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Independence Movements in Scotland: Brief History of Nationalism in Scotland until Brexit

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Abstract

The parliaments of England and Scotland passed the Acts of Union in 1707, which led to the creation of the United Kingdom of Great Britain. Since the mid-19th century, there have been nationalist movements in Scotland, which have varied in terms of numbers and dimensions. The reasons behind these are also diverse, and deeply influenced by the socioeconomic and political background of the United Kingdom and its relationship with Scotland and Europe.

A referendum on the independence of Scotland from the United Kingdom was held on 18th September 2014 under the question "should Scotland be an independent country?", the result of which was negative (55.30%–44.70%). The Scottish Independence Referendum Act had been passed by the Scottish Parliament in November 2013, with the previous agreement of the Government of the United Kingdom. Nevertheless, the Scottish independence movements have been growing during the last few decades, long before the referendum. In addition, the debate of the independence of Scotland has been reopened after Brexit.

Therefore, the aim of this research is to define the possible causes of the Scottish independence movements of this century, considering its political history since the 17th century. I will focus on the last three decades of the 20th century, as this is when this movement began to gain popularity again. Besides, in order to understand the nature of Scottish independentism I will also analyse its national identity and I will discuss the evolutionary line from nationalism to independentism.

Keywords: Scotland, Independence, nationalism, United Kingdom, politics, Brexit.

0. Introduction

In 2014, Scotland carried out a referendum on its independence. At a time when Catalan nationalist movements were at their peak, this event was followed closely in Catalonia. Certainly, the most recurrent question asked in this country was 'why?'. The will to understand how these movements reached this point is what led me to choose this topic for my BA dissertation.

In this regard, the purpose of this research paper is to provide with an explanation, however complex it may be, of how Scotland has developed these nationalist tendencies—and how they have progressed until present times. Within this framework, I will focus on the 20th century onwards, for I believe it is the context which justifies the evolution of Scottish nationalism until the referendum. Nonetheless, I will also emphasise on Scottish national identity and how it has been built along the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, hand in hand with the Home Rule and Devolution movements. These two concepts are particularly relevant, as they lay the foundations for posterior independence movements in the country. In this regard, they include the formation of associations, the Scottish Nationalist Party (SNP) and the foundation of the Parliament, which are still pillars of nationalism nowadays.

In order to understand Scottish nationalism, it is equally important to inquire into the relationship of Scotland and England. For this reason, I will also include in this research the main conflicts between one another, from the Jacobite risings to the Thatcherism to the West Lothian Question. On the other hand, it is also significant to examine the social, economic, and political problems within Scotland.

Last in order, I will also discuss Brexit and the impact it has had on Scotland, given the fact that most Scottish citizens voted against it. This insight may allow scholars to foresight how independentism will progress in the years to come.

1. Scottish identity

1.1. Early history: rebellions in Scotland and relationship with England

1.1.1. The Union of Crowns

In 1603, a composite monarchy between the Kingdom of England and the Kingdom of Scotland was founded under the kinship of James IV of Scotland (1567–1625) and I of England (1602–1625). This monarch succeeded Elizabeth I of England, which meant the end of the English Tudor dynasty—and the Stuart rise to power. He was named 'King of Great Britain, France and Ireland', but not of Scotland.

For Scots, at the time, the term 'Britain' was associated to Englishness. They were afraid that after this union, Scotland may be swallowed by its bigger counterpart. Therefore, what was more important for them was that this union would be carried out considering both parties as equals. The English had their doubts as well; for them, an English monarch had to apply its sovereignty exclusively from the English parliament. They were reluctant as to sharing the same ruler with other three parliaments. In sum, both countries feared domination from the other, and sought different kinds of Union: to the English, it had to be an incorporating union[1] under their terms; instead, for the Scots, it had to be a federal-like union.[2]

This is why king James initiated negotiations with both countries, which generated a considerable debate across both territories. At last, a consensus was reached: despite sharing the same ruler, both states maintained separate parliaments and privy councils.[3] This would turn out to be indispensable for Scotland, as the figure of the sovereign would prove to be frequently absent. In fact, there would be tensions for years to come.

[1] A union in which both states are dissolved in order to form the new state.
[2] A union in which both states have possession of their own sovereignty.
[3] Privy Councils were advisors and representatives of the ruler, and therefore had certain rights when it came to executive power.

One of the most complicated matters was religion. King James was known for wanting a 'perfect union', and one of this kind could not be achieved with different concepts of religion across the territories. He pressured Scottish Presbyterians,[4] as he pretended to establish Anglican practices there. In fact, between 1618 and 1621 the monarch passed the Five Articles of Perth.[5] This reform was highly opposed by the Scottish citizens, for whom religion was a very relevant part of their identity.

During the next few decades, Scottish and English population would remain detached from each other; it would not be until many decades later that citizens would intertwine through relations such as intermarriages. For the time being, the dream of the monarch of having a perfect unified country was far from becoming true and, in fact, tensions would rise after his death in 1625.

