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Margaret Thatcherová a její vliv na Velkou Británii, zvláště pak na Skotsko
Margaret Thatcher and her influence on Great Britain with focus on Scotland
(bakalářská práce)

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1 Introduction

Although 23 years have passed since Margaret Thatcher left her position, she has been widely discussed since. This thesis deals with the impact of Thatcherism in Scotland. Thatcher was known for her successes in foreign policy and for improving the economic situation in Britain. She was also known by her nickname “The Iron Lady.” This nickname suited her especially within the context of Scotland. Due to its industrial tradition, Scotland suffered during Thatcherism with high unemployment and all the consequences that unemployment brings.

In the first part of my thesis, I will focus on Margaret Thatcher’s life. I will start with her childhood then focus on her studies, her married life and early political career. Afterwards, I will focus on the political stream she created called Thatcherism and its consequences in Scotland. I would also like to describe the relationship between Scots and Margaret Thatcher. In the end of the theoretical part, I will speak about Margaret Thatcher’s death and the reactions of Scots to this incident.

The second part is theoretical and will focus on Scot's opinions about Thatcherism. Questionnaires were handed out to Scottish citizens who expressed their opinions about the period of the Thatcher government. I will analyse the Scottish people's stance on Thatcherism in order to see whether the answers of the participants agree with the information in the theoretical part.

2 Biography

2.1 *Childhood*

Margaret Hilda Roberts was born on 13 October 1925 in Grantham. She was a daughter of a shop owner and a dressmaker. Her father, Alfred Roberts, came from a working class family with a long tradition of shoe making. He did not fulfil his dream to become a teacher because he had to start working at the age of 13. Margaret Thatcher described him in her autobiography as a hardworking and deeply patriotic man. He enlisted in the army six times but each time he was rejected because of health issues. Margaret's mother, Beatrice Ethel Stevenson, was a dressmaker. Alfred Roberts owned a shop, above which the family lived in a small flat. As Thatcher described in her biography, her family was very dedicated to the shop. "Everyone knew that we lived by serving the customer."¹

Margaret and her older sister Muriel were raised on Methodist beliefs. "I was born into the house which was practical, serious and intensely religious."² The education her parents gave her was strict. Instead of spending time with children of her own age, she had to work in the shop or go to the church with her family.

However, in her book *Path to Power*, Thatcher described that she enjoyed going to church and that thanks to the church meetings she had a rich social life. "I always enjoyed 'adults' conversation, which ranged for a wider than religion or happenings in Grantham to include national and international politics."³ She was always interested in politics.

The Roberts believed in hard work and built the characters of their children. When she wanted to spend time with her friends instead of going to church, her father told her: "Never do things just because other people do them." That became her motto since.

Her father inspired her and due to the education he gave her, she became a tough woman. It was Alfred Roberts who built the sense of duty in her. "These upright qualities, which entitled a refusal to alter your convictions just because other disagreed or because you became unpopular, were installed into me from the earliest days."⁴ This was something that Margaret remembered very well and continuously applied throughout her whole life. The Roberts family was also politically active. Alfred Roberts became the Mayor of

¹ Margaret Thatcher, *The path to power* (London: HarperCollins, 1995), 4.

² *Ibid.*, 5.

³ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 7.

Grantham in 1945–1946 and Margaret gained some political experience by helping her father with the campaign.

Margaret enjoyed reading, poetry, and listening to the music. She started to learn to play the piano when she was 5. Her favourite authors were Haydn, Mendel and Mendelssohn. Margaret attended Huntingtower Road Primary School, continued in Kesteven and later in Grantham Girls' School. There her chemistry teacher inspired her and chemistry became the area of her interest.

2.2 University life

In 1943, Thatcher took the entrance exam to Somerville College, Oxford. Unfortunately, she was not accepted. However, later that year a telegram arrived saying that because another student had dropped out she could start in Somerville College in October. Thatcher studied a four year Bachelor of Science Chemistry degree. In her fourth year she worked under Dorothy Hodgkin on the simple protein Gramicidin B. Her teacher later won The Nobel Prize for making a contribution towards discovering penicillin. In University, Thatcher became more politically active. She joined the Oxford University Conservative Association (hereafter OUCA). “Oxford politics was a nursery for talent. I made friends in university, politics who as on the novels of Antony Powell, kept reappearing in my life as years passed by.”⁵ Her political opinions were formed there. In March 1946, Margaret Thatcher became the Treasurer of OUCA and in October she was elected as the President of OUCA. She visited conservative conferences and read books from Macmillan and Hayek with whom she shared similar political views.

After finishing her degree she took a position at the research and development section of BX plastics at Manningtree in Colchester where she moved to and joined the Dartford Conservative Association. They were looking for candidates; she was suggested as one and participated as a candidate in 1950 and 1951. Even though she lost both times she gained a lot of experience.

2.3 Family and early political career

In 1951, Margaret got married to Denis Thatcher and two years later she gave birth to twins, Mark and Carol. In 1950, Margaret decided to study law as her second degree because she thought it would be useful to pursue a career in politics. In 1953, she qualified as a barrister. When she passed the bar exams she was able to turn her focus to politics

⁵ Ibid.,42.

again and decided to run as a candidate for Finchley. In July 1958, she was adopted as a candidate for Finchley. It was very controversial for a young woman to become an MP candidate. As a result, it was widely discussed among the newspapers and citizens of Finchley

Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, M.A, B.Sc, the 33 year old housewife-barrister who topped the list of about 200 would-be Conservative MPs seeking the Finchley and Friern Barnet seat in the next General Election, scored a resounding hit when she appeared for adoption at Conservative Hall on Thursday evening, last week.⁶

In 1961, Margaret Thatcher was appointed Parliamentary Under secretary to the Ministry of Pensions and National Insurance. Thatcher's reaction to the appointment was a surprise: "Mrs. Thatcher admitted that the post had been a surprise to her." "I didn't think that people of my vintage (1959) would be likely to be considered. I'm one of the first of my batch."⁷

In 1964, Labour won the election. Whilst in the shadow cabinet, Thatcher gained a lot of experience in various fields between the years 1964-1970. In 1964, she shadowed pensions. In 1965, Thatcher moved to Shadow the Housing and Land. In 1966, she shadowed the Treasury as deputy to Ian Macleod. In 1967, Thatcher went Shadow Cabinet responsible for Fuel and Power. In 1968, she was to shadow Transport and 1969 appointed to shadow Education Spokesman.⁸

On June 18th 1970, the Conservatives won the elections and Thatcher became the Secretary of Education and Science. In this time she became known as Margaret Thatcher 'Milk Snatcher'. She was given this name because within the budget cuts that were necessary, she abolished the Free Milk Act from 1964. Thanks to this act, one third of pint of milk was provided to the children under 18 so cancelling this act made her very unpopular. The government was not very successful. One of the main reasons was the miner's strike in 1984. The general election took place in February 1984. The result was too close and so no party won the majority of the votes needed. In March, Heath resigned

⁶ "Speech at Finchley adoption meeting," Margaret Thatcher Foundation, accessed January 23, 2013, <http://www.margaretthatcher.org>.

⁷ "Interview on being appointed a minister," Margaret Thatcher Foundation, accessed January 23, 2013, <http://www.margaretthatcher.org>.

⁸ "Brief chronology 1925-90," Margaret Thatcher Foundation, accessed January 23, 2013, <http://www.margaretthatcher.org>.

as Prime Minister. In October 1974, general elections took place again. Labour won by 3,4%.⁹

In February 1975, the battle for the post of the Conservative leader began. Keith Joseph decided not to stand for the leadership and supported Mrs. Thatcher. Thatcher won in first ballot and on February 11th she was elected as a leader of Conservatives.

Margaret Thatcher was the leader of the shadow government between the years 1975 and 1979. In those years a major issue was discussed: the Scottish Assembly. Margaret Thatcher was very anti-devolutionist. The referendum took place to decide whether devolution would take place or not. But before it actually took place, Thatcher organized an anti-devolution campaign which was based on the statement that Scotland had the same problems as the whole Britain so they should be solved together with the problems of the UK. Even though the majority of voters voted for the devolution, the required number of voters did not come to vote. The political situation was unstable. Thatcher's shadow government had to witness the Labour government leading the United Kingdom into a very bad financial situation of high inflation, indebtedness and deep recession. As a result of this situation, many strikes took place and so when the general elections came the Conservatives won the majority of votes.

⁹ Hynek Fajmon, *Margaret Thatcherová a její politika* (Brno: Centrum pro studium demokracie a kultury, 2010), 86.

3 Thatcherite Politics

3.1 1979-1983

1979 to 1983 was the first electoral period of Margaret Thatcher as Prime Minister. During these years, she made changes that were generally unpopular but were meant to help the country out of recession. On the 3rd May, the Conservatives won the general election with 43.9% of votes and gained 339 seats.¹⁰ However, in Scotland, only 31, 4% of Scottish voters decided to vote for Conservatives and there they gained only 22 seats.¹¹

On May 4th 1979, Margaret Thatcher was appointed Prime Minister. She became the first woman in the post of PM. Later in a documentary made by BBC called *The Downing Street Years*, she said it had never occurred to her that she was a female Prime minister. "I was Prime Minister; it was the greatest honour that can come to a British person. To have been given this and I'd been put there because I would change things. So I had better get on with making the change."¹² And that is what she did.

3.1.1 Changes and budget cuts

She began by changing the economic system in Great Britain right away. Traditionally, Keynesianism was applied when making economic decisions. However, a new approach was prepared for the British economy: monetarism. Monetarism is based on the theory that by controlling the money supply, then inflation is also under control. It was believed that Keynesianism, which tried to fight unemployment, brought Britain into recession. This critical situation had to be solved differently.

Keith Joseph, the industry secretary who convinced Thatcher of the benefits of monetarism, commented that Britain's situation was as follows: "We were over-governed, over-taxed, under-policed and rather badly educated."¹³ This meant big changes for the whole country. "Prime Minister Mrs Thatcher was determined to mount immediate assault on public spending and the trade unions, both which she considered responsible for Britain's economical decline."¹⁴ The other area of her focus was to be the house owning policy. For Scotland was this decision crucial. Because of its industrial nature, a lot of labour was needed. The problem was that in Scotland there were many nationalized

¹⁰ Fajmon, *Margaret Thatcherová a její politika*, 97.

¹¹ David Torrance, *"We in Scotland": Thatcherism in a cold climate* (Edinburgh: Birlinn), 2009, appendix 2.

¹² "Woman at War," Thatcher and the Downing Street Years, aired October 20, 1993 (UK: BBC, 1993), VHS.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 16:00.

