*, Volume 52, issue 4, pp 613-633.

Prins, J.E.J (Ed.) (2001) *Designing E- Government: On the Crossroads of Technological Innovation and Institutional Change*, Kluwer Law International, The Hague, London and Boston.

Raab, T.D.K. (1975) *The Struggle for Stability in Early Modern Europe*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Raab, C.D. (1998) 'Electronic Confidence: Trust, Information and Public Administration', in I.Th.M.Snellen and W.B.H.J. van de Donk (Eds.) *Public Administration in an Information Age: A Handbook*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Rabinow, P. (Ed.) (1984) *The Foucault Reader: An Introduction to Foucault's Thought*, Penguin Books, London.

Rawls, J. (1999) *A Theory of Justice*, (Revised edition). Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Ravetz, J. (1997) 'The Internet, virtual reality and real reality', in Loader, B (Ed.) *Cyberspace Divide: Equality, Agency and Policy in the Information Society*, Routledge , London and New York, NY.

Reichard, C. (1998) 'The Impact of Performance Management on Transparency and Accountability in the Public Sector', in Hondeghem, A. and European Group of Public administration (Eds.) *Ethics and Accountability in a Context of Governance and New Public Management: EGPA Yearbook*. IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Rennger, N. (1999) *E-Governance: Democracy, Technology and the Public Realm*, Published by the Scottish Council Foundation, Edinburgh.

Rheingold, H. (1993) *The Virtual Community*. Harper Perennial, New York, NY.



- Rhodes, R.A.W. (1997) *Understanding Governance: Policy Networks, Governance, Reflexivity and Accountability*, Open University Press, Buckingham.
- Richard, E. (1999) 'Tools of governance', in Hague, B. and Loader, B. (Eds.) *Digital democracy: Discourse and Decision Making in the Information Age*, Routledge, London.
- Richards, D., Smith, M.J. (1998) 'keepers of the Common Good: Power and the Public Service Ethos' in Hondeghem, A. and European Group of Public Administration (Eds.) *Ethics and Accountability in a Context of Governance and New Public Management*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.
- Richards, G. (1998) 'Businesslike Government: The Ultimate Oxymoron?', in Howlett, M. and Laycock, D. (Eds.) *The Puzzles of Power: An Introduction to Political Science*, Oxford University Press, Toronto, Oxford and New York, NY.
- Robertson, D.S. (1998) *The New Renaissance: Computers and the Next Level of Civilisation*, Oxford University Press, New York, NY.
- Robins, K. Webster, F. (1999) *Times of the Technoculture: From the Information Society to the Virtual Life*, Routledge, London.
- Roemer, J.E. (1999) 'Does Democracy Engender Justice?' in Shapiro, I. and Hacker-Cordon, C. *Democracy's Value*. Cambridge University Press.
- Rose, N. (1999) *Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Rosen, M. and Wolff, J. (Eds.) (1999) *Political Thought*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Ross, J. (2001) 'Test for electronic voting', *The Scotsman*, Politics Section 24/09/2001, p9.
- Rowlands, I.(Ed.) (1997) *Understanding Information Policy*, Proceedings of a Workshop held at Cumberland Lodge, Windsor Great Park, 22-24 July 1996, Bowker Saur, London.
- Rubin, H.J. and Rubin, I.S. (1995) *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*, SAGE Publications, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi.
- Sabine, G.H. (1966) *A History of Political Theory*, George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd. London.
- Sandholtz, W. (1996) 'Membership matters: limits of the Functional approach to European institutions', in *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 34/No. 3.

Sardar, Z. and Ravetz, J.R. (Eds.) (1996) *Cyberfutures: Culture and Politics in the Information Superhighway*. Pluto Press, London.

Saward, M. (1994) 'Democratic Theory and Indices of Democratization', in Beetham (Ed.) *Defining and Measuring Democracy*, SAGE Modern Politics Series, Volume 36, SAGE Publications, London, Thousand Oaks, and New Delhi.