1.1.2. 'Building' a Union: Scottish Rebellion

In 1625, after the death of James IV and I, Charles I succeeded his father. This took place in a climate of tension, in which the Scots thought their monarch was too occupied with England and did not look out enough for Scotland. The border, despite having been scarcely pacified and rebranded as the 'Middle Shires', shortly after became as unstable as it had been before. Besides, the religious policies adopted by king James raised unrest in the Kirk.

King Charles would prove sooner than later that his ruling intentions were completely different from those of his father. Instead of uniting his kingdoms, he intended to assert his dominance in all of them. State interventionism grew in Scotland, especially

[4] Presbyterianism is a form of Protestant Church which is handled by the minister in association with a group of elders of equal rank. Conceptually, its approach is similar to Calvinism.
[5] The first article of this Act, for instance, referred to the practice of kneeling during communion, which was a very Anglican practice despised by the Presbyterians—amongst other practices.

in matters of religion: he imposed the redaction of a new prayer book between 1634 and 1636, whilst ignoring the advertisements from Scottish bishops. The purpose was to impose liturgical reform, and this was carried out, naturally, without taking consent of any authority of the Kirk.

Certainly, Scots reacted against these reforms and began rioting. Lairds, nobles and burgesses signed a National Covenant in 1638, which acquired great support. Even if the Scottish population at that time did not share a common strong identity, they assembled to fight for this cause. This would be the starting point to a series of civil wars that would spread throughout the kingdoms ruled by king Charles during the following few years. Of course, the revolts would be suppressed by military forces, though in 1643, "the English negotiators for a Scottish alliance signed the Solemn League and Covenant" (Elliott 56).

However, the execution of Charles would take place in January 1649, only six years later; governing functions would be carried out by the Commonwealth. This was seen as an act of treachery by the Scots, to whom, despite how unpleasant the monarch was, he was still from the Scottish royal line. They refused to abandon the union or the monarchy and proclaimed his son, Charles II, heir. In the end, Union was re-established, and Scotland was to be seen as an equal counterpart in it.

In spite of this, Scottish and English citizens were still mistrustful and quite resentful of one another, given the recentness of the civil conflict. Besides, the fact of forcing these nations to become united caused the opposite effect. As the English had resulted victorious from the conflict, they often presumed of pride, which often transformed into arrogance.

These tensions were intensified by two other conflicts. On the one hand, the Navigation Acts that had been passed in 1651 and 1660 forbade Scotland (and Ireland)

from participating in any trade concerning English colonies in North America and the West Indies. This Act angered Scots, as they had been promised to be treated with equality. On the other hand, the English wars against the Dutch, which led to an increase on taxes. Besides, the Dutch were one of the major trading partners of Scotland and, while the wars were still active, the commercial activity of the country diminished greatly—mostly because of the effect of the Navigation Acts.

In those tumultuous times, the king was deceased, which led to a dynastic issue. At the beginning, the brother of the king, James II, seemed like a good pretender for the Scots: he took residence in Scotland and won popularity there whilst living among the citizens. However, he had a considerable flaw: he was Roman Catholic, which brought him both problems both in England and Scotland. Public opinion soon changed, and he became quickly disliked. To this must be added the bid for the throne made by William of Orange, who proclaimed in the Declaration of Scotland to "free that kingdom from all hazard of Popery and Arbitrary Power and settle a parliament to redress grievances" (Elliott 71). In the end, James exiled to France and William II, along with his wife Mary (the daughter of James), took the throne in 1688, after riots against James throughout the country—but, especially, in Scotland.

From now on, those who supported the Catholic Stuarts would be known as Jacobites. They were mostly present in the Highlands, but also the north-east Lowlands. While William of Orange tried to subdue the insurgents of the region, the massacre of Glencoe in 1692 along with other military campaigns did nothing but increase the hatred towards the new monarch. However, Scottish society remained deeply fragmented between diverse religious and political ideologies. This prevented Scotland from having a national identifying image, and it was henceforth mostly swallowed by England.

Nonetheless, Scotland also gained some apparent advantages with this new monarch. What the citizens were mostly worried about was the economy, as it was clearly damaged after the Nine Years War (1688–1697). Famine, epidemics and their consequent loss of population were really serious, and caused an under-developed economy in relation to England. Envisioning a brighter future, Scotland set its expectations on the Company of Scotland,[6] which sailed for Darien, Panama. The idea was to establish a Colony named New Caledonia. However, the expeditions between 1698 and 1700 turned out to be a complete disaster: financial losses were enormous and put the investors in debt. More than 80% of the participants passed away, and living conditions there were devastating. The new monarch had not provided them with any help at all.