¹⁴ Torrance, *"We in Scotland"*, 60.

industries (shipbuilding, steel producers and coal mines) which were largely loss-making and governed by the trade unions.

After World War Two, the government decided that the best way to heal the wounded country was to apply regional help. In Scotland, this meant supporting Scottish industry. Thatcher however was not a supporter of socialism, and so she decided to change this. In June 1979, an emergency budget was introduced where direct taxation was cut and indirect taxation expanded. The country went into recession. In her first speech at the Conservatives conference in 1979, Thatcher addressed the difficulties that Scotland was going through. Such difficulties included high inflation (reaching 10%) and rising unemployment. Furthermore, many firms were going out of business.

She introduced her plan to encourage the growth of small businesses, implying that she didn't see the future in nationalized companies but instead in private ones that took care of themselves. She also showed that she was not planning to invest into firms "which have no future, or which lack the will to adapt to the new demand of their customers"¹⁵.

What the Scots could not forget about was the issue of Black Gold; the North Sea Oil which was Scotland's biggest pride. Even now, some Scots still think that earnings from this oil were misused. As the Scotland's trade union centre (hereafter STUC) leader (1989-1998) Campbell Christie said: "We were at the centre of the world industry in what we were doing and of course...by the oil industry...you know, so we had a real chance at that stage to take those industries forward rather than close them down."¹⁶ Instead of using the profit from the North Sea oil to modernize the Scottish industry and make it profitable again, the Scots were witnesses of the money being used to pay for the recession. "Scotland was Mrs Thatcher's banker or, as Alex Salmond later put it, North Sea oil revenue 'was used to bankroll monetarism'"¹⁷ This, along with many other policies, made Margaret Thatcher highly unpopular in Scotland. New posters made by Scottish National Party (hereafter SNP) appeared in the streets where Thatcher was depicted as a vampire with oil dripping from her teeth and a slogan: "No wonder she's laughing. She's got Scotland's oil. Stop her-join SNP." What seemed incomprehensible for the Scots did not seem problematic at all for Thatcher. She believed that because Scotland was a part of Britain its oil was too.

¹⁵ "Speech to Scottish Conservative Party Conference," Margaret Thatcher Foundation, accessed January 30, 2013, <http://www.margaretthatcher.org>.

¹⁶ "Thatcher and Scots," directed by Craig Williams, aired January 1st, 2009 (UK: BBC Scotland), TV.

¹⁷ Torrance, "We in Scotland", 65.

The problems in the industrial field were becoming more serious. In 1980, the problems at British Leyland started. Surprisingly, the government intervened and helped them financially with an amount of £450 million.¹⁸ In January 1980, steelworkers all over the UK went on Strike. In Scotland, Ravensgraiɡ was affected. The steelworkers were striking for higher wages from January until April. The government gave up in the end and the strikers were given 19% pay rise. From then, British Steel Corporation lost £2 billion a year.¹⁹ In both situations, the government demonstrated its anti-monetarist and anti-Thatcherite stances. However, the strike was just a herald of a bigger crisis.

Scotland was known to be driven by the ‘Younger’s invisible hand’; which meant modifying some of the Thatcherite policies in a Scottish way. In Thatcher’s speech to the Conservative conference in Scotland, she said that she would not pour money into “firms which have no future, or which lack the will to adapt to the new demand of their customers.”²⁰ However, she promised that a temporary help could be given to the potentially prosperous firms and to firms which were “brought low by the nation’s economic ills”²¹ And that is what happened. While the rest of the country was going through big regional aid cuts, Scotland was receiving aid through Scottish Development Agency (hereafter SDA). George Younger, Conservative Scottish secretary, tried to get as many finances as possible but his actions did not stay invisible: “It was, therefore, not surprising that one cabinet minister told the Daily Telegraph that George Younger was practicing ‘Keynesianism north of the border’.”²² However, surprisingly, there was not so much done about it until later.

Even though money was being invested into starting small businesses, Scots were seeking opportunities in the public sector rather than in the private sector. As a result, the Scots were still very dependent on big nationalize companies. Michael Fry, former conservative candidate, commented this fact: “There had not been benefits for Thatcherism in Scotland because the Scottish establishment had been so sluggish in accepting Thatcherism. There had been no privatization in Scotland before and there was no privatization in Scotland till 1987.”²³ The situation became very complicated and this was one of the reasons why Thatcherism was so unpopular in Scotland. Therefore, the problem

¹⁸ Torrance, “*We in Scotland*”, 67.

¹⁹ “Thatcher and Scots,” directed by Craig Williams, aired January 1st, 2009 (UK: BBC Scotland), TV.

²⁰ “Speech to Scottish Conservative Party Conference,” Margaret Thatcher Foundation, accessed January 30, 2013, <http://www.margarethatcher.org>.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Torrance, “*We in Scotland*”, 72.

²³ “Thatcher and Scots,” directed by Craig Williams, aired January 1st, 2009 (UK: BBC Scotland), TV.

of being dependent on the government's decisions was not resolved because it was government who had the future of Scottish workers in their hands. While in other parts of Britain big companies were being privatized, Scotland did not experience this in early 80's. The nationalized companies were not prosperous and were kept alive from the state's donations. Therefore, the privatization would have been very complicated.

3.1.2 Housing

Margaret Thatcher promised to change the house-owning situation. She disliked the idea of people paying the rent instead of buying their own house because their money went into somebody else's pocket. She wanted to relieve them from this helpless situation. She did as promised. She encouraged people to buy their own houses by the so called Tenant's Rights Etc (Scotland) Bill, which was also called 'the right to buy'.

Thatcher said: "We will give to every council tenant the right to purchase his own home at a substantial discount on the market price and with 100 per cent mortgages for those who need them."²⁴ The problem was that the Scots did not respond to the bill in the way that Thatcher had hoped for. Many people did not plan to invest in buying the houses they lived in because if they were to invest, then they wanted to build their own house. Some people did not agree with this policy, arguing that by implementing it, it would stop the potential investments into building new houses. As a result, the building programme went through some "cuts". By the year 1984, the program was downsized from £765 million to £450 million. This caused rent to rise. To encourage people to buy even more, the grants to the private sector for house building and improvements were increased by 364%.²⁵

This housing policy was not originally Thatcherite; it was the work of several post-war conservative and labour governments.

In 1957, the Macmillan government gave local authorities the power to sell or lease council houses. The popularity of the policy was obvious, and many Conservative councils at the end of the sixties invited their tenants to buy their own houses-until the Labour government stamped on the idea. The Heath government received it.²⁶

²⁴ Torrance, "We in Scotland", 48.

²⁵ Ibid., 51.

²⁶ Ian Gilmour, *Dancing with dogma: Britain under Thatcherism* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992), 143.

However, it was Thatcher who took this issue most seriously. Even though at first the Scots didn't want to cooperate as much she as wanted, they greatly benefited from the right to buy. As a result, from 1979 to 1990 the number of owner occupied houses raised from 699 thousand to 1,088 thousand. The number of public rented houses also dropped from 1,073 thousand to 845 thousand. These numbers clearly show that Thatcher had reached her goal.²⁷

3.1.3 *Falkland war*

During the Falkland War, Thatcher certainly became worthy of her nickname 'the Iron Lady'. She did not see compromise as an option: "If you look at the great philosophies and ideas which moved the world; if you look at the great religions, and that Judo-Christian religion really has been the origin of human rights and the significance of the individual, do you think you'd ever had those great guidelines had people gone out and said: 'Brothers I believe in consensus!' Of course you wouldn't."²⁸ And, as she said, she did not compromise in the Falkland war.

The Argentineans invaded the Falklands on April 2nd 1982, having sent the forces to the Islands on February 31st with the intention of invasion. Thatcher had to face a tough decision. Britain was trying to solve the invasion diplomatically, but after the soldiers arrived, the government approved of sending forces to Falklands. Thatcher believed that democracy would not retreat to the aggression of authoritarian Argentina as she said: "Appeasement is wrong. It only encourages dictators. Dictators have to be beaten!"²⁹ Argentina was surprised by the willingness of Great Britain to fight for the far away islands. The USA was working in this conflict as the mediator, trying to reach a compromise whilst maintaining the interests of both countries. The first to reject the diplomatic proposal written by the USA was Argentina. Thus the war officially started. When the battle cruiser General Belgamo crossed the line set by the British, it was bombed and sunk. As an answer to that, the Argentines sunk the British battle cruiser MHS Sheffield. On May 21st, the disembarkment of the British started. By June 15th, the Argentines hung the white flag.

²⁷ Torrance, "We in Scotland", appendix 4

²⁸ "Woman at War," Thatcher and the Downing Street Years, aired October 20, 1993 (UK: BBC, 1993), VHS.

²⁹ "The Best of Enemies," Thatcher and the Downing Street Years, aired October 20, 1993 (UK: BBC, 1993), VHS.

This conflict had a big impact on the British mood. Before, the whole nation was disillusioned by the spending cuts and the unpopular political and economical changes. However, suddenly the people of Great Britain felt united and celebrated the victory. The victory in the Falkland War secured Thatcher her second term as PM.

In Scotland, the Falkland war created an enthusiastic mood and the Scots were suddenly proud of their Britishness. “As the Labour MP and academic John P. Mackintosh once pointed out, the Scots possessed dual nationality-Scottish and British-and switched between the two when it suited them. During the Falkland war, the motifs and symbols to hand were those of Britain, not Scotland.”³⁰ At this time, Scots decided to celebrate their Britishness. In the following elections, a new term ‘the Falkland Factor’ appeared. It was discussed whether the win in the Falkland war would influence the elections or not. Lord Healey said: “She milked it for all it was worth in domestic policies, she kept talking about the Falkland factor which means ‘I am always right.’”³¹ Her campaign was based on the victory in the Falkland war and she was curious whether it would work also in Scotland.

3.2 1983-1987

Thatcher’s second term from 1983 to 1987 was of huge significance for the United Kingdom. It is true that the UK went through years of crisis caused by the union and high unemployment. However, the country also enjoyed years of success because privatization in the UK finally began. This was the time when the so called popular Thatcherism came to the UK. In the second general elections on 9 June 1983, the Conservatives won with 42,4% of votes (28,4% in Scotland) and gained 397 seats (21 in Scotland).³² Unlike in the rest of Britain, the Falkland Factor, discussed after the Falkland war, did not have the expected effect in Scotland. The Conservatives lost 1 seat in Scotland together with 3% of voters.³³

Shortly after the elections, Mrs. Thatcher made an announcement stating that further cuts would be made to regional aid. Even though the budget was cut, Scotland did rather well in comparison to other parts of the UK. George Younger’s invisible hand could be seen again behind the scene.

