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Accusers of capitalism: masculinity and populism on the Scottish radical left in the late twentieth century

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ABSTRACT

Scotland offers a valuable case study of the ways in which a combination of transnational and national structural changes can open up national articulations of 'hegemonic masculinity' to subaltern contestation. During the late twentieth century, the subjection of an imagined industrial community to both global capital flows and state planning priorities produced opportunities for the rearticulation of hegemonic masculinity as a means of securing subaltern agency within a counter-movement against neoliberalism. The defiant but respectable left-wing 'hard man' -- a signifier of collective morality and populist counter-legitimacy against the state and the market – was mobilised by leaders espousing an often explicitly gendered vision of respectable militancy. This article identifies three such leaders: Jimmy Reid, Jim Sillars and Tommy Sheridan. Each of these figures advocated resistance to market forces and the state by personally embodying a form of traditional masculine authority rooted in the cultural imaginary of industrial working-class communities. This article examines the parameters of Scottish left-wing populism before analysing its fading power in the late twentieth century. Under devolution this populism has been displaced by a more inclusive 'civic' nationalism less comfortable with both gendered and militant rhetoric, as the social basis of masculine left populism has been eroded.

KEYWORDS:

In his speech from the dock, defending himself against charges of sedition in 1918, anti-war socialist John MacLean said: “I am not here, then, as the accused; I am here as the accuser, of capitalism dripping with blood from head to foot.”[1] Maclean was an educator and Bolshevik, becoming the first Soviet consul to Britain in 1918. Rather than join the newly formed Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) in 1920, Maclean formed the Scottish Workers’ Republican Party and argued for Scottish independence.[2] His health was broken by imprisonment, however, and he died in 1923. The folk memory of Maclean’s martyrdom has become central to the performance of a tradition of male leadership on the Scottish left. In the 100 years since MacLean’s speech from the dock, the defiant but respectable socialist ‘hard man’ – a signifier of collective morality and populist counter-legitimacy against the state and the market – has proved an enduring image. This role has been reprised by key labour movement and left-wing figures, becoming part of the Scottish left’s cultural heritage. It is embedded within a broad Scottish radical tradition and has become an important reference point for debates within various sections of both the Scottish left and wider Scottish society who have sought either to critique or make claims upon this political and cultural heritage. This article identifies three activists who attempted to embody this tradition in different contexts during the final three decades of the twentieth century: Jimmy Reid, Jim Sillars and Tommy Sheridan.

Jimmy Reid was born into a working-class family in Govan, Glasgow during 1932. He experienced the brutality of depression-era impoverishment first-hand as a child when two of his siblings died during the 1930s.[3] Reid later became an active trade unionist as an engineering apprentice after the Second World War and joined the CPGB. He rose to national prominence through his leadership of the Upper Clyde Shipbuilders (UCS) ‘work-in’: occupations mounted in opposition to the closure of four large Clydeside shipyards over 1971-2. During the dispute, Reid’s years of experience as an articulate workplace representative came to the fore in widely reported oratory that affirmed his authority based on his status as an elected representative of manual workers. Reid’s strong class and gender consciousness underpinned an explicitly national opposition to the contraction of Scottish heavy industry overseen by a Conservative

Westminster government. He subsequently left the CPGB and joined the Labour Party and then the SNP. Reid died in 2010 having converted to supporting Scottish independence.[4]

Jim Sillars (1937-) is the son of a railwayman and carpet weaver, and grew up in Ayrshire, formerly a highly industrialised area of Scotland. In his autobiography, Sillars underlines paternal political influences in a Labour voting household.[5] Unlike Reid, Sillars made his name in the corridors of officialdom and then parliament. Sillars initially rose through the ranks of the trade union movement and Labour Party, eventually becoming the MP for South Ayrshire. He experienced frustration with what he saw as Labour's insufficiently radical commitments to Scottish devolution in the context of mounting industrial closures. He led the 'breakaway' Scottish Labour Party (SLP) in 1976 out of this frustration and sought to use it as a vehicle to voice a fusion of class-based and national discontent. After this venture failed, he became a prominent figure on the left wing of the SNP, leading its 'Scottish Industrial Resistance' strategy in the early 1980s. In 1988 he was involved in the anti-poll tax movement, and overturned expectations by winning the Govan by-election in an election dominated by arguments over non-payment, which Labour was pledged to oppose.[6]

Tommy Sheridan (1964-) is a generation younger than Reid and Sillars. His family relocated from Govan to the peripheral housing scheme of Pollok in 1966. Unlike Reid and Sillars, he experienced higher education. He joined the Trotskyist Militant Tendency and the Labour Party aged 17, shortly before he went to study at Stirling University. Upon his return to Pollok he begun to organise a large group of Militant Tendency supporters initially within the Labour Party and outside following his and other activists' expulsion. Sheridan's formative leadership experience took place in street-based community mobilisations rather than within industrial workplaces or the institutional labour movement. During the late 1980s and early 1990s, Sheridan gained national prominence as the public face of the Anti Poll Tax Federation (APTF) across Scotland and the UK. This followed the introduction of the unpopular measure -- which replaced local taxation based on property values with a flat tax payable by all adults -- a year earlier in Scotland than across the UK. In the course of this struggle, Sheridan appealed to the militant imagery of 'Red Clydeside', specifically the legacy of John Maclean and the moral legitimacy of breaking unjust laws. Hesubsequently led the Scottish Socialist Party (SSP) group

in the Scottish Parliament. Sheridan's image as a respectable working-class family man was formative to both his rise to popularity and his downfall. In 2010 he was found to have perjured himself in a 2006 court case against News International relating to marriage infidelity.[7]

Each of these figures articulated a 'respectable' militancy in the workplace, parliament and housing schemes. They advocated physical resistance to market forces and the state while embodying a traditional masculine authority rooted in industrial working-class communities. Our analysis uses the published memoirs of each activist. The activist memoirs were not written to reflect upon careers as they came to an end, but at pivotal moments in their activism. Each memoir draws its potency from the authenticity of working-class upbringings and highly localised political experiences, but serves the purpose of affording the author some control over their story on the national stage, in the face of considerable media attention, and - crucially - affirms their status as an 'organic' intellectual emerging from their own class in order to represent it. Archival research, oral testimonies and articles from the radical press related to each figure's activism supplements the autobiographies. These sources emphasise respectable masculinity, through a restrained but defiant attitude towards the forces of law and order.