Scarrow, S.E. (2000) 'Parties without Members? Party Organisation in a Changing Electoral Environment', in Dalton, R.J. and Wattenberg, M.P. (Eds.) *Parties without Partisans: Political Change in Advanced Industrial Societies*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Schalken, K.A.T. and Tops, P.W. (1995) 'Democracy and Virtual Communities: An empirical exploration of the Amsterdam digital City', in van de Donk W.B.H.J, Snellen I.Th.M, and P.W. Tops (Eds.) *Orwell in Athens: A Perspective on Informatisation and Democracy*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Schalken, K. (1998) 'Internet as a New Public Sphere for Democracy?', in Snellen, I.Th.M. and van de Donk, W.B.H.J. (Eds.) *Public Administration in an Information Age: A Handbook*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Shapiro, I. and Hacker – Cordon, C. (Eds.) (1999) *Democracy's Value*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Schement, J.R. and Curtis, T. (1997) *Tendencies and Tensions of the Information Age: the Production and Distribution of Information in the United States*, Transaction Publishers New Brunswick, and London.

Schiller, H. (1996) *Information Inequality: The Deepening Social Crisis In America*, Routledge New York, NY, London.

Schluchter, W. (1981) *The Rise of western Rationalism: Max Weber's Developmental History*, University of California Press, Berkeley California.

Scott, P.H. (1985) *In Bed With an Elephant: The Scottish Experience*, Saltire Pamphlets. New Series, No. 7. The Saltire Society, Edinburgh.

Schroeder, R. (1998) 'Virtual Worlds and the Social Realities of Cyberspace', in Loader, B. (Ed.) *The Governance of Cyberspace: Politics, Technology and Global Restructuring*, Routledge, London.

Schwerin, E.W. (1995) *Mediation, Citizen Empowerment and Transformational Politics*, Praeger Series in Transformational Politics and Political Science. Praeger, Westport Connecticut, and London.

Scott – Aitkens, G. (1999) 'Deweyan systems in the Information Age' in Hague, B.N. and Loader, B.D. (Eds.) (1999) *Digital Democracy; Discourse and Decision Making in the Information Age*, Routledge, London and New York, NY.

The Scottish Office/ Centre for the Study of Telematics and Governance at Glasgow Caledonian University (1999) *Telematics and the Scottish Parliament: Transferable Democratic Innovations*, [SP.info@scottish.parliament.uk]

Scottish Council Foundation (1998) *Business and government: Partners in the Good Society*, Paper No. 8. The Scottish Council Foundation, Edinburgh.

The Scottish Executive (2000) *Information Age Government in Scotland: A draft common framework*, [a@www.Scotland.gov.uk/cru/]

The Scottish Executive: Press Release No.1363/99 (29/06/2002) *The Scottish Executive: a new name for a new era*.

The Scottish Executive, (1999) *Scottish Household Survey Report*, [www.scotland.gov.uk/shs.] (15/4/2001@1300)

Scottish Parliament Committee Report (Justice and Home Affairs) Stage 1 *Report on the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Bill*, Scottish Parliament Paper 141@ [www.scottish.parliament.uk/official\_report/cttee/just-00/jur00-05-02.htm]

Scottish Parliament Information Centre, (SPICe) (6/10/1999) *Approaches to Tackling Poverty and Social Exclusion*, Research Note 42. Prepared for the 'Social Inclusion, Housing and the Voluntary Sector Committee'.

Scottish Parliament Information Centre, (SPICe) (27/05/1999) *The New Scottish Government*, Subject Map, Devolution Series/2.

Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe) (22/02/2000) *Modernising Government Programme*, Subject Map: Devolution Series 1/00.

Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe) (4/05/2000) *The Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000*, Research Note RN 00/30

*Scottish Parliamentary (Cross – Party) Group on Information, Knowledge and Enlightenment*, (SPIKE) website details: [www.scottish.parliament.uk/msps/cpg/cpg-ike.html]

Scottish Parliament Research Paper 99/11 (6/10/1999) *Measuring Social Exclusion*.

*The Scotsman* (9/03/2001) 'Executive acts to overturn Parliament', News Section, p1.

Searle, J. (2000) 'Helping Small UK Firms into the Digital World' in Stanford-Smith, B. and Kidd, P.T. (Eds.) *E-Business: Key Issues, Applications and Technologies*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Seldon, A. (1989) 'Ideas and Interests in British Economic Policy' in Gamble, A. (Ed.) *Ideas, Interests and Consequences*, Institute of Economic Affairs, IEA Readings No. 30, London.

Shapiro, I. and Hacker-Cordon, C. (1999) *Democracy's value*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

Siedentop, L. (2001) 'This is a new kind of Europe', *Sunday Times June 3<sup>d</sup> 2001, Comment and Opinion Section*, p15.

Silcock, R. (2001) 'What is e-Government?', in *Parliamentary Affairs*, Volume 54, pp. 88-101.