³⁰ Torrance, “*We in Scotland*”, 89.

³¹ “The Best of Enemies,” Thatcher and the Downing Street Years, aired October 20, 1993 (UK: BBC, 1993), VHS.

³² Fajmon, *Margaret Thatcherová a její politika*, 107.

³³ Torrance, “*We in Scotland*”, appendix 2.

3.2.1 *The miner's strike*

Margaret Thatcher's second term as Prime Minister started with a very unpleasant event. The miners could no longer stand their jobs being taken away from them so they decided to take an action to protect their future. Unfortunately, the one year strike did not end well for them. Margaret Thatcher decided to end the problem with the unions once for all.

In 1972, the Unions were so powerful that they managed to bring down the Heath government of which Thatcher was a part of. She decided that this could not happen again and so from the year 1979, she ordered to make reserves of coal for the thermal plants. In this way, Britain could survive a potential strike without losing its comforts. By the year 1984, this decision had shown to be very sensible. In 1983, Ian Mac Gregor became the head of National Coal Board (hereafter NCB) and planned a restructure of the company. The problem was that 75% of the mines were loss-making so it was necessary to make some changes. For every ton of coal, the NCB was losing £13, 96. Mac Gregor planned to make 64 000 out of 202 000 people redundant.³⁴ In Thatcher's memoirs, she mentions that the deal for employees who were made redundant was very fair; for each year that they had worked in the mine they were to be paid £1000 of redundancy payment. Accordingly, a man who had worked in a mine for 20 years would have received £20 000.

This deal seemed unacceptable for many miners, principally for Arthur Scargill who led the strike in 1972. He was very left wing and did not have much education in the field of economy. In 1984, the closure of 2 mines was announced: Polmaise in Stirlingshire and Cottonwood in Yorkshire. Polmaise was being reconstructed for the last three years but it was too productive and the market could not consume such a big supply of coal. Later the decision was made to reduce the production of coal in Britain by 750 000 tons.³⁵ After this announcement, the Pithead Ballot took place. The miners were against the strike. As a result, a special meeting of National Miners Union (hereafter NUM) was called in April and the requirement for the national ballot was lowered to a simple majority. But Scargill, guessing that the strike would not be agreed in the ballot, declared a strike without the ballot.

The battle had started and Neil Kinnock, the leader of the labour party in 1983-1982, said: "Arthur Scargill was a good enemy to have because he didn't have a ballot, because he tried to excuse illegal actions. The script was written for the Conservatives by

³⁴ Fajmon, *Margaret Thatcherová a její politika*, 181.

³⁵ Torrance, "*We in Scotland*", 126.

that.”³⁶ On March 5th, 81 pits went on strike whilst 83 remained open.³⁷ But for that Scargill had an answer. As he had done previously in 1972, he decided to use force for the greater good. As a result, the so-called Flying Pickets were organized; the groups of striking miners who tried to persuade those still working to go on strike. The idea of these pickets was first to try to persuade miners by discussion and later by using force. Many police officers were sent to the striking areas to enable the non-striking miners to continue working and to keep the peace. Margaret Thatcher saw this strike as ‘us versus them’; the monetarist versus the socialist world. She would not accept miners bullying her country by dictating unacceptable conditions.

Scargill hoped that this would become a political issue but Thatcher left the lead to Mac Gregor and George Younger. As a result, his hopes to repeat the 1972 situation diminished. Moreover, it was not strategic to start a strike in May when it was getting warmer. In May, the National Miners Union and the management of the mines began talks and tried to find a compromise. However, it seemed to be impossible. As the leader of the NMU, Scargill would accept nothing else than reopening of all the mines without dismissals. NMU started to pay to the miners who participated in the flying pickets. As a result, on May 25th 1984, there was a conflict between the angry and upset miners and the police. 69 people were injured. In July, 2 miners decided to take legal action against the NMU for starting the strike without the national ballot and Scargill was to pay £200 000.³⁸

By November 19th, 93, 9% of the miners were on strike in Scotland. NCB tried to persuade the miners to return to work by offering them a special Christmas bonus. As a result, 2000 miners returned to work. On December 29th 1984, a very important piece of news for the NMU was released. It was announced that Britain had enough coal stocks for the following year. By March 1st, 65% of the Scottish miners were back at work. The strike officially ended on March 3rd.

The miners who returned to work during the strike were bullied by the picket lines. It was an extremely difficult for them because many people believed that they had betrayed their own people. Margaret Thatcher sent a thank you letter to these miners. This was a big paradox because many of them had lost their jobs in return for their suffering. “The debt that we have to these miners is a continuing one and should be honoured by the continuing government” said M. Thatcher to this issue.

³⁶ “The Best of Enemies,” Thatcher and the Downing Street Years, aired October 20, 1993 (UK: BBC, 1993), VHS.

³⁷ Fajmon, *Margaret Thatcherová a její politika*, 181.

³⁸ Fajmon, *Margaret Thatcherová a její politika*, 184.

3.2.2 *Health*

The most prominent issue that Thatcher had to solve was the growing number of people who became infected by HIV and AIDS. In Scotland, the disease spread quickly. The Times described the upcoming Edinburgh Festival as a dangerous event. “Scottish health experts are worried that the Edinburgh International Festival next month may become a breeding ground for the spread of the mystery disease acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome.”³⁹ Many people in Edinburgh reused and shared contaminated needles. In order to prevent further spread, the needle exchange policy was initiated. In Scotland the Scottish Health Monitor was created. Information campaigns were organized to tell people about diseases and how to prevent them from spreading. In the newspapers, announcements stating ‘don’t aid AIDS’ appeared. In 1987, the department of Health and Social Security also began to hand out leaflets saying ‘AIDS-Don’t die of ignorance’ in 1987. These leaflets were delivered to every household in a sealed envelope. They explained what AIDS is, how one becomes infected, how one can protect himself, what to do if there is possibility of being infected and even discussed how dangerous the situation was abroad. In 1987, the ‘Tombstone’ and ‘Iceberg’ adverts appeared on British television to inform the population about AIDS and the leaflets that were to come to their homes. After these campaigns, the number of infected people finally began to drop.

In order to cut down the costs of healthcare, Thatcher assigned a special board to find out how spending in hospitals could be reduced. She also wanted to make the doctor aware of how much every item they used cost. That was highly unpopular in Scotland. The curious thing is that Mrs. Thatcher did not use public health care but decided to entrust herself into private sector. Other unpopular changes included alterations to charges for optical and dental care and also for prescriptions.

3.2.3 *Unemployment*

Since Mrs. Thatcher was appointed Prime Minister, the rate of unemployment started to rise. The unemployment levels peaked in her second term. We shall now take a closer look at the statistics. In 1972, during the Heath government, 28% of Scots and 26% of the overall British population were unemployed.⁴⁰ The Labour government did not stop rising unemployment. However, with the election of the Conservative government in 1979, levels of unemployment began to rise even faster. By the year 1983, 36% of the inhabitants

³⁹ “History of HIV & AIDS in the UK 1981-1995,” HIV & AIDS Information from AVERT.org, accessed March 25, 2013, <http://www.avert.org/>.

⁴⁰ Torrance, “*We in Scotland*”, appendix 4.

of Scotland was unemployed and this situation did not change until the following year.⁴¹ The entire job market suffered, and, as David Torrance commented: “Every sector of Scottish employment, meanwhile, was proportionately affected, the greatest hit being textiles, engineering and metal manufacturing, but also small drops in construction due to massive cuts in government capital expenditure and house building.”⁴² and he continues: “Decreasing demand for food and drink accounted for the loss of 6,000 jobs during 1981...”⁴³

From 1983 onwards, the UK as a whole slowly came out of recession and unemployment started to decrease. However, Scotland stayed in recession. The unemployment rate in the UK was at its highest in the beginning of 1983 (32%) but yet the same year the number of unemployed started to slowly decline and in 1990 it reached 25%.

Scotland had a rockier future ahead. However, in 1985, the unemployment rate dropped to 34%. A year later, it rose to 35% and in 1986 it returned to 34%. From then on, levels of unemployment slowly decreased and by 1990 it stood at 29%. If we summarize the data, we see that Thatcherism failed to improve the employment situation in Scotland because when Thatcher became PM, the unemployment rate was 1% lower than when she left her post. Nevertheless, what she did do was restructure the labour market.⁴⁴

As a result of high unemployment, levels of crime increased in the country. During Thatcherism, they rose by 79%. Poverty was also becoming an increasing problem among the people. “In reality whole about 120,000 families were caught in poverty trap in 1980, the 1988 ‘reforms’ increased this figure to 530,000 families...”⁴⁵ The fight against the recession and coming capitalism brought poverty as the side effect.

3.2.4 Privatization

Privatization was a policy that Thatcher reckoned to be very important for the development of her country. She therefore believed that if the company was prosperous, then the citizens would make money. Similarly, if the company was not successful then the state would not have to intervene in order to keep it running. Bankruptcy therefore would not become a political issue. She also liked the idea that a company's assets were to be sold to citizens. She considered this to be a distribution of wealth that made citizens stand on their own feet; also Nigel Lawson was a big supporter of privatization. However,

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Torrance, “*We in Scotland*”, 85.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid, appendix 4.

⁴⁵ Gilmour, *Dancing with dogma*, 133.

privatization did not go as quickly as they wanted. During the first term (1979-1983), only a few companies were privatized: British Aerospace, Associated British Ports, assets in Cable and Wireless and Amersham International.

The sale of Britoil's assets was interesting. The shares were sold in two waves, but the government, knowing the importance of the company, kept over half of the shares. Therefore, in a case of crisis, it would have been the government that was able to decide about the future of Britoil. Thatcher did not want to give up Britoil. She may also have been concerned that a foreign company would buy off Britoil and so it would no longer be in British hands.

In Scotland, the situation was different. As previously stated, many companies in Scotland were loss-making. Furthermore, some politicians thought that denationalizing Scottish companies was not a good idea. Some members of Parliament thought nationalized companies gave the government a certain amount of control over Scotland. In 1983, the British Shipbuilders Corporation was privatized. The curious thing is that this company had been nationalized few years earlier in 1977 by the Labour government. In 1984, British telecom was privatized. After it was separated from the Post office in 1980, British telecom was facing financial problems. They wanted to revitalize and expand the company but were not able to pay for it. Therefore, the only way out of this situation was to privatize the company. This privatization was very successful and in the end British telecom had over 2 million shareholders. Two years later, British Gas was privatized. The area of transport experienced the most attempts to privatize in Scotland in. It started with an attempt to sell 8 airports owned by Civil Aviation Authority. The assets were sold only in Scotland so the airports would stay in Scottish hands. Although this attempt was not successful due to lack of interest from the Scottish citizens, it was a good start for the further development of privatization.