The archetype of the left-wing Scottish 'hard man', typically of industrial working-class status, has also shaped both the critique of Scottish and left masculinity, and the self-image and politics of the traditions which have made claims upon the legacies of individuals, events and activities to which the archetype refers.[8] This gendered imagery of class and community leadership has been a live part of Scottish cultural and literary criticism as well as political activism over the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.[9] The iconography of the self-sacrificing male socialist leader has provided a rallying-point within a broad interpretation of socialism which transcends partisan and factional divides. His political alignment was much less important than his social position and the popular morality he was seen to embody, which allowed men from a range of political traditions within the Scottish left to take up this mantle. The context for this performance was a pervasive sense of traditional working-class communities under threat; local spokesmen with a national platform sought to defend these communities by recapitulating their communal values in defiance of the law and the market. By the late twentieth century, extensive social and economic reconstruction had transformed

Scotland's industrial landscape. The imagery of male workers has been central to the memorialisation of industrial Scotland, and the threatened disappearance of this old structure and the danger of mass unemployment allowed its social norms – once associated with squalor, danger and oppression – to be rearticulated in terms that blended conservatism and popular agency.[10] This has parallels to European and North American experiences of deindustrialisation, where community-based resistance counterposed visible human authority to invisible market forces and distant governmental authorities.[11]

We have chosen to focus on the final third of the twentieth century because it illustrates a pivot-point between two eras of radical politics in Scotland: the first, explored in depth by Gordon Pentland and Malcolm Petrie, saw the fusion of liberal and working-class visions of radicalism at a highly localised level, challenging the legitimacy of British national politics through appeals to local identities and universal rights between the eighteenth and early twentieth centuries.[12] As Petrie shows, the working-class radicalism of the CPGB and the Independent Labour Party struggled to adapt to the new age of mass democracy during the interwar period. Left-wing electoral politics was dominated by the Labour Party by the time of the Second World War. This article explores the re-emergence of a more autonomous, and increasingly nationalist, Scottish popular politics after the Second World War through a fusion between local and Scottish national identities, with the heritage of left-wing masculine leadership providing an important bridge between the two.

The gendered character of class-based, left-wing and radical politics in Scotland is closely connected to themes of populism and legitimacy which have become more widely discussed in recent scholarship concerning political imagery, identity and leadership.[13] Linking discussions of class and gender to questions of populism and legitimacy has significant consequences for understanding Scottish nationalism's ideological transformation over the second half of the twentieth century. The variant of left-wing nationalism adopted by both the Scottish National Party (SNP) and elements of the Labour Party incorporated elements of both 'Labourist' and 'radical' traditions in the 1970s and 1980s. These were clearly oriented towards masculine imagery, closely linked to the defence of male-dominated heavy industry.[14] Yet as the proposed agenda for defending the 'industrial nation' through devolution or 'home rule'

was popularised alongside Scotland's transition to a predominantly service-driven economy, the ideological tenor of the nationalism underpinning it shifted towards a 'civic' agenda stressing consensus, gender equality and representation.[15] The shedding of a 'radical' agenda oriented towards class conflict during the 1980s has been widely associated with progress towards a more plural, 'dialogical' national identity, and the 'hard man' archetype has been used to associate the politics of not only class struggle but broader revolutionary and radical agendas with an exclusionary 'old left'. In his foreword to Gregor Gall's biography of Sheridan, Gerry Hassan describes Sheridan as Scotland's 'last revolutionary' and 'a certain kind of Scottish man'; a 'big man' in the context of a Scottish political system moving away from traditional alignments of party with class, and of gender with particular social and political roles.[16] Yet a more nuanced investigation of the imagery of left-wing masculinity suggests that the latter's reification into a stereotype has helped to provide progressive justification for Scottish nationalism's abandonment of the populist politics of 'community' or 'social' counter-legitimacy on which it based its appeal in the 1980s. This gave it much of its radical reputation before the arrival of the Scottish Parliament. The portrayal of key elements of the radical left tradition as irredeemably masculine has helped to justify its marginalisation by an elite-driven 'civic' nationalism which rose to predominance within the national movement towards the end of the 1980s.[17]

Scotland offers a valuable case study of the ways in which a combination of transnational and national structural changes open up national articulations of what R.W. Connell calls 'hegemonic masculinity' to subaltern contestation.[18] In Scotland, a long-standing tendency towards intensified subjection of an imagined industrial community to both global capital flows and changing state planning priorities produced opportunities for the rearticulation of hegemonic masculinity as a means of securing subaltern agency within a broader counter-movement against neoliberalism. As the influence of Scotland's 'traditional tycoons' waned, the vacuum left by their 'traditional sense of social obligation' undermined the bourgeois claim to hegemonic masculinity in Scotland.[19] An older hegemonic masculinity predicated on militarism, empire and dynastic commercial proprietorship was challenged by one focused upon protest, community and industrial labour. During the first half of the

twentieth century, hegemonic masculinity in Scotland was associated with soldiers such as General Douglas Haig who was a revered figure at annual remembrance services following the First World War until his death in 1928.[20] Haig's militarism was supplemented by more plebeian figures such as Harry Lauder, the former miner and tartan-clad music hall entertainer who achieved his greatest public recognition for patronising soldiers on the Western Front.[21] Patrician politicians also performed appeals to Scottish leadership. Walter Elliot served as Secretary of State for Scotland in the late 1930s and remained a leading Scottish Tory during the Attlee governments. He opposed the 'denationalisation' of Scotland by a socialist London government intent on centrally managing the coal and steel industries which were central to Scottish industrial capitalism. Elliot drew his authenticity both from his First World War experience, but also his family background in a Lanarkshire agricultural business.[22] Yet in the five decades that followed, the articulation of a subaltern hegemonic masculinity became a crucial 'raw material' for the construction of a national-popular challenge to the legitimacy of both the British state and liberalised market forces. This analysis extends Nairn's focus on the ethno-symbolic 'raw materials' of nationhood that had been preserved through Scottish civil society institutions, stressing the ability of the national frame to absorb and adapt class and gender-based ideology.[23]

The article begins by outlining our theoretical framework. Drawing on the work of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe on the role of discourse within hegemonic politics, we stress the importance of hegemony's 'open', fluid and incorporating quality in the context of Connell's theory of 'hegemonic masculinity'. We then outline the development of the male socialist activist archetype during the 1960s, in a moment where the idea of a 'new Scotland' expressed a sense of transition away from the traditional social order. These years also saw the birth of working-class heritage efforts which aided the construction of an influential folk memory of 'Red Clydeside' and John Maclean in particular. Maclean subsequently became a source of legitimation for the 'national' framing of socialist activism that was mobilised by influential male leaders. We then explore this through the examples of Reid, Sillars and Sheridan, each of whom can be seen to embody, either deliberately or not, several aspects of the Maclean archetype.