Sillars, J. (1998) 'Independence in Europe' in Paterson, L. (Ed.) *A Diverse Assembly: The Debate on a Scottish Parliament*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh.

Silverman, D. (1985) *Qualitative Methodology and Sociology*, Gower Publishing Company, Vermont.

Skinner, A.S. (1979) *A System of Social Science: Papers Relating to Adam Smith*, Clarendon Press, Oxford.

Smith, A. D. (1971) *Theories of Nationalism*, Duckworth Books Ltd, London.

Smith, M. (1994) *Paper Lions: The Scottish Press and National Identity*, Polygon Press, Edinburgh.

Smith, C. (1998) 'Political Parties in the Information Age: from 'Mass Party' to Leadership Organisation?', in I.Th.M. Snellen and van de Donk, W.B.H.J. (Eds.) *Public Administration in an Information Age: A Handbook*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Smith, C. and Gray, P. (1999) 'The Scottish Parliament: Re- Shaping Parliamentary Democracy in the Information Age', in Coleman, S. Taylor, J. and van de Donk, W.B.H.J. (Eds.) *Parliament in the age of the Internet*, Oxford University Press in association with the Hansard Society for Parliamentary Government.

Snellen, I.Th.M. (1995) 'Chanelling Democratic Influence Through Bureaucracies', in van de Donk, W.B.H.J. Snellen, I.Th. M and P.W. Tops (Eds.) *Orwell in Athens: A Perspective on Informatisation and Democracy*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Snellen I.Th.M. and van de Donk W.B.H.J (Eds.) (1998) *Public Administration in an Information Age: A Handbook* , IOS Press, Amsterdam, Netherlands.

Snellen, I.Th.M (2001) 'ICTs, Bureaucracies, and the Future of Democracy', in *Communications of the ACM*, January 2001, Volume 44, Number 1, pp.45-48.

Sobchack, V. (1996) 'Democratic Franchise and the Electronic Frontier', in Sardar, Z. and Ravetz, J.R (Eds.) *Cyberfutures: Culture and Politics on the Information Superhighway*, Pluto Press, London.

Sparks, C. (1994) 'Civil Society and Information Society as Guarantors of Progress', in Stevenson, N. (Ed.) *Understanding Media Cultures: Social Theory and Mass Communications*. SAGE Publications, New York,NY.

Stanyer, J. (2001) 'The New Media and the Old: The Press, Broadcasting and the Internet', in *Parliamentary Affairs*, Vol.54, pp349-359.

Stoker, G. (2000) (Ed.) *The New Politics of British Local Governance*, MacMillan Press Ltd, Basingstoke, Hampshire.

Storror, W. (1999) 'Easter Rising', *The Sunday Herald*, 4/4/1999.

Street, J. (1992) *Politics and Technology* , MacMillan Press Ltd, Basingstoke and London.

Strinati, D. (1995) *An Introduction to Theories of Popular Culture*, Routledge, London.

Stromer-Galley, J. and Hall – Jamieson, K. (2001) 'The Transformation of Political Leadership?' in Axford, B. and Huggins, R. (Eds.) *New Media and Politics* , SAGE Publications Ltd. London.

Taylor, B. (1999) *The Scottish Parliament* , Polygon Books, Edinburgh.

Taylor, J. and Van Every, E. (1993) *The Vulnerable Fortress: Bureaucratic Organization and Management in the Information Age*, University of Toronto Press, Canada.

Taylor J.A, Snellen I.Th.M. and Zuurmond, A. (Eds.) (1997) *Beyond BPR in Public Administration: Institutional Transformation in an Information Age*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Taylor, J. A. (1998), 'Informatisation as X-ray: What is Public Administration for the Information Age?', in Snellen I.Th.M and van de Donk (Eds.) *Public Administration in an Information Age: A Handbook*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Taylor, J.A. and Burt, E. (2001) 'Not - For -Profits in the Democratic Polity' in *Communications of the ACM*, January 2001 Vol. 44, No.1, pp58 – 62.

Thaens, M. Bekkers, V.J.J.M. and van Duivenboden, H.P.M. (1997) 'Business Process Redesign and Public Administration: A Perfect Match?', in Taylor, J.A. Snellen, I.Th.M. and Zuurmond, A. (Eds.) *Beyond BPR in Public Administration: Institutional Transformation in an Information Age*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Therborn, G. (1978) *What Does the Ruling Class Do When it Rules? State Apparatuses and State Power under Feudalism, Capitalism and Socialism*, New Left Books, London.