In 1985, the Transport Act was passed. The National Bus Company was to be sold to the private sector. In Scotland, the Scottish Bus Group was the main transport company and it shared the market with the Scottish Transport Group. It was not surprise that the Transport Act was celebrated as a big success in the UK. However, the Scottish Bus Group did not experience any changes.

Thatcher was proud that the citizens of the UK became shareholders. To be a shareholder meant for her financial freedom and real capitalism. However, some people claimed that the UK would lose something hard to be regained, while others said that it was positive because the capitalism, or so called Popular Thatcherism, was finally coming

to Scotland. In 1990, the results of Thatcher's efforts were clearly visible. "In the eleven years after 1979, the number of individual shareholders tripled to nine million or over 21 per cent of the adult population."⁴⁶ As we can see from the statistics, Thatcher once again reached her goal.

3.3 1987-1990

On June 11th 1987, the general elections took place. Having endured the miner's strike, high levels of unemployment and continuing recession, Scots were determined to make a change. The Scottish Daily Record urged Scots to put the end to Conservative rule. "Today Scotland votes for its future', but for Scots who have no jobs there is no future. For them there is no future with Mrs. Thatcher."⁴⁷ This statement reflects the atmosphere in Scotland after two terms of Thatcher as the Prime Minister. The result of the elections in Scotland very clearly screamed: 'We don't want the Conservatives to rule.' The Conservatives lost 11 seats in Scotland and only 24% of voters supported them.⁴⁸ Although the result in Scotland was very clear, it did not influence the result in the UK very much. The Conservatives won 42% of votes and 376 seats in the parliament (21 seats less than the previous term).⁴⁹ This opened the discussion if Scotland was experiencing a democratic deficit. This was because the result in Scotland was very clear but the nation was still to be governed by the Conservatives.

Before the elections took place, Tim Bell, a public relations specialist who was helping Margaret Thatcher to improve her image, implied that she didn't need to work so hard in Scotland because the Scots were socialists. "We all considered it as socialist desert that did not believe in or agree with any deep-rooted principles of Thatcherism."⁵⁰ In other words, he had no interest in changing the opinions of Scots because the Conservatives did not need their votes in order to win.

Thatcher was disappointed by the results of the elections and blamed it on the public sector in Scotland. In her opinion, everybody was still too dependent on it. Privatization was still was not very successful because many companies remained public or shut down. It seemed that buying council houses and working in the private sector were not

⁴⁶ Gilmour, *Dancing with Dogma*, 101.

⁴⁷ Torrance, "We in Scotland", 155.

⁴⁸ Torrance, "We in Scotland", appendix 2.

⁴⁹ Fajmon, *Margaret Thatcherová a její politika*, 117.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 136.

good enough reasons for the Scots to vote Conservative. Thatcherism was simply showing its dark side in Scotland.

3.3.1 *Thatcher in Scotland*

When the council elections in 1988 were about to take place, Thatcher visited Scotland in hope of redeeming her position. In attempt to build a relationship with the people, she decided to go to a football match. It was the Scottish Cup Final and Celtic was playing against Dundee. This match became very famous in Scottish history and one of the main reasons was the attendance of Mrs. Thatcher. However, this was not because everyone was excited to see her. Instead, people could finally show their feelings towards her. As a result, she was booed at by thousands of fans.

Hoping that the situation would get better, she visited the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. She ‘preached’ in the assembly and this speech was later named by the journalists ‘Sermon on the Mound’. This speech became very famous. Thatcher used the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland as a place to explain her vision and to justify capitalism. She was accused of using religion in order to reach what she wanted. “I believe that by taking together these key elements from the Old and New Testaments, we gain: a view of the universe, a proper attitude to work, and principles to shape economic and social life.”⁵¹ Although she was invited to speak, nobody expected that she would use her speech in order to explain her actions. The most cited sentence from her speech is: "Christianity is about spiritual redemption, not social reform." This quote has been cited repeatedly since. The aim of her speech was to show that capitalism wasn't against Christian beliefs. She was also trying to make up for having previously stated that society didn't exist. Moreover, she needed to improve her relationship with the Scottish church. In 1985, she wrote a report called Faith in the City in which she criticised the Anglican Church. To improve her reputation, she decided to do this speech, in order to improve her reputation.

3.3.2 *The Community Charge*

The Rates, the system for funding the local authorities, was highly unpopular in the UK. It was based on the nominal rental value of the property. In 1985, the revaluation of rates took place in Scotland. After the revaluation, the rates rose which meant that on

⁵¹ “Speech to General Assembly of the Church of Scotland,” Margaret Thatcher Foundation, accessed February 15, 2013, <http://www.margarethatthatcher.org>.

average, the bill was £406 per household. In Edinburgh, the rates rose by 40% and in the whole of Scotland, the rates rose by 17% on average.⁵² Scots could not understand this because they knew that the Conservatives promised to change of the system, not to raise the rates. Thatcher knew that if the revaluation took place in England, it would have caused the same consequences. The problem needed to be solved and the Community Charge was supposed to be the solution. The Community Charge, or so called Poll Tax, was created to replace the rates on residential property. It was a tax per capita that everyone had to pay for the expenses of the community. The Conservatives included a change to the system in the 1979 electoral strategy. There were several possible options but in the end the Poll Tax was employed.

However, Nigel Lawson wrote a report saying that the Community Charge was not going to work and suggested that it was a political suicide. Nevertheless, the Poll Tax was to be applied and Thatcher was happy that George Younger took the initiative in Scotland where change was needed. It was decided that the tax would be introduced in Scotland on April 1st 1989, a year before it was introduced in the rest of UK. In 1986, Malcolm Rifkind became the new Scottish secretary and continued in the work of George Younger. The STUC organized an anti Poll Tax campaign. A special Rock concert was a part of the campaign focused on the young tax payers

Although, the Scottish Tory Leadership thought it would be popular, the Poll Tax was the last straw for Scots. As we will see in the practical part, they felt like guinea pigs. In the end the poll tax was not much cheaper than the rates. Malcolm Rifkind estimated that the poll tax should be as follows: “On 4 November 1988 the governor estimated that Poll Tax levels, based on 1989-88 council spending levels, would range from £313 per adult in Edinburgh to £84 in Orkley. It became clear, however, that the first year’s Poll Tax was going to be around 16% higher than Rifkind estimated.”⁵³ It is interesting to note that the local authorities increased their spending.

To explain how the tax worked and how it would benefit the people, leaflets called ‘The Community Charge (The so-called Poll Tax): how it will work for you?’ were distributed to each household. After the tax was implemented many people simply could not afford to pay it. “In early September, Grampian Region said its non-payment level was 15 per cent; and in Lothian it was 17 per cent; and unofficial estimates reckoned it to be

⁵² Torrance, “*We in Scotland*”, 143.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 197.

around 20 per cent in Strathclyde.”⁵⁴ While Scots remained reasonably calm, the rest of UK did not. On March 31st 1990, a day before the Poll tax was to be implied in the rest of UK, the so called Poll Tax Riots took place in London. As a response to the riots, a short film was made to introduce the tax in a friendly way. In the film, a wife comes home and her husband starts a conversation about the poll tax, wondering how it would benefit them. The witty wife goes on to answer the most frequently asked questions about the tax, such as ‘Why do poorer people have to pay the same amount as the rich people?’

Husband: Why should I have to pay the same for local services as Hockings?

Wife: Actually we won’t.

Husband: Because the rich should pay more than us, shouldn’t they?

Wife: They do. The Community Charge pays just over a quarter of what a council house spends. The rest comes from the businesses and taxes, like income tax. And we don’t pay anything like as much as Mr. Hockings.⁵⁵

The husband also asks: “Why did the government set the poll tax so much higher than the rates in the first place? The wife explains that the amount of tax is set by the local councils. As a result, the national government cannot be blamed. The video emphasizes that the areas with the highest taxes are the areas with Labour councils and assures the viewers that Conservative councils tried to keep spending down. It also explains the reduction rules. Unemployed people were to get reductions, and students and pensioners paid 80% less. At the end of the video, they invite people to go to the regional elections because ‘Labour costs you more’ and every vote counts.

The Attempts to make Poll tax popular failed. It was replaced by Council Tax in 1993. The decision to imply this tax cost Thatcher her post of Prime Minister. She was suggested that she should leave her seat to someone else. Although she won in the first round of the election for the Conservative leader on October 11th 1990, she resigned in the second round and supported her successor John Major.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 215.

⁵⁵ “Conservative Party Political Broadcast, 1990,” YouTube video, 5:06, from Conservative Party Political Broadcast by Limehouse television on May 2, 1990, posted by “Tory archives,” November 11, 2012. http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=KkkXgtBmcRQ.

3.4 Scots and their attitude towards Thatcher

It is interesting to note that not only did Scots dislike her politics but they also found her to be very unsympathetic. It is said that when they heard her voice on the radio, they turned it off because of her high pitched voice. Perhaps her English accent also reminded them that an English person was directing their future.

Sir Malcolm Rifkind, secretary of state for Scotland (1986-1990), commented on this problem: “She was a woman, she was an English woman, she was a bossy English woman.”⁵⁶ And then laughing he added that with these three factors added together, Scots just could not stand her. The Glasgow Herald commented on this issue rather critically:

The public persona of Mrs. Thatcher appears to many Scots to capture all the worst elements of their caricature of the detested English-uncaring, arrogant, always convinced of their own rightness (‘there is no alternative’), possessed of an accent that grates on Scottish ears, and affluent enough to afford a retirement home costing around £500,000.⁵⁷

When this article was printed, she had bought a house in Dulwich. This provoked feelings of discontent among the Scots who faced poverty and unemployment. Thatcher herself did not help her reputation in Scotland either. She tried to make herself popular among the Scots but she was blamed for the problem of growing unemployment and for using Scottish oil to support the rest of Britain. Moreover, whether intentionally or unintentionally, she was separating Scotland from the other parts of Britain.

However, when she participated in an interview with BBC Scotland, Sir Malcolm Rifkind pointed out to her: “I’ve often heard that when you’re in Scotland you often talk about how you and Scotland do this, you and Scotland do that.’ I said.’ It sounds like as if you were visiting other country.” After he pointed this out, Mrs Thatcher agreed and said she would try to avoid using these terms in her speeches. However, when she gave the interview, she had used the term “us and Scotland” for 3 times.

In a different interview, this time with Colin MacKay, Mr. MacKay pointed out to Mrs. Thatcher: “4 out of 5 Scots are dissatisfied with you personally, and of the Scots who voted Tory last time but won’t now, so they say, you were the 3rd most important reason

⁵⁶ “Thatcher and Scots,” directed by Craig Williams, aired January 1st, 2009 (UK: BBC Scotland), TV.