Hegemony, masculinity and populism

R.W. Connell argues that 'at any given time, one form of masculinity rather than others is culturally exalted.'[24] This 'hegemonic masculinity' is a means of legitimising patriarchy, making the dominance of men and the subordination of women within the 'gender order' appear natural and just, rather than a historically contingent and political system of oppression.[25] The character of a given hegemonic masculinity is similarly historically specific, as are those of other 'subordinated and marginalised masculinities'. These 'multiple masculinities' are constantly in a dynamic relationship with each other, as the hegemonic requirements of patriarchy change with broader structural changes - for instance in the structure of industry - and pressure 'from below' by women as well as marginalised or subordinated masculinities.[26] The importance of the concept of 'hegemony' in explaining the fluid and adaptive characteristic of masculinity's power is key to our own use of it here, for it has significant applications to questions of populism and nationhood too. Drawing on Antonio Gramsci's use of the concept, Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe have stressed the importance of discourse to hegemonic politics: the construction of hegemony, they argue, is a fundamentally discursive project wherein multiple identities are 'articulated' together under a particular catch-all demand such as 'radical democracy'.[27] Yet hegemonic politics is a means of subordination as much as emancipation; Raymond Williams argues that hegemony functions through the limited 'incorporation' of subaltern groups into the programme of the dominant class.[28] This produces a 'national-popular' articulation of mutual interest, in which subaltern groups have a genuine - not merely illusory - stake in the rule of the dominant class, but one that nevertheless continues to maintain existing power relations.

One crucial aspect of this process of articulation is populism, and recent scholarship has stressed populism's applicability to the politics of both left and right. Cas Mudde and Cristobal Revira Kaltwasser have described populism as a 'thin-centred' ideology which attaches itself to more substantive programmes, counterposing a 'pure' people against a 'corrupt' elite, while Laclau understands it in similar terms as a 'discursive strategy' of 'constructing a political

frontier dividing society into two camps and calling for the mobilization of the 'underdog' against those in power'.[29] Mouffe writes that populism is a 'way of doing politics' rather than an ideology, programme or specific regime, and it is this definition of populism which we adopt here.[30] The nation can form a key focal point for populist discourse, providing a specific but shared cultural idiom in which a hegemonic politics of 'the people' can be meaningfully articulated against a distant elite.

This article, then, explores two different but interrelated hegemonic processes: one is the reinforcement of 'naturalised' patriarchal power in Scotland through the rearticulation of hegemonic masculinity, incorporating popular class, community and national demands into its own symbolic repertoire; the other is the role of a broader *counterhegemonic* politics in this process, which sought to draw on the traditional symbolic authority of patriarchal power to authenticate its opposition to the power of the state and the market. We can view the reinforcement of hegemonic masculinity through popular struggles in Scotland as the product of a conflict between distinctive national articulations of masculinity at the levels of Scottish and Anglo-British identity. By blaming an ostensibly alien and elite - that is, Anglo-British - form of hegemony for deindustrialisation, Scottish working-class masculinity was invested with a counterhegemonic potential which enabled it - paradoxically - to assert its hegemonic legitimacy within a peripheralised gender order, valorising male power not in spite of but because of its opposition to the power of the market and the state. Phillips *et al*'s recent study into the culture of the skilled male 'Clydesider' underlines the fusion of gender and class positions typical of articulations of masculinities.[31] Shipyard workers prized skilled labour, harboured a combative attitude towards employers and valued trade union organisation. This workplace culture was consciously transmitted from older to younger workers and institutionalised via apprenticeships. Phillips *et al* emphasise the UCS work-in as a moment where this culture approached its zenith but stress its continuation through deindustrialisation's 'half-life' since the 1960s.[32] This article is less concentrated on workplace experience but retains a focus on how the traditions and mythologies of industrial society conditioned responses to socioeconomic change. Male political leaders were able to assert themselves as bearers of legitimate authority in the face of economic threats to community

integrity in a class and gender conscious fashion. In this manner, they were able to ensure that localised crises became understood as Scottish national concerns.

A usable past

In all of our examples, local crises in the west of Scotland gained national significance under class and gender-conscious leadership. The prominence of these struggles reinforced the apparent value of their fusion of class and gender politics, and was built on their connection with popular feeling at points of crisis in working-class communities. Jim Phillips' work on the 1984-5 miners' strike emphasises the strongly gendered nature of how strikebreakers, 'scabs', were and continue to be characterised in the Scottish coalfield.[33] Similarly, a widespread perception of working-class respectability in the face of industrial closures was evidenced elsewhere. During the factory occupation that was mounted to opposed the closure of Caterpillar's tractor plant in Tannochside, Lanarkshire, during 1987 the symbolism of male working-class respectability and Scottish national concern were closely entangled. The ubiquitous flatcap worn by John Brannan, the factory's convenor, became a key emblem of the 103 day occupation against the closure.[34] As Hobsbawm argued, the flatcap acted as a principal cultural class signifier of the 'remade' nineteenth-century British working-class lifestyles. It established a coded familiarity between often small scale industrial settlements or neighbourhoods.[35] These repertoires point to the centrality of a masculine working-class framing in Scottish resistance to deindustrialisation which took the form of a community defence of culture as well as an effort to protect jobs and workplaces.

The populist mobilisation of hegemonic masculinity was in part a response to the emergence of a widely recognised 'new Scotland' during the 1960s. This landscape was populated by new towns, housing schemes, the welfare state, and industrial sectors increasingly dominated by the state and multinational investors, or 'branch plants' of UK firms. The swift contraction of employment in the traditional 'staple' industries of jute, coal mining and shipbuilding, and the demolition of miners' rows and inner city housing through 'slum clearance' programmes, stimulated efforts to record the lifeworlds and structures of traditional

occupations. These commemorations informed the folk revival's preservation of rural and proto-industrial life.[36] Over this period, a coordinated infrastructure of Scottish labour and working-class history emerged. This included the foundation of the Scottish Labour History Society in 1966 and the beginning of its journal, *Scottish Labour History*. Its emergence demonstrated the growing confidence of Scotland's historians in exploring the nation's distinctive social history, expressed with particular clarity in T.C. Smout's highly influential 1969 book *The History of the Scottish People*.[37] The work of Smout and other social and labour historians such as Ian MacDougall, William Marwick and Victor Kiernan fed into an emerging literary sphere which was particularly concerned with Scotland's historical development and its radical traditions. Christopher Harvie argues that the late 1960s and 1970s saw a move away from 'propagandist' and nationalist writing about Scottish society, towards efforts 'to understand why Scotland was different and what long-term factors, if any, underlay the current political upheavals'. Yet many on the left saw this moment of national rediscovery as an opportunity for an historically-informed propagandism of their own: these 'new legends', as Harvie calls them, sought to blur the lines between national and radical history.[38]

The Scottish Insurrection of 1820, published in 1970 and authored by Peter Berresford Ellis and Seumas Mac a'Ghobhainn, identified the artisanal radicalism of the 'Radical War' in 1820 as an early instance of left-wing Scottish nationalism - an argument that has been subjected to considerable critical scrutiny since.[39] Efforts to frame John MacLean as embodying a distinct brand of Scottish radicalism carried more credibility and prominence. These were led by the John Maclean Society, founded in 1968 at the instigation of the Workers' Party of Scotland (Marxist-Leninist) with the support of prominent CPGB and Labour Party members, left-wing nationalists and ex-Communist left-wingers such as Harry McShane, as well as MacLean's daughters Nan Milton and Jean Wilson.[40] Milton published a highly influential biography of her father in 1973. Maclean became central to the cultural imaginary of the principled Scottish male working-class leader. His legacy was malleable: across political divides. Maclean's primary contribution was portrayed to be not the Marxist political agitation or internationalism to which he dedicated most of his life, but instead his status as a political martyr who ultimately succumbed to the physical and mental effects of repeated imprisonment

during and after the First World War.[41] In the publicity for its first meeting, the John MacLean Society announced its intention 'to commemorate John MacLean's life, educational work, leadership and sacrificial effort to the workers of Scotland and the world'.[42] Tom Johnston, Maclean's fellow Clydeside socialist, contemporaneously emphasised the 'sacrificial' aspect of his resistance to the First World War. Johnston wrote in the socialist weekly *Forward* that: 'The blood of martyrs is said to be the seed of the church, and John Maclean's dramatic sacrifice may do more to shake up the brains of the working class than did John Maclean's years of educative propaganda for socialism.'[43]