Therborn, G. (1980) *Science, Class and Society*, New Left Books, London

'Third Way Internet Discussion'(1998)  
[<http://www.netnexus.org/debates/3way/default.htm>]

Thompson, J. (1967) *Organisations in Action*, McGraw – Hill Books, New York, NY.

Touraine, A. (1974) *The Post - Industrial Society*, Wildwood House, London

Touraine, A. (1999) 'Society Turns Back upon Itself', in Elliot, A. (Ed.) *Contemporary Social Theory*, Blackwell Publishers Oxford.

Turner, J. Holmes, L. Hodgson, F.C. (2000) 'Intelligent Urban Development: An Introduction to a Participatory Approach' in *Urban Studies*, Volume 37, Number 10, September 2000, pp.1723 -1734.

Turner, J. Grieco, M. Apt, N. and Len Holmes (2000) 'Looking to initiatives in Communications Technology to Overcome Social Exclusion and Gender Inequalities: women's mobility and welfare to work: the need for appropriate transport policies', in *Local Economy*, 2000, vol.15, No.1.

Van de Donk, W.B.H.J. and Meyer, O.M.T. (1995) 'Digitalising Decision Making in a Democracy: For Better or Worse?', in van de Donk W.B.H.J, Snellen, I.Th.M and Tops, P.W. (Eds.) *Orwell in Athens: A Perspective on Informatisation and Democracy*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Van de Donk, W.B.H.J. and Tops P.W. (1995) 'Orwell or Athens? Informatisation and the future of Democracy: A review of the literature', in van de Donk W.B.H.J., Snellen I Th.M. and Tops, P.W. (Eds.) *Orwell in Athens: A Perspective on Informatisation and Democracy*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Van de Donk W.B.H.J. and Snellen, I.Th.M (1998) 'Towards a Theory of Public Administration in an Information Age?', in Snellen, I Th.M and van de Donk, W.B.H.J. (Eds.) *Public Administration in an Information Age: A Handbook*, IOS Press Amsterdam.

Van de Donk, W.B.H.J. (1998) 'Beyond Incrementalism? Redistributive policy making, information systems and the revival of synopticism', in Snellen I Th.M and van de Donk W.B.H.J. (Eds.) *Public Administration in an Information Age: A Handbook*, IOS Press Amsterdam.

Van de Donk, W.B.H.J. (1999) 'Infocracy or Infopolis? Will the Information Society be a civil Society?' Paper for the Communitarian Summit 1999. February 27-28 Washington DC. [See <http://members.aol.com/dekomnetz/infocracy.html>]

Van de Donk, W.B.H.J. (2000) 'Infocracy or Infopolis? Transparency, autonomy and democracy in an information age' in Hoff, J. Horrocks, I. And Tops, P.W. (Eds.) *Democratic Governance and New Technology: Technologically mediated innovations in political practice in Western Europe* Routledge/ECPR, London & New York. NY.

Van den Hoven, M.J. (1998) 'Moral Responsibility, Public Office and Information Technology', in. Snellen I.Th. M and van de Donk W.B.H.J. (Eds.) *Public Administration in an Information Age: A Handbook*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Van Dijk, J. (2000) 'Models of Democracy and Concepts of Communication', in Hacker, K.L. and van Dijk, J. (Eds.) *Digital Democracy: issues of theory and practice*, SAGE Publications, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi.

Van Parijs, P. (1981) *Evolutionary Explanation in the Social Sciences: An Emerging Paradigm*, Tavistock Publications, London and New York, NY.

Van Rillaer, J. (1998) 'New Public Management in the Flemish Administration: new ethical and political dimensions for civil servants', in Hondeghe, A. and European Group of Public Administration (Eds.) *Ethics and Accountability in a Context of Governance and New Public Management*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Van Vliet, M. (1993) 'Environmental Regulation of Business: Options and Constraints for Communicative Governance', in Kooiman, J. (Ed.) *Modern Governance: New Government-Society Interactions*, SAGE Publications, London, Newbury Park, New Delhi.