⁵⁷ David Torrance, “*We in Scotland*”, 162.

for their defection after unemployment and pensions.”⁵⁸ She denied that she was the reason that Scots chose to vote for the Labour party instead of the Conservatives. Instead, she claimed that unpopular Conservative politics prompted the population to vote Labour. Thatcher was also very well known for fighting for Britain’s independence from Europe (even from the European Union). Despite this, she could not understand the similar feeling of individuality that Scots had concerning Great Britain. Her choice of words and actions further encouraged this feeling among the Scots.

3.5 Reaction to Margaret Thatcher passing away

On April 8th 2013, Margaret Thatcher died. Her death raised a wave of emotions. Some people grieved for their beloved heroine and some people celebrated; some people simply did not know how to feel. Although some people hated her policies, they were ashamed of their neighbours who celebrated her death.

Mrs. Thatcher was a very intelligent, hard-working and high-principled woman who, in the long run, helped the British economy out of the recession. Her private secretary, Sir Charles Powell remembered how great her memory was. “She had an ability to absorb detail until late at night and the most astonishing memory. That in many ways was the most striking characteristic of all; this phenomenal recollection of detail of the things she read.”⁵⁹ However, as a perfectionist, she also expected others to be perfectionists in their work. Lord Tebbit was a witness of Margaret Thatcher being unhappy with the work carried out by the ministers. “She could be merciless and I’ve seen ministers reduced not to tears but to a state of considerable distress, when they realized she knew more about their papers than the minister himself and that he had not brought a case together properly.”⁶⁰ Margaret Thatcher really was the Iron lady.

Her daughter, Carol Thatcher remembers her mother as a workaholic: “For a workaholic, No 10 was the perfect home: a staircase of just 17 steps led from the private flat to the prime minister’s study on the first floor. It had to be the shortest commute in London.”⁶¹ She says she was the most practical woman she has ever met.

⁵⁶ Margaret Thatcher, interview by Colin MacKay, Edinburgh, Scottish Tv, Sep 4. 1968.

⁵⁷ “The Best of Enemies,” Thatcher and the Downing Street Years, aired October 20, 1993 (UK: BBC, 1993), VHS.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ “The Margaret Thatcher I knew: 20 personal insights,” The Guardian, accessed April 10, 2013, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/>.

On the other hand, there are people who don't have any nostalgic memories about Mrs. Thatcher. Thomas Younger, a student from The University of Glasgow, who originally comes from Newcastle, had a strong reaction to Mrs. Thatcher's death. It inspired him to write a poem:

The Iron Lady is dead,
but not before we were left to mourn
in sepulchres of northern towns;
County Durham pits,
the silent mass graves
of a way of life.
Policies like electric shocks
administered with technocratic precision
And you,
who hated the poor
with unequalled iron in your soul
took St Francis' words, Lady Poverty's lover,
our voices of struggle to smother.
Forget a state funeral; this is a state of emergency
because the creeping cruelty she injected
the sinister alliances with tyrants
still emanate unchecked from the corridors of power.
Pit-heads transformed into call-centres,
shipyards now playgrounds for the rich,
and every woman, man and child is told their price
in a land where wage labour doesn't add up to a living.
BBC sound bites as toothless as she was ruthless
don't mask the sardonic grin:
twenty years of politics haven't changed a thing -
'cut your complaints and pay your way' -
the dereliction you dealt upon us
is history that will not be written away.⁶²

⁶² Thomas Younger, facebook message, April 12th, 2013.

In this poem, we can see how deep the wounds that Thatcherism left are and how they affected the people. Even though this student did not experience Thatcherism himself, the changes that her politics brought still deeply affected him and others from his generation. On April 8th 2013, in the House of Commons, tributes were paid to Margaret Thatcher. Glenda Jackson spoke about Thatcher. To the surprise of the Conservatives, she decided to sum up Thatcherism from a Labour point of view. She described Thatcherism as “the most heinous social, economic, and spiritual damage upon this country.”⁶³ She spoke on the topic of the local hospitals being so under budgeted, that the patients “were staying on trolleys in corridors.”⁶⁴ She also touched on the topic of education. She described that in order to make the schools run, everybody had to help to raise money. She further mentioned that the walls were falling apart and the few books left in the library were held together by the tape. Mrs. Jackson also remembered the many homeless people who had nobody to take care of because society was un-united. There was no help offered. She described Thatcherism as the as the era of greed and selfishness.

Thatcherism definitely changed the British nation. It helped the country out of recession but for what price? Some people say that it brought wealth to the wealthy and more poverty to the poor. And they have not forgotten this. Other people say she was a hero; definitely she was a woman, who influenced her country in a bigger way she could have imagined as a little girl.

⁶³ “Glenda Jackson launches tirade against Thatcher in tribute debate,” YouTube Video, 8:04, from House of Commons by BBC Parliament on April 10, 2013, posted by “barnetbugle,” April 10, 2013, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XDtCIJYJBj8>.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

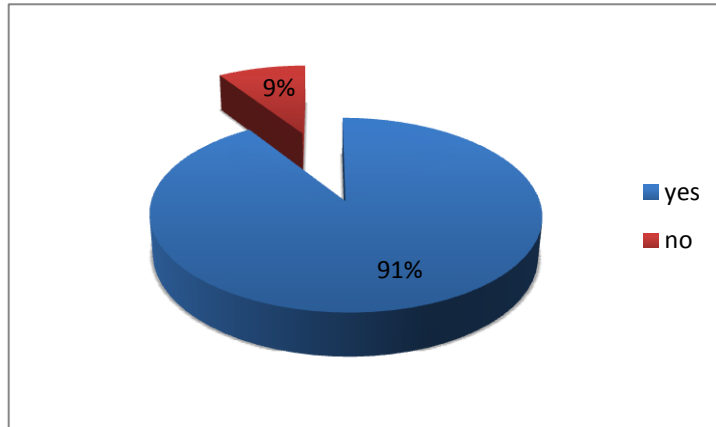
4 Practical part

A questionnaire was handed out to 44 Scots who answered questions relating to Thatcherism in Scotland. Some questions were answered as expected and some answers were surprising to me. The questionnaire contained 11 questions regarding Thatcherism. It also contained 3 questions regarding the age group, place of birth and the highest level of education achieved by the participants.

The age groups were divided into 5 groups, from 18-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51-70, and 70+. 36% of respondents were in the age group 18-30, 9% of respondents were in the age group 41-50, 36% were in the age group 51-70 and 18% were in the last age group 70+. Each respondent came from Scotland, mainly from Glasgow, Edinburgh and Hamilton. 78 percent of the participants had a university degree. The answers of the participants did not relate to the age group nor the place of birth nor the highest level of education achieved. The only exception was in the first question in which the age group influenced the answers.

- 1. Three times Scots voted against the Conservatives (1979, 1983, and 1987) but three times they stayed in power. Do you feel that during Thatcherism Scotland was experiencing a democratic deficit?*

91 percent of participants answered that a democratic deficit was present in Scotland. Those who answered that Scotland did not experience a democratic deficit were in the first age group (18-30), meaning that they did not experience her politics or were only children during Thatcherism. Scots, in order to regain their power, drove Conservatives out of Scotland on the regional base as mentioned in the theoretical part. In the regional Council elections in 1986, only 16, 9 percent of voters voted for the Conservatives, and 19,6 percent of voters voted for Conservatives in 1990. Although Conservatives clearly lost in the elections in Scotland, it did not influence the results in UK.

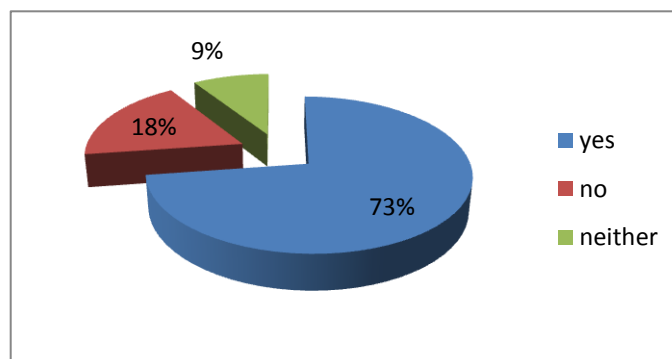


Graph 1. Democratic deficit in Scotland during Thatcherism

2. *Do you feel that Scotland was being discriminated against during the rule of Margaret Thatcher?*

73 percent of the participants answered that they did feel that Scotland was discriminated against. One of the participants added: “The working classes were discriminated against and Scotland happened to have a majority working class/industrial society so maybe suffered more than Southern English non-industrial societies.”⁶⁵ Many respondents answered similarly. The respondents felt that Scotland was discriminated against because of its industrial nature.

Those participants who answered neither argued that it was not only Scotland who was suffering, but also the rest of UK with focus on industry. The participants who answered no said they were not aware of Thatcher willingly discriminating against Scotland. Instead she was only trying to solve the economic situation.



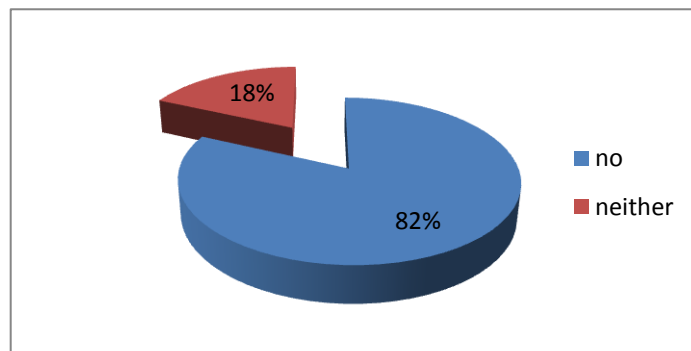
Graph 2. Was Scotland discriminated against?

⁶⁵ Participant 4 , e-mail message, March 1st, 2013.

3. *Do you think that Margaret Thatcher thought of Scotland as an equal to England?*

82 percent of the respondents answered that Scotland, according to Thatcher, was not an equal to England. Many Scots believe that if as many people were suffering in England the way that people were suffering in Scotland, then Thatcher would have tried to stop it. “I do not believe she considered Scotland as an equal part of the Kingdom. As a smaller, poorer nation she considered it inferior and was not afraid to literally be ‘the Iron Lady’ in Scotland.”⁶⁶ As stated one of the respondents in his answer.

The rest that answered that they cannot say yes or no argued, that everything went according to the law structure of the UK. Therefore, they did not feel that a democratic deficit was possible.