The dominant image of Maclean which emerged from these memorialising efforts was one of a principled working-class intellectual and agitator who risked his life and liberty in pursuit of peace and social justice. Hamish Henderson's lyric, *The Freedom Come All-Ye*, written as an anthem for the Scottish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament in 1960, explicitly situates MacLean within a tradition of radical, anti-imperialist peace activism:

> When MacLean meets wi's freens in Springburn
> A' the roses and geans will turn tae bloom,
> And a black boy frae yont Nyanga
> Dings the fell gallows o' the burghers doon.[44]

Yet one other crucial feature of Maclean's image has been determined by his most famous public appearance, the 'speech from the dock' during his trial in 1918. In repositioning himself from 'accused' to 'accuser', Maclean articulated an intellectual and moral counter-legitimacy, based primarily on the validity of his critique of capitalism rather than any popular or organisational backing, against the formal legitimacy of the state. Subsequent interpretations of Maclean's counter-legitimacy, however, root it not in his critique of capitalism but in popular support for his bravery and his sacrifice, emphasising the crowds that greeted him after his release from jail. Henderson's image of Maclean in the 1948 *John Maclean March* is more populist - even nationalist - than Marxist, deploying images of an activist, militant nation and a 'home' for the people in Scotland's most famously radical region:

The red will be worn, ma lauds, an Scotlan will merch again

Nou great John Maclean has come hame tae the Clyde[45]

Respectable militancy

MacLean's pacifist heroism provided the Scottish left not just with an image of effective popular counter-legitimacy, but also a vision of anti-militarist male heroism which challenges popular representations of Scottish masculinity in the nationalist myth of the 'Scottish soldier'. Furthermore, there was a popular legitimacy to breaking the law in conflicts between the state and working-class communities with a distinct morality. This was exemplified in the coalfields by the ingrained narratives of the 1926 general strike and lockout through the heroic status accorded to miners who were jailed during the conflict.[46] Joe Corrie's *In Time O' Strife*, a play written at the time of the general strike, encapsulates this dynamic in a dialogue between Tam Anderson, a young Communist miner, and Jean Baxter, his partner Kate's mother. Tam is considering taking part in a crowd action against strikebreakers whilst Jean urges caution warning of the legal consequences. In response Tam sees these as both inevitable and a price worth paying for affirming his status as a legitimate bearer of working-class morality which transcends the legal order:

> Jean: Is it worth it, Tam? It means the jile for ye, and the breakawa'll take place some time or ither. You nor onybody else can stem it, and you ken that, for it has happened before in your time.
>
> Tam: And it'll happen again Jean, and will happen till the workers control their ain destiny. But we've got to fight till the last ditch every time, whether it means the jule or no'.
>
> Jean: It'll hurt Kate, Tam.

> Tam: I ken it will, but there's nae escape. I'll no likely get ony mair than three months, and it'll be worth the suffering to come back and ken that I did my bit.[47]

Corrie's play was re-published and performed by the 7:84 theatre company in 1982, with its narrative claimed as a 'usable past' during the revival of Scottish industrial conflict under Thatcherism.[48]

The Fife coalfields were a focal point of radical working-class heritage efforts during the second half of the twentieth century. These were driven by the context of deindustrialisation, through the closure of small village collieries, the rehousing of communities from miners' rows and the maturing of the generation who had led the major class conflicts of the 1920s and 1930s. Ian MacDougall's *Militant Miners*, which was published in 1981, is a prominent example of these efforts. The collection includes both extensive extracts of oral testimonies from John McArthur and letters written by David Proudfoot. Both men were Communist coal miners in East Fife during the interwar years. In a foreword, Michael McGahey, the National Union of Mineworkers Scottish Area President, and Victor Kiernan, a history professor at the University of Edinburgh, underlined their view that miners' militancy was an example to be followed by the contemporary labour movement. They referred to McArthur as 'a man, and a Scotsman, whom his countrymen should want to know of.'[49] McArthur's memories centre on his experiences of engagement with revolutionary politics through his contact with John Maclean during the late 1910s and early 1920s when he was a young mining trade unionist. He attended a Maclean lecture on Marxist economics in Fife before he enrolled in Maclean's Scottish Labour College in Glasgow. Maclean was a 'courageous fighter', but, reflecting the sensibilities of a founding member of the CPGB, McArthur was discouraged by his 'individualism' and lack of commitment to building a durable party organisation. McArthur's memories indicated the importance of restraint to Scottish respectable militancy. He fondly recalled the influence of Irish republicanism in the Fife coalfields, including a meeting in Methil which was addressed by the nationalist and socialist revolutionary Constance Markiewicz. However, there were clear limits to this enthusiasm. When McArthur was a student at the College, he was acquainted with

the Blantyre miner, Andrew Fagan, who he described as Maclean's 'outstanding pupil' and an IRA gunrunner. During interviews recorded over four decades after the event, McArthur was still scathing in his assessment of the impact that hiding weapons and ammunition in the College's premises could have had on the Scottish labour movement.[50] McArthur's comrade, Abe Moffat, painted a similar picture of respectable militancy during an interview in 1974 that was published in *Scottish Labour History*. Moffatt went onto become the President of the Scottish miners' union in 1942 but was keen to discuss the formative experiences of the 1921 and 1926 lockouts. His recollections included the formation of a workers' defence force in West Fife during 1926, which included First World War veterans like himself. However, rather than emphasising violence, Moffat instead highlighted the social order that these men embodied:

> A very strong workers' defence force in Cowdenbeath, marching along in military style through the streets, training and everything else, and we had big ex-soldiers, six feet two, taking charge of different groups. They were well trained and very well disciplined I would say.[51]

Moffatt emphasised that Communists such as himself were firmly embedded in the mining industry and community life within the village of Lumphinnans where he grew up and married. He sought to discredit opponents who explained militancy through outside agitation: 'I used to smile when I heard right-wing leaders saying that the Communists were infiltrating into the trade union: we'd been there all our lives.'[52] MacIntyre's 1980 study of the single-industry localities that became Britain's interwar 'Little Moscows' confirmed the authenticity of Moffat's perspective through its study of Lumphinnans. It also sought to reconnect to a radical past after the mining and textile villages that it studied had lost their distinctive Communist electoral presence by becoming Labour Party strongholds since the 1950s.[53]