Verba, S. Nie, N.H. and Kim, J.O. (1980) *Participation and Political Equality: A Seven - Nation Comparison*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Vermeulen, P. (1998) 'The Civil Servant, Society and the Citizen in Quest of Good Ethical Behaviour', in Hondeghem, A. and European Group of Public Administration (Eds.) *Ethics and Accountability in a Context of Governance and New Public Management*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Vintar, M. (1995) 'Informatisation of Public Administration as an Instrument of Change to a More Democratic Society', in van de Donk, W.B.H.J. Snellen, I.Th. M. and Tops, P.W. (Eds.) *Orwell in Athens: A Perspective on Informatisation and Democracy*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Wallace, H. and Wallace, W. (2000) *Policy – Making in the European Union*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Ward, S. (2001) 'Draconian' spy bill will spell end of Britain's e-commerce warns Binnie' *The Sunday Herald Business Section* 9/04/2000, p1.

Watson, R.T. and Mundy, B. (2001) 'A Strategic Perspective of Electronic Democracy', in *Communications of the ACM*, January 2001/Vol 44, No1.pp. 27-30.

Weber, M. (1949) *The Methodology of the Social Sciences*, Translated and Edited by Shils, E. and Finch, H.A., The Free Press, Glencoe Illinois.

Weber, M. (1952) 'Essentials of Bureaucratic Organisation: An Ideal -Type Construction', in Merton, R.K, Gray, A.P, Hockey, B. and Selvin, H. (Eds.) *Reader in Bureaucracy*, The Free Press, New York, NY.

Weber, M. (1978) *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, Guenther, R. and Wittich, C. (Eds.), University of California Press, Berkeley California.

Webster, C.W.R. (1998) 'Changing Relationships Between Citizens and the State: The Case of Closed Circuit television Surveillance Cameras', in Snellen I.Th.M and van de Donk, W.B.H.J. (Eds.), *Public Administration in an Information Age: A Handbook*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Webster, F. (1996) *Theories of the Information Society*, Routledge, London and New York, NY.

Webster, F. and Robins, K. (1999), *Times of the Technoculture: From the information society to the virtual life*, Routledge, London and New York, NY.

Wilden, A. (1980) 'Changing Frames of Order: Cybernetics and the Machina Mundi', in Woodward, K. (Ed.) *The Myths of Information: Technology and Postindustrial Culture*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London and Henley.



Willcocks, L.P, Currie, W.L, Jackson ,J. (1997) 'In Pursuit of the Reengineering Agenda: Research Evidence form UK Public Services' in Taylor, J.A. Snellen, I.Th.M, and Zuurmond, A. (Eds.) *Beyond BPR in Public Administration: Institutional Transformation in an Information Age*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Williams, R. (1999) 'The Social Shaping of Technology' in Dutton, W. (Ed.) *Society on the Line :Information Politics in the Digital Age*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Wilson, D. (1999) 'Exploring the Limits of Public Participation in Local Government', *Parliamentary Affairs*, Volume 52, issue 2, April 1999, pp246-259.

Wolinetz, S.B. (1990) 'The Transformation of Western European Party Systems', in Mair, P. (Ed.) *The West European Party System* , Oxford Readings in Politics and Government, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Wright, K. (1997) *The People Say Yes: The Making of Scotland's Parliament*, Argyll Pubishing, Glendaruel, Scotland.

Ziller, J. (2001) 'European Models of Government: Towards a Patchwork With Missing Pieces', in *Parliamentary Affairs* (2001), 54, pp.102-119.

Zijderveld, A.C. (1972) *The Abstract Society: A Cultural Analysis of Our Time*, Allen Lane, The Penguin Press, London.

Zobel, R. (2000) 'e-Europe and the IST Programme', in Stanford –Smith, B. and Kidd, P.T. (Eds.) *E-business: Key Issues Applications, Technologies*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Zouridis, S. (1998) 'Information Technology and the Organisation Chart of Public Administration', in Snellen I.Th.M, and van de Donk W.B.H.J. (Eds.) *Public Administration in an Information Age: A Handbook*, IOS Press Amsterdam.

Zuboff, S. (1988) *In the Age of the Smart Machine: the future of Work and Power*, Oxford, Heinemann Professional.

Zuurmond, A. and Snellen, I.Th.M, (1997) 'From Bureaucracy to Infocracy: Towards Management through Information Architecture', in Taylor, J.A., Snellen, I.Th.M., and Zuurmond, A. (Eds.) *Beyond BPR in Public Administration:Institutional Transformation in an Information Age*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.

Zuurmond, A. (1998) 'From Bureaucracy to Infocracy: Are Democratic Institutions Lagging Behind?', in Snellen, I.Th.M, and van de Donk. W.B.H.J. (Eds.) *Public Administration in an Information Age: A Handbook*, IOS Press, Amsterdam.