Graph 3. Was Scotland an equal to England?

4. *Do you think that Thatcher encouraged Scotland to become more sovereign and independent?*

I chose this question in order to find out if people felt Thatcherism gave Scotland a push towards independence. The answer was yes. 82 percent of respondents said that Thatcherism made Scots realize how important it is to have the power over their own nation. It led to the birth the Scottish Parliament. It is clear that one of the reasons for this was the rule of ‘Iron Lady’.

One of the participants said that one of the reasons Scots wanted the independence from Great Britain was the North Sea oil.

⁶⁶ Participant 7, e-mail message, March 23rd, 2013.

The main source of encouragement for Scots to become sovereign and independent was probably the development of the oil industry in the Scottish Waters of the North Sea and the large revenue derived from it by the UK government. Revenue was used by the Thatcher government to combat the unemployment resulting from the deliberate and speedy run-down of heavy industry in particular. Many Scots resented the effects of this run down and the use of the revenue for this purpose.⁶⁷

As mentioned in the theoretical part, the issue of ‘Black Gold’ was very serious for Scots. They could not understand why their problems could not have been solved by investing the profit from the North Sea oil into the Scottish issues.

Another participant meditated that Thatcherism made Scots realize that they cannot rely on the UK government.

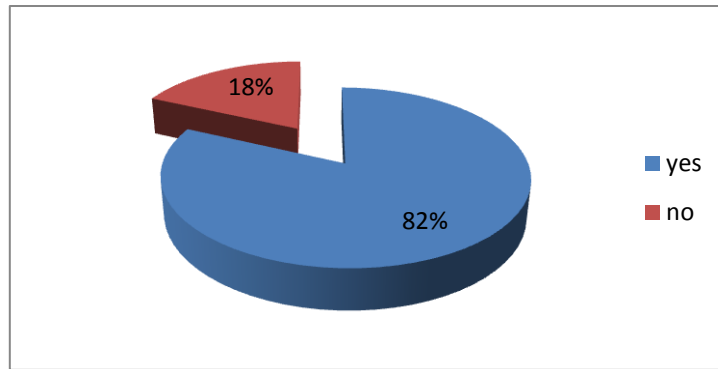
Probably, yes. If the experience of Thatcherism didn't cause a long-term trend towards independence it likely did contribute towards the overwhelming support for a Scottish Parliament. It probably made Scots think that they can't rely on Westminster to defend the centre-left welfare state and social-democratic benefits we enjoy, particularly as they seems to be valued more north of the border than in England (considering the country as an administrative whole and not regionally.)⁶⁸

Scots simply always felt culturally different and Thatcherism made them feel more different than ever.

Overall Scots do think that Thatcherism encouraged Scots to become more independent; after establishing the Scottish Parliament there is upcoming referendum for Scottish independence.

⁶⁷ Participant 28, e-mail message, March 25th, 2013.

⁶⁸ Participant 31, e-mail message, April 1st, 2013.



Graph 4. Were Scots encouraged to become more sovereign and independent?

5. *Do you agree that due to Thatcher many people in Scotland own their own property?*

73 percent of the respondents feel that thanks to Thatcherism many people own their properties, however many of them don't think of it as a positive. One of the participants pointed out that it resulted in homeless people being placed into unsuitable accommodations. "Yes. However at the same time it has reduced the stock of council houses available to local authorities resulting in many homeless people having to be housed in expensive, often unsuitable, rented accommodation."⁶⁹ The other negative effect of the house owning policy is that people often could not afford to maintain the properties.

Yes, but I don't see it as thanks as the country now suffers from the fact that a massive asset for future generations was sold at very low cost and indeed now many people cannot afford to maintain these properties. This change also knocked the UK out of line with its European partners where only a minority of the public owned their home.⁷⁰

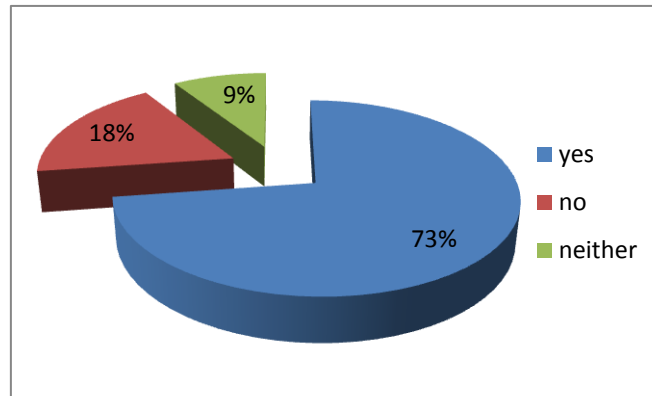
This means that many of the properties are in a disastrous and uninhabitable state. In the end, this policy was a short term policy that did not have a very positive and long lasting effect. It also caused housing prices to rise "The very same policy contributed to the

⁶⁹ Participant 28, e-mail message, March 25th, 2013.

⁷⁰ Participant 10, e-mail message, March 30th, 2013.

massive rise in house prices we have seen over the last few decades and thus, in the long term, has probably kept a lot of young Scots of the property ladder.”⁷¹

Therefore, we can conclude that although many participants agreed that Thatcherism helped people to own their property, there were also many negative effects that came with the policy.



Graph 5. Do you agree that due to Thatcherism many people in Scotland own their property?

6. *Do you agree with the idea that thanks to Thatcherism being against the manufacturing and industry, Scots discovered new working and educational possibilities?*

Only 45 percent of the participants answered yes to this question. According to their responses, Scots feel that they could have found new possibilities without the drastic dismissals.

Scotland could have discovered new working and educational possibilities without the dramatic cuts to manufacturing and industry. Many who were laid off in that period were not given the opportunity to participate in new industries and the stagnant level of welfare and poverty in certain areas of South-West Scotland show this.⁷²

⁷¹ Participant 43, e-mail message, April 3rd, 2013.

⁷² Participant 4, e-mail message, March 1st, 2013.

As said, the process could have gone more smoothly. Some people also commented that many people lost their jobs and there were not many visible efforts to educate the dismissed workers.

There was no real attempts by the Thatcher government (that have know of or have seen evidence of) to 'reskill' those that lost their jobs in the eighties. It seems to me that they preferred to push the long-term unemployed onto sickness benefits and let them be forgotten rather than stimulate new skills. You only have to visit previously thriving working class communities in the West Coast of Scotland to see how the mass lay-offs in the eighties still impact these now marginalised communities.⁷³

Even though Thatcher claimed that there were efforts to educate the people, the reality was different. In the Scottish Interview where she was interviewed by Colin McKay where he asked her about this issue, she only mentioned available computer seminars with very limited number of possible participants.

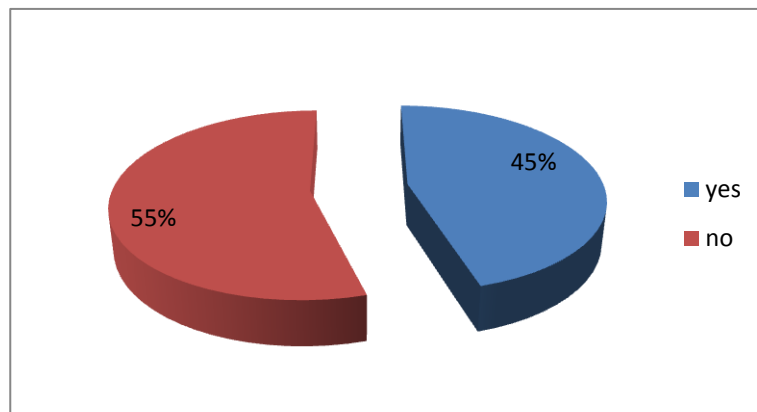
Some participants can see now in hindsight that the industrial restructuring was necessary because many of the organizations were loss-making. “What is also true that industry in the UK needed major restructuring. Thatcher did nothing for the education system in Scotland (which has always been superior to the English system and much more widely accessible than the English system).”⁷⁴ But mostly the respondents blame Thatcherism for creating huge unemployment but not being able to solve the situation that they created but led people to blindly figure out how to reemploy themselves. “Thatcherism resulted in the disappearance of most Scottish industry. Those unemployed were forced to find other things to do.”⁷⁵

However, most participants blamed Thatcherism for creating high levels of unemployment and criticized her for not being able to solve the situation that her politics created. Instead, people were left alone to find work for themselves.

⁷³ Participant 15, e-mail message, April 3rd, 2013.

⁷⁴ Participant 9, e-mail message, March 22nd, 2013.

⁷⁵ Participant 6, e-mail message, March 15th, 2013.

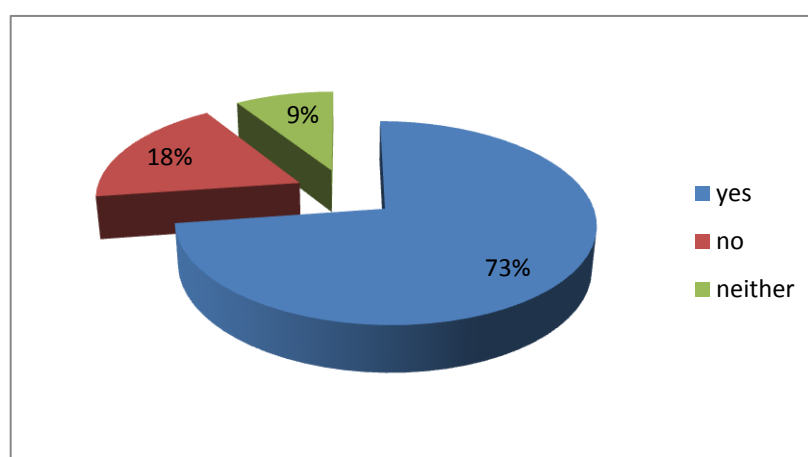


Graph 6. New possibilities due to Thatcherism

7. *Do you feel that Scotland became a guinea pig in the case of poll tax being introduced a year earlier in Scotland?*

73 percent of the participants agreed with the idea that Scotland became a guinea pig when the Poll Tax was introduced. It deepened the feeling that Scots were inferior to the rest of UK. “This is in evidence as the poll tax was implemented in Scotland yet not in England despite very strong opposition from the Scottish people. When it was introduced in England and the English protested against it, it was subsequently abolished.”⁷⁶ The Scots simply felt powerless.

The respondents who answered neither or no argued that the tax was supposed to be applied in the whole UK, just that it was applied in Scotland earlier because of the revaluation which pushed the rates higher. This became unbearable for the Scots.