The usable nature of 1920s class struggles was also affirmed in more directly political literature. The CPGB's journal *Scottish Marxist* had regular working-class history contributions, including the interwar memories of party members. Peter Kerrigan, the party's former industrial organiser contributed an article to the journal's third edition in 1973 which recalled his involvement in engineering trade unionism during the 1920s. He remembered being part of

a crowd that vandalised the home of a 'non-union blackleg' in Glasgow during 1923. Kerrigan also recalled conflict in the city during the 1926 general strike, principally with university students who acted as strikebreakers. He remembered that this further instilled class-based 'hatred and sustained hostility'. Kerrigan's memories also indicate the limits of respectable militancy. After much debate the Glasgow Strike Committee refused to arm its members.[54] The left appropriation of hegemonic masculinity in late-twentieth-century Scotland similarly subverted the physical-force heroism of bourgeois 'Scottish soldier' archetypes with a moral-force alternative that was militant but explicitly anti-militarist and non-violent. In the mid 1980s Jim Sillars summarised his own adherence to Scotland's tradition of 'democratic revolution' by citing the lineage of Chartism and Maclean's commitments to non-violence whilst maintaining that as a socialist he condoned both 'civil disobedience' and industrial struggle.[55]

Authenticity

The development of a historical consciousness of the Scottish working class from the late 1960s onwards progressed alongside a succession of prominent left-wing male leaders, who deployed similar political ideas and practices within varied political and economic contexts: the moralistic de-legitimisation of the state, the deployment of populist rhetoric in the defence and valorisation of specific geographical communities, and the attempt to 'nationalise' the particular experience of these communities via symbolic interventions in the public sphere. These themes appeared in different contexts and within distinct political traditions within the left, but in each case their public profile and reception cleaved to the general archetype of left-wing, populist male leadership: Reid, Sillars and Sheridan were each presented and interpreted as national 'champions' within a firmly male-oriented political and social imaginary. This connected particular battles within their communities with a broader struggle for the future of a male-dominated industrial - or declining, 'post-industrial' - working class that had become a proxy for Scottish 'national' interests. These interests were portrayed as under threat from distant Conservative governments with little connection or social understanding of plebeian Scottish culture.[56]

The left-populist form of masculinity embodied by each figure was, on the one hand, a basis for 'organic' authority counterposed to the 'faceless' and artificial legitimacy of the British state; on the other hand, it challenged the order of the state whilst seeking to defend societal order itself, proposing a communitarian, 'respectable' alternative to the outright anarchy that deindustrialisation, the liberalisation of market forces and negative wealth redistribution were perceived to represent. This included pronounced opposition to Westminster government which was often framed as undemocratic or dictatorial. For instance, during the campaign against the poll tax both Militant and the Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC) referred to the Scottish Secretary of State Malcolm Rifkind's claims to have powers equivalent to a 'colonial governor'.[57] The STUC published a leaflet that mocked Rifkind by portraying him replete with a paper hat and sword.[58] Similar motifs were apparent during the UCS work-in when the occupiers produced a poster that portrayed the industrial dispute as a one-sided boxing match between a muscular 'UCS' figure and a representative of the government. The English Conservative Prime Minister Ted Heath is portrayed as an enfeebled sideline figure who is obliged to throw in the towel.[59] By the 1980s this optimism had given way to grievous concern about Scotland's future but this retained a focus on its industrial integrity. Writing the introduction to his 1986 autobiography, *Scotland: The Case for Optimism*, Sillars discussed Thatcherite economic policy in terms of 'the threats to Scotland's place as an industrial nation'.[60] The understanding of Scotland as an 'industrial nation' enjoyed cross-class appeal. It was an assumption shared by policy-makers and academic economists as well as socialist activists. As Scottish capital contracted through the 'modernisation' agenda of the mid-twentieth century, industrial nationhood granted increasing cultural legitimacy to industrial workers, especially those associated with traditional sectors.[61]

This leaned heavily on deep-rooted notions of patriarchal, rather than governmental, authority. Male authority was strongly ingrained across much of industrial Scotland, especially its heavy industrial regions, through apprenticeship systems, trade union organisations, the Labour Party and Communist Party, and membership social clubs. Such bodies were a significant alternative pole of identification to the official bodies of the government or on some occasions were strongly linked with the local state. Jim Sillars's telling of his life-story underlines

the paternal influence of his father and grandfather with whom he shared occupational as well as familial bonds. His formative experience came during a rail strike in 1955 when Sillars's grandfather and father implored him to strike despite his initial reluctance to lose pay in support of colleagues who were members of another union. Sillars's socialisation continued under male mentors in the Scottish leadership of the Fire Brigades Union and the Labour group in Ayr Town Council. He stressed their 'incorruptible' respectability and their 'encouragement of young lads like me': a youthful Sillars was 'happy to sit at their feet and learn'.[62] Sillars's marriage to the prominent SNP activist and MP Margo MacDonald in 1981, and his continued encouragement of her career and legacy after her death, suggests a more complex relationship to the traditional practices of labour movement male leadership. Yet the recurrent motifs of paternal lineage and the explicit gendering of moral themes of respectability and responsibility throughout his autobiography demonstrates the enduring importance of masculinity as a means of legitimising his socialist politics.

Jimmy Reid's autobiography, tellingly titled *Reflections of a Clyde-Built Man*, emphasises the 'spirit of community' which pulled his family through unemployment in Govan. Like Sillars, he highlighted the importance of morality learnt through industrial employment, but underlined the importance of workplace representatives rather than full-time labour movement officials. Reid explains that his decision to join the CPGB was influenced by the shop stewards he met whilst serving an apprenticeship at Scottish Precision Castings. Their performance of authority was rooted in authentic experiences and collective bonds between workmates, which Reid sought to replicate in his own activism. Whilst an apprentice, Reid was among the leadership of a strike which included 40,000 apprentice engineers across the UK. He emphasised the importance of respectability to this effort, stating it was 'impressive to watch how the young men had organised in a responsible and disciplined manner'. Following a victory march Reid and several comrades were jailed. Reid recalled this as a working-class male-socialising experience. He defiantly sang the 'Red Flag' along with the other arrested men and concluded from the affair that in comparison to well organised young workers, 'the establishment was daft'.[63]

Tommy Sheridan's recollections of his introduction to working-class politics similarly stress elements of oral and family traditions and moral argumentation. Unlike Reid and Sillars though, Sheridan did emphasise the role of politicised women, especially his mother who he recalls as a Transport and General Workers' Union steward and Tennent's Caledonian barmaid. She was an active picketer in the struggle for union recognition during the 1970s. Nevertheless, Sheridan strongly emphasised working-class social norms even as his community experienced deindustrialisation and he studied at Stirling University. This sharply differentiated Sheridan from Reid and Sillars's experience of maturing through industrial employment. Nevertheless, Sheridan stressed that the reason he chose to join the Militant Tendency when he was a student was 'because its student members seemed to come from the same kind of background as mine', noting that they 'dressed more normally than the other far-left groups'.[64]