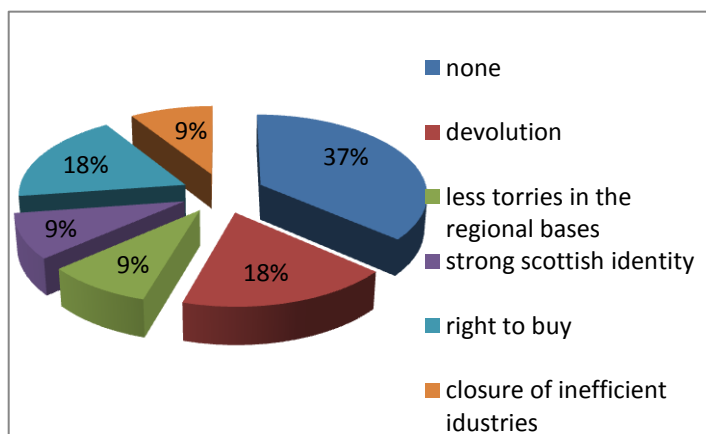


Graph 7. Did Scotland become a guinea pig to Thatcherite politics?

⁷⁶ Participant 25, e-mail message, March 12th, 2013.

8. *What benefits did Thatcherism bring to Scotland?*

The majority (37%) of participants could not think of any benefits that Thatcherism brought to Scotland. Some of the most frequent answers were that thanks to Thatcher, the process of devolution accelerated. This resulted in the birth of the Scottish Parliament and the idea for a referendum for independence of Scotland to take place. Participants also gave Thatcherism credit for people owning their houses, thanks to the policy of the ‘The Right to Buy’. Some participants also thought that Thatcherism was positive, because it drove Conservatives out of Scotland on the regional bases. Some also answered that it strengthened the Scottish identity among the people. It drove them to think that they were very different from the English and they had a common enemy; Mrs. Thatcher. Few participants think that the closure of inefficient industries was needed and that it was a positive thing to do.



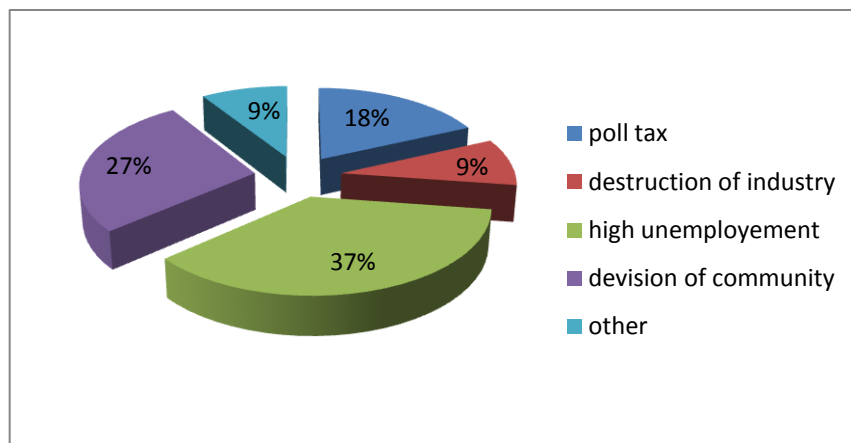
Graph 8. The benefits of Thatcherism in Scotland

9. *What was the worse aspect of Thatcherism in Scotland?*

The majority of the contestants indicated high unemployment as the worst aspect of Thatcherism. They explained high unemployment was the result of all of Thatcher's policies, and so this phenomenon summarizes most of the problems that Scotland had during Thatcherism. Scots cannot forget the fact that Thatcherism caused vast unemployment without being able to provide alternatives for the workers.

People claimed that the second worst aspect was the division of community. People feel that Thatcherism brought individualism but Scots were always proud of being a community. “Thatcherism perused policies which often promoted individual selfishness which was alien to Scottish community values.”⁷⁷ Once Thatcher said, that she did not believe in the community. Therefore, this statement together with many others made Scots feel very different from English. Other participants indicated that Poll tax was the worst policy of Margaret Thatcher. They did not feel that it was a good solution for replacing the rates. The Poll Tax was too high and many people simply could not afford to pay for it.

The rest of the participants agreed that as industry was destroyed in Scotland, a part of Scottish tradition was also destroyed. The other answers were that Thatcherism isolated many regions from the wealth of the south of England, that Scotland was treated as second-rate nation and that Thatcherism caused the feeling of greater state dependency.



Graph 9. The worst aspects of Thatcherism in Scotland

10. Do you feel the impact of Thatcherism still present in Scotland?

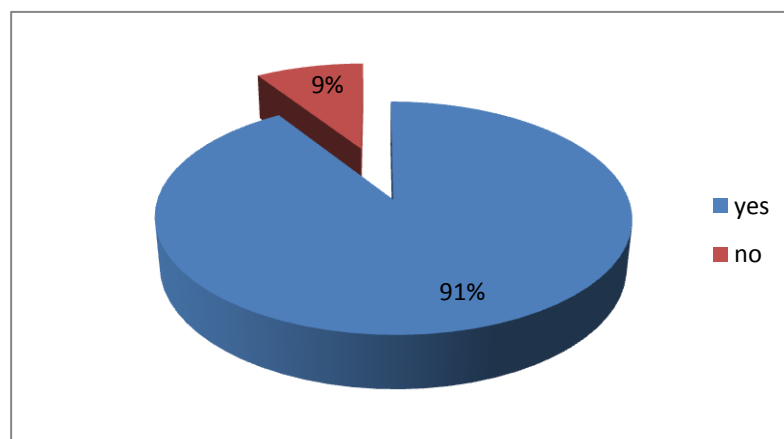
Thatcherism certainly influenced Scotland. Her policies not only affected the lives of people who lived during the 10 years she was in office but also the lives of another generation. 91% of the participants answered that the impact of Thatcherism is still present

⁷⁷ Participant 18, e-mail message, March 25th, 2013.

in Scotland. One of the participants further explains the impact that Thatcherism made on today's Scotland.

Certainly. The nature of the modern Scottish economy, its lack of industry, its reliance on banking, structural unemployment would be the main, enduring impact. But also the political consequences: the death of the Tory party in Scotland, devolution, a cementing of a centre-left discourse in Scottish politics and of a broad consensus around relative equality and 'fairness' in Scottish society. (I'd like to mention that I know this last point is a little vague but let me explain. I come from a nice, Edinburgh middle-class family. My parents are Irish and English but lived in Scotland during Thatcherism. My experience of the Scottish middle class has always been that is much more cemented on the left, feels much more obligated to contribute to the rest of society, and much more understanding of the need for measures to tackle inequality, provide benefits and for them to pay their taxes than my experience of their English counterparts.)⁷⁸

This answer summarises how deeply Thatcherism challenged Scots. It tried to change the Scottish nature and Scottish way of life. As stated, it left Scotland with almost no Conservative representatives and with a desire to be independent resulting in the referendum for devolution.



Graph 10. The impact of Thatcherism of today's Scotland

⁷⁸ Participant 11, e-mail message, April 3rd, 2013.

11. Did Thatcherism play a big role in the process of devolution?

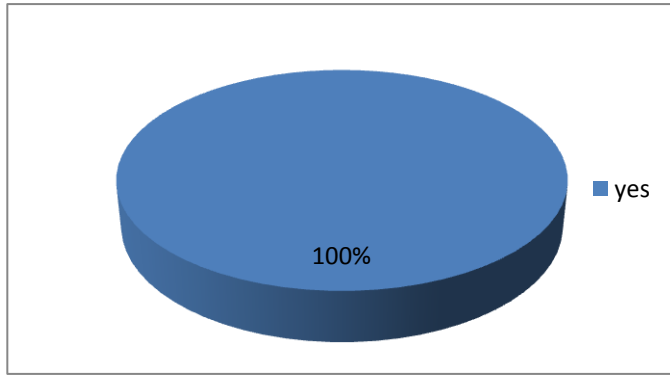
One hundred percent of participants answered that Thatcherism did contribute to the process of devolution. It is a widely discussed topic with the upcoming referendum that will be held on September 18th 2014.

However, most of the participants emphasized that although it contributed to the devolution, the feeling of necessity for devolution had been in Scotland for much longer time. “Yes it has a bit. But Scotland has been a ‘nation’ from the 9th century and managed to resist the English until 1707.”⁷⁹ Many Scots still think of Scotland as a very different nation in comparison to the rest of the UK. Thatcher gave them a reason why they should gain independence from the UK. “It may have given some leverage for devolution and later for the campaign for independence, particularly because she was completely insensitive to the extremely difficult economic situation in Scotland.”⁸⁰ Thatcher simply could not understand the specific needs of Scottish nation.

Some participants saw a clear connection between Thatcherism and the devolution movement. “Absolutely, the creation of the Scottish parliament I think was a direct consequence of the poll tax so we could have more control over taxation and public service provision. The upcoming independence debate always finds a way to mention Thatcherism as a reason to be cautious of Westminster Tory rule.” Scots have clearly learned from the extremely difficult period and therefore decided to act as soon as possible to prevent the same mistakes from being repeated.

⁷⁹ Participant 29, e-mail message, March 22nd, 2013.

⁸⁰ Participant 37, e-mail message, , e-mail message, March 23rd, 2013.



Graph 11. Did Thatcherism Play a big role in the process of devolution?

5 Conclusion

The main aim of my thesis was to determine the relationship of Scots toward Thatcher and to find how Thatcherism affected Scotland. I started by analysing Thatcher's life in order to learn about her background and to discover where she gained her political views. I found out that her father played a role of mentor in her life and she learnt her attitude towards life from him. Moreover, the fact that he was a shop owner based her view on the state economy which she was sometimes laughed at for.

When Thatcher became Prime Minister, she did not waste her time and started making changes. She did not like Keynesianism and inclined towards Monetarism. In order to rescue the UK from recession, she decided for vast budget cuts. Instantly, she became unpopular for the obvious reasons. Thanks to winning the Falkland war the whole UK united and her government was re-elected. While England was slowly getting out of recession, Scotland's situation did not improve; with closing the inefficient industries, miner's strike, and structural unemployment, Thatcher became hated in Scotland. Although she tried to improve her position in Scotland, she failed. The privatization in Scotland was not very successful because industries were loss making which meant hard to sell. Thatcher hoped that the right to buy policy could improve her reputation in Scotland but even though some Scots used this right, the policy was not popular. Scots did not need to own the places they lived in, they focused on the possibility of living in a house some day. People were also worried that the real estate sales will drop.