These class sensibilities were also strongly gendered, with Sheridan claiming that 'my mum would have skelped me if she knew how I was behaving towards girls' after recalling his actions during a pregnancy scare he had with a girlfriend aged fifteen.[65] Sheridan's self-presentation was not sharply differentiated from Reid's, who stressed his regular football attendance and explained that as a young man he 'knew that the lassies were the best opposite sex imaginable'.[66] Sillars, however, emphasises his trajectory away from this gendered idea of male working-class authenticity, facilitated by his discovery of a new identity as a 'late developer' working-class intellectual during his time in the navy.[67] Sillars's autobiography combines the class conscious pride associated with his railway worker family and union comrades with a 'wounds of class' narrative.[68] Having been written off as a failure at school Sillars once again found himself isolated by a 'snobbish clan' of Scottish Labour MPs who rejected his support for 'home rule' during the 1970s. He responded by styling himself as an independently-minded MP, distinguished by both his own autodidactic intellect and his efforts to channel Scottish popular discontent. Sillars made common cause with the Paisley Labour MP John Robertson, who was regarded as on the right of the party but shared Sillars's constitutional politics and social background. This had national as well as class implications, with Sillars positioning himself and Robertson as struggling against the infamous 'Scottish cultural cringe'.[69]

All three figures were keen to live up to the imagery of Maclean's standing as a distinctly working-class intellectual. Jimmy Reid recalled that despite gaining entrance to a senior secondary school he 'knew [he] would be leaving school at fourteen'. However, this did not stop his efforts to gain an education. Reid recalled the hours that he spent in Govan public library as a young apprentice during the late 1940s where he read labour movement publications such as the *Daily Worker, Daily Herald,* and *Forward*. These were accompanied by more substantial works such as Thomas Johnston's *A History of the Scottish Working Classes* which Reid purchased with his first pay packet. Yet despite these interests he felt unwelcome in some of the predominant young left circles of the time such as the Workers' Open Forum. Despite its title, the Forum was dominated by middle-class professionals and in Reid's view was not welcoming to someone of 'my lifestyle, my background'.[70] Reid merged his intellectual and social interests by hosting 'Big Jimmy's meetings' where young male engineering trade unionists would meet to hear talks or discuss ideology over drink.[71] These meetings epitomised the links between occupation, class and gender that shaped the 'Clydesider' identity that Reid sought to nationalise through the UCS work-in.[72] Sheridan was also keen to emphasise his intellectual development in a different environment. Despite his misgivings about 'home counties' students at Stirling University, Sheridan also emphasised his discovery of Marxism and histories of the labour movement as formulating 'a view of the world, which related to my own experiences'. Yet Sheridan locates the further development of his outlook in decisively more plebeian circumstances. Working with Militant cadre George McNeilage he claims to have 'helped transform Pollok into the most class-conscious housing scheme in Britain' with the assistance of Trotsky's writings and Nan Milton's Maclean biography.[73]

'No hooliganism'

The UCS work-in saw workers led by Reid and fellow Communist shop steward Jimmy Airlie occupy and proceed to continue working in the four UCS yards that had been marked for closure by the Heath government. It was fundamentally a challenge to the 'social legitimacy of the government'.[74] Reid's rhetoric leaned heavily on the ideals of respectable masculinity. The

work-in began with Reid imploring workers that 'there will be no hooliganism, there will be no vandalism and there will be no bevvying', whilst he also went on to state that the work-in was not only defending jobs but the gendered social fabric of Clydeside: 'We don't only build ships on the Clyde, we build men!' The UCS campaign made a populist appeal to Scottish national interest, with Reid stating bluntly that 'faceless men or any other group in Whitehall' had no moral right to threaten the livelihood of Scottish shipbuilders.[75] In legitimating an illegal occupation that directly convened private property rights, Reid appealed to a respectable form of militancy, and portrayed the government as the true source of disruption. The work-in was sustained between June 1971 and October 1972 without police intervention. Perhaps reflecting Reid's invocation of Red Clydeside shop steward militancy and moral argumentation, police commanders in Glasgow refused to consider removing the occupiers, hyperbolically foreseeing a comparable situation to that unfolding contemporaneously in Belfast during the early days of the 'troubles'.[76] Reid's defence of tradition through 'a new form of struggle' approximated to an opposition to deindustrialisation couched within a critique of modern bureaucratic capitalism.[77] The diaries of the UCS liquidator, Robert Smith, offer another perspective and indicate a high level of cooperation between respectable militants and the official forces of law and order. On 30th July 1971 Smith was forced to vacate UCS premises following 'hysteria at Clydebank'. Yet following interventions by Glasgow Police Chief David McNee, Smith returned to his 'usual routine' after walking past pickets at the Linthouse yard and met with Reid who assured him that he 'would not be impeded in going about my business.'[78]

UCS offers an insight into the relations between Scotland's multiple masculinities, and the way in which they could be combined to articulate a national hegemonic masculinity as a countervailing, defensive bulwark against the disembedding of the economy from society by London planners and multinational corporations. The relationship of Scotland's growing left-wing intelligentsia to the UCS work-in was uneasy but optimistic, reflecting a clear sense of exclusion from an industry-focused hegemonic masculinity amongst University-based intellectuals. Bob Tait, the editor of the Edinburgh-based cultural review *Scottish International*, visited the UCS yards to report on the work-in in 1972, and reflected on the discomfort he felt on arriving: 'What exactly are we here to see and write about, how will we be received?... We

are working for an arts magazine. We even lose our way when we get there in Clydebank's one main street. Ridiculous!'[79] He was nevertheless cautiously optimistic, wondering if 'a new, confident kind of expression and organisation' for a pluralistic left-wing tradition encompassing both intellectuals and workers might emerge from a new era of Scottish industrial conflict. Tait concluded by identifying with 'other fantasists in the yards looking for realities or realisations. Maybe we could be accepted as watchers and listeners… Maybe on that basis we could get in.'[80] He recruited the novelist Archie Hind to write the magazine's main report on the struggle, and Hind's essay - titled 'Men of the Clyde' - constructs a clearly gendered hierarchy of heroic Scottish workers and ruling-class English villains.[81] He begins by describing the Upper Clyde's natural resource endowments, its 'farmlands and ducal estates belonging to an effete, mad or absent aristocracy', but 'otherwise nothing, unless we consider the men and their inheritance'.[82] Hind goes on to trace this inheritance as a gendered one:

> Men whose fathers had failed disastrously in the ambitious imperial venture at Darien, their hopes blocked and thwarted by English intrigue; men, evicted from their homes in the Highlands by absent landlords […] The hard men, the men of this cold, northern, wintry land who had learned to take a special view of reality, a sour view, a harsh view; men whose characters were as obdurate as the reality which had formed them; men whose history had been violence, shock and dispossession.[83]