Scots felt helpless because even though they did not vote for Conservatives, they were still in power. They applied policies that simply did not agree with the Scotties nature and traditions. The educational system was failing, there was not enough money to support it, and the health system was not improving either but the last straw for Scots was the Poll Tax. Although the rates were not ideal solution and needed to be exchanged for a better policy the Poll Tax was unacceptable. It seemed particularly hurtful because it was introduced in Scotland one year before it was introduced in England. Scots felt like guinea pigs. They simply could not do anything against the Poll Tax. Many people could not afford to pay for it because it was set too high. However, a day before it was applied in England, violent riots took place London. This policy cost Thatcher her post of prime Minister. As the result her colleagues suggested that she should resign on her post of Conservative leader and that is what she did. She was replaced by John Major whom she publicly supported.

The aim of the practical part was to find out the attitude of Scots towards Thatcherism. The results of the analysis of questionnaires were not so surprising. Scots have quite negative point of view on Thatcherism and Thatcher herself up to now. On the question what were the benefits of Thatcherism many respondents answered, none. As Scots never experienced the so called popular Thatcherism and witnessed mainly the negative side of Thatcherite politics, this answer should not surprise me. However, I expected that 'the right to buy' policy and privatization would win at least a bit of Scot's affection. I was also surprised that only few participants saw closing of the inefficient industries as positive. From this I can assume that the industry was a much bigger part of Scottish tradition than I have anticipated. Even though 23 years passed since Thatcher left her position of Prime Minister Scots still see closing of the industries as if their industrial tradition was stolen from them.

I was also interested how much is the upcoming Scottish independence referendum encouraged by Thatcherism. I learnt from the participants that Scots definitely assured themselves during Thatcherism that they were very different from the English. Primarily they discovered that their values were different. For Scots community was very important. Once Thatcher said that she did not believe in community and this same person was deciding about the future of a nation she did not understand. She was slowly destroying what Scots believed in and tried to bring her philosophy and politics to Scotland without asking for permission.

When Thatcher was no longer in power Scots decided to act. In order to never let this situation happen again they established their own Scottish Parliament. The upcoming referendum in 2004 could be the last step towards the Scottish independence.

6 Resumé

Cílem mé bakalářské práce bylo zjistit, jaký mají Skoti vztah k Thatcherismu, Margaret Thatcherové k samotné a jak moc Thatcherismus Skotsko ovlivnil. Nejprve jsem se seznámila s jejím životem, abych zjistila, jak moc ji ovlivnila rodina a studium. Zjistila jsem, že její otec se jí stal vzorem a vnuknul jí její životní postoje a principy podle kterých se v životě řídila. To, že byl její otec majitel obchodu, ovlivnilo Margaretin pohled na ekonomiku. Poznatky, které se v dětství v obchodě naučila, potom často aplikovala na státní ekonomiku, za což často sklízela posměch.

Když se Thatcherová stala premiérkou, neztrácela čas a začala s reformami. Nejzásadnější reformou byla změna ekonomické teorie a to z keynesiánství na monetarismus. Dále, aby dostala zemi z recese, musela Království podrobit velkému množství ekonomických škrťů. Není divu, že se bezprostředně po zvolení stala neoblíbenou ministryní a vysloužila si přezdívku „Iron Lady“. Díky tomu, že se Thatcherové podařilo vyhrát válku o Falklandy, byla podruhé zvolena premiérkou. Výhra ve válce o Falklandy jí pomohla sjednotit občany Spojeného Království. To však netrvalo dlouho a kvůli stávce horníků, uzavírání nevýdělečných továren a velké strukturální nezaměstnanosti začali Skoti Thatcherovou brzy nenávidět. Přestože se snažila svoji reputaci ve Skotsku zachránit, nebylo jí to nic platné. Snaha o privatizaci velkých státních podniků nebyla ve Skotsku příliš úspěšná. Podniky byly nevýdělečné, a proto byl jejich prodej obtížný. Právem na koupi pronajímaných bytů se Thatcherová Skotům také moc nezavděčila. I když mnozí toto právo využili, nepatřilo ve Skotsku mezi příliš oblíbené, protože se domnívali, že tím poklesne poptávka na trhu s nemovitostmi.

Skoti se cítili bezmocně, přestože Thatcherovou a její vládu nevolili, stále byla u moci a prosazovala ve Skotsku svou politiku, která se neshodovala se Skotskou ideologií. Školy ve Skotsku neměly peníze na knihy a zdravotní systém byl v hrozném stavu, ale poslední kapkou pro Skoty byla daň na hlavu (Poll Tax), která byla zkrátka nepřijatelná. Nejhorší pro Skoty bylo, že se cítili, jako pokusné krysy, protože daň byla ve Skotsku uvalena o rok dřív než ve zbytku Království. Proti této dani ale byli bezmocní a ve Skotsku bylo zhruba patnáct procent obyvatel, kteří si daň nemohli dovolit zaplatit. Den před uvalením daně na zbytek Království se v Londýně konala velká stávka, ve které nechybělo násilí. O tři roky později byla daň zrušena. Tato daň stála Thatcherovou post ministryně. Kolegy z vlastní strany jí bylo naznačeno, že by měla odstoupit. Přesto, že první kolo voleb

o post lídra konservativů vyhrála, od druhé kola odstoupila a podpořila svého nástupce Johna Majora. Thatcherová si jistě nepředstavovala, že svou kariéru ukončí tímto způsobem.

Zvláštní byl také vztah Skotů k samotné Thatcherové. Říká se, že když si pustili rádio a slyšeli na něm její hlas, ihned ho vypnuli. Tak moc jim byl její hlas nepříjemný. Představovala pro ně symbol nadřazené Angličanky. Nejen že jim chtěla vládnout žena, ale byla panovačná a byla z Anglie. Tyto tři faktory dohromady z ní udělaly nenáviděný terč. Když jednou v rámci zlepšování vztahu se Skoty přišla na fotbalový zápas, Skoti ji ze stadiónu vypískali. Nedávná smrt Margaret Thatcherové vyvolala vlnu diskusí. Zaměřila jsem se na reakce Skotů na její smrt a ty byly velmi smíšené. Zatímco někteří truchlili nad její smrtí, jiní naopak oslavovali. Třetí skupina necítila nad její smrtí ani radost ani smutek, ale styděli se za své spoluobčany, kteří její smrt oslavovali.

V praktické části jsem si chtěla ověřit, jestli se získané informace z teoretické části shodují s názory Skotů. Odpovědi na dotazníky mě nepřekvapily. I přes to, že uplynulo dvacet tři let od vlády Margaret Thatcherové, Skoti k ní stále chovají převážně negativní emoce. Na otázku jaká byla pozitiva Thatcherismu, většina Skotů odpověděla, že žádná. Protože Skoti nikdy nezažili tzv. populární Thatcherismus a spíše se stali svědky negativních důsledků této politiky, jejich odpověď by mě neměla překvapit. Přesto jsem ale doufala, že právo na odkup bytů a privatizace alespoň trochu Skoty obměkčila. Zajímavé také bylo, že pouze malé procento Skotů uvedlo, že zavření nevýdělečných továren bylo pozitivní. I když byl tento krok poněkud vyhrocený a uspěchaný, situace by v delším rozmezí času dopadla stejně. Z tohoto usuzuji, že jsem Skotskou průmyslovou tradici podcenila a že byla mnohem hlubší, než jsem se domnívala. Skoti dodnes celou událost vidí tak, že jim byl průmysl Thatcherismem ukraden.

Dále mě zajímalo, jak moc Thatcherismus ovlivnil touhu Skotů po nezávislosti. Jejich touha po nezávislosti samozřejmě existovala i před Thatcherismem, ale dozvěděla jsem se, že se tato touha během vlády Thatcherové ještě umocnila. Z dotazníku jsem zjistila, že Skoti díky tomuto období zjistili, že jsou od Angličanů opravdu velmi odlišní. Skoti si velmi cení komunity a pospolitosti, zatímco Thatcherová jednou prohlásila, že komunita neexistuje a tato žena, která absolutně nerozuměla skotským prioritám a hodnotám, teď rozhodovala o skotské budoucnosti. Rozhodla se do jejich země přinést své názory a hodnoty a bez ptaní nebo povolení je ve Skotsku praktikovat. Poté, co skončila ve

své funkci, vzali Skoti iniciativu do vlastních rukou a prosadili si na svém území vlastní parlament. V roce 2014 se bude ve Skotsku konat referendum o jejich nezávislost. To by se mohlo stát posledním krokem, který podniknou pro svou svobodu.

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8 Anotace

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá Margaret Thatcherovou a její politikou, takzvaným Thatcherismem. Tato práce se soustředí na dopad Thatcherismu ve Spojeném Království, ale především ve Skotsku, nesoustředí se na zahraniční politiku.

Práce se skládá ze dvou částí, z části teoretické a z části praktické. První část je rozdělena do několika podkapitol. Zabývá se životopisem Margarety Thatcherové, její politikou a důsledky, které měla její politika na Velkou Británii, především na Skotsko. Snažím se poukázat na to, že situace v Anglii a ve Skotsku byly rozdílné, a proto byly rozdílné i názory občanů Spojeného Království na Thatcherismus.

Praktická část rozebírá výsledky dotazníků, které zodpověděli skotští občané. Pomocí dotazníků se snažím zjistit, jestli se mé nabyté teoretické poznatky shodují s názory Skotů a jak moc jejich národ Thatcherismus ovlivnil.

9 Abstract

This thesis analyses Margaret Thatcher and her politics; so called Thatcherism. This thesis is divided into two parts; a practical and a theoretical part. The first part is further divided into several subchapters. It deals with the biography of Margaret Thatcher and, her politics and its consequences of Thatcherism in the UK, mainly on Scotland. I am trying to show that the circumstances in England and in Scotland were different and that is also why their opinions on Thatcherism differ so much.

The practical part analyses the questionnaires filled out by Scots about the impact of Thatcherism in Scotland. I am trying to compare my gained knowledge from the theoretical part to the results I received from the questionnaires.

9.1.1 The list of Graphs:

Graph 1. Democratic deficit in Scotland during Thatcherism

Graph 2. Was Scotland discriminated against

Graph 3. Was Scotland an equal to England?

Graph 4. Were Scots encouraged to become more sovereign and independent?

Graph 5. Do you agree that due to Thatcherism many people in Scotland own their property?

Graph 6. New possibilities due to Thatcherism

Graph 7. Did Scotland become a guinea pig to Thatcherite politics?

Graph 8. The benefits of Thatcherism in Scotland

Graph 9. The worst aspects of Thatcherism in Scotland

Graph 10. The impact of Thatcherism of today's Scotland

Graph 11. Did Thatcherism Play a big role in the process of devolution?

9.1.2 *The list of abbreviations*

Oxford University Conservative Association OUCA

Scottish National Party SNP

Scottish Development Agency SDA

National Coal Board NCB

National Miners Union NMU