The recurring, rhetorical deployment of the word 'men' was no accident, and Hind went on to denounce 'the fancy London media boy with his rag-bag of left-wing commitments, with his life-style and indulgence and expense accounts and dolly bird and total lack of a sense of authenticity envying the boiler maker for the authority of his crisis.' He explicitly contrasted this 'authentic' struggle with 'issues like women's lib., or abortion, or gay power, or the right to print porn or smoke pot.'[84] This drew a highly critical response from John Lloyd, a journalist who had fled Glasgow to become prominent in London's alternative media scene. 'It seems to me', Lloyd wrote in an open letter, 'that you could condense most of the quotations above into

the one insult which I guess you'll never have had levelled at *you* - "Fu'ng poof!".'[85] Hind's response, denying allegations of homophobia, nevertheless clearly articulated the kind of foreign, classed masculinity with which he was engaging: 'One hundred thousand people under severe economic attack and all the response is from some spoiled bourgeois brat bragging about getting his end away in London!'[86] Hind's refusal to reflect on the gender and sexual politics of his own characterisation of UCS took the form of a renewed assault on an oversexualised, bourgeois and metropolitan masculinity, reinforcing the polarised, populist binary of 'us and them' that joined class, nation and gender together against a perceived London-based threat.

Crashing cell doors

The same tensions between novelty and tradition, and respectability and radicalism, characterised Sillars' attempt to break away from the Labour Party in Scotland. Sillars had already achieved some prominence as a 'hammer of the nats', thanks to his skills as a debater and his written polemics against the SNP which exhibited a plebeian toughness. This was exemplified during the 1970 South Ayrshire by-election when Sillars's former and future comrade, Sam Purdie, stood for the SNP in South Ayrshire. Purdie anticipated Sillars's shift to the SNP, but Sillars met Purdie's rumouring of impending coal closures in Ayrshire with outright hostility that marked him out as a class traitor deserving of rough treatment:

> He [Purdie] has claimed to speak for thousands of miners. Someone who has welshed on the Labour movement as he did will never have that honour. I have no doubt that he will be repudiated in his claim by the miners' own spokesmen. If the Ayrshire miners now warn him off the coalfield I for one could not blame them.[87]

Sillars found himself on the receiving end of the treatment he had sought for Purdie when he defended South Ayrshire as an SLP candidate at the 1979 general election. In his memoirs, Sillars recalled that his son was 'hounded out' of the mining village and Labour stronghold of

New Cumnock whilst the National Union of Miners paid for an advert in Scotland's most-read newspaper, the *Daily Record* condemning his abandonment of the Labour Party.[88] Sillars mournfully recalled his defeat in terms which stressed his continued loyalty to class, community and nation. His move to Edinburgh to work as the Director of the Federation of Scottish Housing Associations was presented as a removal from home as Ayrshire went through a crisis:

> It was a wrench leaving my home county and South Ayrshire, which I love. I felt no bitterness towards people, only sorrow, because I knew whatever personal problems I was having, they were nothing in comparison to what an English Tory government would create in a defenceless Scotland and a prostrate South Ayrshire.[89]

The SLP initially drew considerable support and attention from Scottish journalists and intellectuals. Harvie characterised it as the 'magic party' for its blend of socialism and Scottish nationalism.[90] Its brief media successes, however, never extended into the electoral sphere, and it as good as disappeared after losing its two seats in the 1979 general election. Sillars suggests that his decision to break with Labour stemmed from frustrations with Labour's hesitation over the devolution plans he had vocally supported, stressing the need for extensive economic powers.[91] His first policy document for the SLP, written with Alex Neil, was titled *Jobs and Industry*. Henry Drucker argues that Sillars 'had hoped to win over the "old Scotland" of heavy industry and traditional "labour values"'; yet 'its activists came, largely… from radicalised sections of the new Scotland.' Carol Craig, a young member of the party with 'new left' sympathies, argued that 'Sillars' problem was that he wanted my father - who's a railwayman - to join; what he got was me.'[92]

For Sillars, this economistic, jobs-based image of traditional industrial communities was the bedrock of political legitimacy, rather than existing parties, laws or institutions. Not only did he evoke it in breaking with Labour, but during his early years with the SNP it was called upon to justify even more extreme action. Shortly after joining the party Sillars argued for and was given leadership of its civil disobedience campaign, titled 'Scottish Industrial Resistance'. In his first conference speech, Sillars warned activists that 'we must be prepared to hear the sound of

cell doors crashing behind us.'[93] In October 1981, Sillars and five other SNP members broke into the Royal High School building on Calton Hill, which had been the proposed site of the Scottish Assembly. Once inside, Sillars read out a declaration stressing that a Scottish Assembly was essential to solve unemployment before being arrested.[94]

Cell doors crashed behind Tommy Sheridan and other APTF activists during the poll tax non-payment campaign during the late 1980s and early 1990s. Non-payment itself was a civil matter in Scotland. Arrests principally related to stopping 'poindings' or warrant sales, the seizure, valuation and sale of an indebted person's goods. Non-payment was justified in material terms by the APTF's slogan of 'can't pay won't pay': the implementation of a flat tax at the insistence of an unpopular central government was profiled as the latest unjust action by a state that had already overseen intensified deindustrialisation and tolerated mass unemployment. It was also seen as an act of naked class warfare: the flat tax worked to the benefit of business and property owners whilst it punished council tenants, the low paid, the unemployed and curtailed the democratic power of the local state. These community and class objections were galvanised by a nationalist framing, as the poll tax was being implemented a year earlier in Scotland than across the UK by a Conservative government that was widely held to have lost its 'mandate' to govern Scotland.[95] A former Militant full-time organiser recalled that Pollok was at the epicentre of resistance. He remembered attending street meetings at which Tommy Sheridan addressed around 300 residents during the summer of 1988, in anticipation of the tax's implementation in April 1989. Between 1989 and the tax's replacement in 1993 Militant organisers 'spent a lot o time getting arrested'. Sheridan was the most high-profile arrestee, but the organiser himself recalled being jailed in Barlinnie just outside Glasgow after he failed to pay a fine.[96]

During 1992, Sheridan was ultimately imprisoned for six months for his involvement in stopping a warrant sale. Sheridan cited John Maclean in his recollections of the case published two years later and stated 'morals have no place in a court of law. Or, at least, our morals have no place in their courts.'[97] This rejection of the court's moral legitimacy chimed with the legacy of Maclean, which Sheridan consciously sought to replicate. He joined Maclean in a longer tradition of radical subversion of the legal process. James Epstein has explored how nineteenth-

century English radicals used the courts to formalise their confrontation with the state, claiming and speaking up for historic rights in an attempt to turn the system on its head and deploy the language of power against power.[98] Petrie argues that this tradition was sustained into the twentieth century in Scotland, not just by Maclean but other Communist activists who were imprisoned for campaigning against the First World War. He suggests, however, that by the end of the interwar period, this vision of the ''radical ordeal' no longer appeared inspirational but antiquated and, frankly, ridiculous in a mass democracy.'[99] Yet there can be no doubt that such visions retained their power at least within the radical left towards the very end of the twentieth century. Sheridan's status as a man imprisoned for a stance against injustice became a major plank of his Westminster parliamentary campaign during the 1992 general election which was run from prison. For instance a copy of *Scottish Militant* from March 1992, less than a month before polling day, was headlined 'Free Tommy'. Reflecting on Margaret Thatcher's resignation in November 1990, following mounting pressure over the poll tax, *Militant* described Sheridan as 'a man who led a mass movement that defeated the poll tax and brought down Maggie Thatcher who the rest of the world thought was invincible'. Another article detailing Sheridan's sentencing reported that 200 people had attended court in Edinburgh from Glasgow housing schemes to support Sheridan who was handed 'class justice', which did not stop his supporters from gathering outside Saughton Jail.[100] This directly mirrored Maclean's appearance in 1918 when again supporters from working-class communities in Glasgow descended on Edinburgh's High Court.[101]

In an address to the electorate in the same edition of *Scottish Militant*, Sheridan underlined his commitment to Scotland, rather than Britain, as the appropriate legitimate political unit to deliver social justice: 'Changing the constitution by itself doesn't feed the kids, doesn't stop dampness in the house, doesn't put people back into work. The Scottish parliament would have to be seen as a means to an end rather than an end in itself.'[102] In his forward to Sheridan's autobiography the prominent Australian socialist journalist John Pilger gave credence to his strategy of class politics informed by a form of nationalist moral deliberation. Pilger emphasised that Sheridan stood in the tradition of John Maclean by standing for parliament from prison. Furthermore, he underlined that Sheridan's success in

building Scottish Militant Labour lay in recruiting housing scheme residents who were 'not necessarily inspired by Militant's programme, rather than by the commitment of Tommy and his comrades to the community'.[103] Pilger's remarks show that the contours of masculine populism on the Scottish radical left during the late twentieth century did not rest on specific programmatic positions. Diverse traditions found common ground in the articulation of a respectable militancy grounded in a confluence of gender, class, community and nationhood. This defensive posture asserted localised and human authority in response to the effects of depersonalised bureaucratic capitalism and deindustrialisation.

Before his ignominious 'downfall' in the mid-2000s, Sheridan went on to become a popular member of Scotland's reconvened parliament. Yet his perspective has been increasingly marginal over the last three decades. Both Sillars and Sheridan have found themselves without a significant platform, consigned to the fringes of party politics. During the 1970s, the Scottish radical left was highly male-dominated - the contents pages of the *Red Paper on Scotland*, edited by Gordon Brown in 1975, were entirely populated by men - but developed alongside an emergent Scottish women's liberation movement.[104] The latter was initially focused on distinctive women's institutions and publications such as Scottish Women's Aid and the *Scottish Women's Liberation Journal*, and treated much of the Scottish left - as well as the question of devolution - with scepticism. In her 1977 book *Scottish Woman's Place,* Eve Hunter criticised 'the famous revolutionary spirit' of Red Clydeside, which:

> was not matched by any awareness of the oppression of their women. James Maxton and Stephen Campbell as ILP MPs refused to support campaigns for free contraceptive facilities. They were right to suspect the motives of some of the campaigners but wrong to ignore the real need and desire for contraception among working-class women.[105]

At a founding meeting of the SLP in 1976, Sillars announced that 'we are laying claim to be the inheritors to the Keir Hardies, the James Maxtons, the Tom Johnstons.'[106] Maxton's own failure to support women's campaigns for sexual freedom was echoed in

Sillars's and John Robertson's support as SLP MPs for the Abortion (Amendment) Act in 1976, which placed new restrictions on women's right to choose. Writing in the *Scottish Women's Liberation Journal* in 1977, Esther Breitenbach argued that this had reinforced concerns in the women's liberation movement over how a devolved Scottish Assembly might treat women, even if it was in the hands of the left.[107] However, after Thatcher took power, women's liberation became a key part of a more diverse radical left during the following decade, in part through close coordination under the banner of Scottish home rule.[108] Much of the agenda which underpinned the foundation of the Scottish Parliament was ultimately shaped by feminist activists from a range of left-wing parties, who had persistently sought to challenge the masculine imagery of leadership that had predominated on the left. While the energy of masculine populism's symbolic repertoire has faded alongside the vitality of Scottish industrial politics, this has not entirely diminished its appeal. Reid in particular remains a crucial reference point for the Scottish radical left and Scottish nationalism alike. At Reid's funeral in 2010, which was attended by a range of politicians across left-wing and constitutional divides, the First Minister Alex Salmond announced that his 'Alienation' University of Glasgow Rectoral Address would be provided free to all Scottish schools.[109]

Conclusion

In the UCS yards, the Royal High School and the courtroom, Reid, Sillars and Sheridan all found themselves at sites where conventional understandings of legitimacy had become blurred and open to contestation by the political and socio-economic transformations that occurred in Scotland during the final third of the twentieth century. The 'new Scotland' in which they operated was, in many ways, incrementally dissolving the bonds on which their own arguments and authority depended. Yet precisely this process of dissolution also permitted the transformation of living memory into heritage, more open to broader appropriation and redeployment than before. Each of these moments - and each of these individuals - has much in common: a clash of legitimacy between the linked forces of state and capital, and those of

community and class; a populist appeal that stretched or exceeded the limits of the law; and the attempted nationalisation of localised struggles through their embodiment in a charismatic individual. These commonalities were also deeply gendered, usually premised on the defence of an industrial working class that stressed the 'jobs' and 'dignity' of its predominantly male workforce. Yet when Sheridan came to the fore, the process of deindustrialisation had gone far enough for the scope of this defence to broaden to the community as a whole, more clearly incorporating the grassroots action of women and children alongside predominantly unemployed men. It is fitting, then, that Sheridan appealed most directly to the legacy of Maclean himself, whose campaigns against the war and as part of a wider 'Red Clydeside' featured prominent women socialist activists like Mary Barbour, Helen Crawfurd and Agnes Dollan.

To understand the symbolic repertoires of left-wing leadership in Scotland as deeply gendered is therefore entirely justified; yet it is impossible to understand this gendered character without viewing it as part of a complex moral economy of community, class and popular or national legitimacy in which masculinity is not necessarily all-consuming. The recent unveiling of a statue to Mary Barbour, leader of the 1915 Glasgow rent strike, accompanied her adoption as an icon of the Scottish Labour Party and the Living Rent Campaign in their campaigns for rent controls. Challenging the domination of Scotland's radical heritage by men has not happened naturally, or without considerable efforts by Scottish feminists: for example, Maria Fyffe, a former Labour MP and editor of *A Women's Claim of Right in Scotland*, was instrumental in the campaign to create a statue to Mary Barbour.[110] Through these struggles over the symbolic heritage of the Scottish radical left, the crucial threads of popular counter-legitimacy and a community-oriented vision of class politics can be preserved even as the predominance of masculine imagery is challenged.

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