In 1701, the English Parliament passed the Act of Settlement, which determined that after the death of Anne, the sister of Mary and next in line, England would have a Hanoverian successor. However, this Act made no reference to the Scottish throne. What this showed was that England definitely considered them subordinates, not an equal counterpart—and this certainly irritated the Scots. Discussions in Parliament indicated that Scotland posed the question of leaving the Union. However, England responded with the Alien Act of 1705, which implied that Scots would be considered 'aliens' in England unless negotiations succeeded before Christmas that year. Negotiations, to a large extent motivated by the deplorable economic and living conditions of Scotland at those times, resulted in the Acts of Union signed between 1706 and 1707.

[6] The company had originally been Anglo-Scottish, which was intended to focus on trading with Africa and the Indies.

1.2. Acts of Union and their consequences

The Acts of Union were two Acts of Parliament passed by the Parliament of England and the Parliament of Scotland, respectively: the Union with Scotland Act 1706 and the Union with England Act 1707. The terms that these acts included had been discussed in 1706 and formed part of the Treaty of Union signed that same year by the Kingdom of England and the Kingdom of Scotland. Essentially, these Acts implied the union of both territories under the name of 'United Kingdom'. This way, England and Scotland would share not only a queen, but a single parliament and flag as well. For the first time ever (except during the Cromwellian Protectorate), Scotland had lost its legislative body—and would not recover it until almost three centuries later. However, it got to keep the Kirk, while its future was unstable and unpredictable.

While both kingdoms already had the same monarch since 1603, the Acts meant a series of significant reforms for both territories. Twenty-five Acts were passed, in which the nature of the new state was established. In this regard, both England and Scotland were to be treated as equals and have the same privileges and liabilities. Scottish representation at Westminster would be forty-five MPs in the House of Commons, and sixteen representatives in the House of Lords. However, this number would change in the future, as many amendments were passed to modify the Acts.

Article 2 put an end to the dynastic issue, as it stated that the succession of the monarchy was to pass on to the Hanoverians. In fact, all Catholics and people who married Catholics would be excluded from the royal line. Nevertheless, the Old Pretender from the Stuart royal line would make a bid for the throne in 1708 and once again in 1715, alongside clansmen uprisings. What this proves is that this Act was ineffective when it came to the general feeling. In fact, the passing of the Acts of Union did nothing but increase the fear of anglicization that had been present in the Scottish population since

the Union of Crowns—both in terms of religion and legislation, as the British parliament was able to contravene the Scottish laws if necessary.

Besides, the Acts were signed by the upper classes, who sought economic stability after the Darien scheme. These financial benefits were not to affect Scotland soon, though, as commerce between Scotland and Europe was constantly disrupted because of conflicts with France—and Scottish trading companies, still affected by the Darien disaster, were not affluent enough to establish new routes overseas. Besides, Scots could not participate in any English Asian trades unless they were employed by an English company. Therefore, common people were unable to detect any positive point on this Union. To them, Scotland had lost many privileges that it possessed whilst being an independent country, and two pillars of the nation were quavering: religion and legislation.

1.3. Jacobite risings

1.3.1. Jacobite rising of 1715

In this context of social unrest, Jacobite sentiment rose in the north-east of Scotland and the Highlands—though it would extend across Scottish territories. Clansmen rebelled under the orders of the Earl of Mar but were defeated in 1715. This insurrection did not achieve any glorious victories, and it did not therefore get a high rank in popular memory.

Nonetheless, in the aftermath, rebels were treated with some clemency. While some participants were executed, many prisoners escaped or were released without having carried out a trial before (Elliott 103). This defeat made James Edward Stuart, the Old Pretender, lose its reputation amongst the citizens. Besides, the measures implemented by Walpole, such as the Malt tax, aroused a situation of conflict that did not

facilitate another insurrection. It would not be until Walpole fell from power in 1742 that the Jacobites would make another attempt.

1.3.2. Jacobite rising of 1745

Even after what had happened in 1715, Jacobitism was still a strong tendency in the Highlands. This is why Walpole strengthened the military presence in the area and aided financially its school system. However, these measures were not enough to tackle the situation in the Highlands. The Duke of Argyll had taken land from clanship, as when any property was found vacant, he sold it instead of giving it to another member of the clan. While after his death his brother and successor tried to mend what he had done, it was too late. Revolution was already seething amongst the highlanders.

In July 1745 Charles Edward Stuart, known as 'Bonnie Prince Charlie' or 'the Young Pretender', travelled to Inverness to face the Hanoverians and seize the throne. By December, with the support of a limited Jacobite army, he reached the English Midlands—mostly, unopposed. However, at that point, lacking English and French support to continue advancing, he lost confidence and decided to retreat to Scotland. This was the culminating point of the venture, as his followers found themselves outnumbered by the Hanoverian forces, who were also better equipped and in a better shape. At Culloden in 1746 the Jacobite army would be dismantled. Charles went into hiding and finally returned to France a few months later. Jacobitism did not disappear, but it surely faded.

This time, the government found no compassion and implemented repression without any further consideration: "a raft of legislation was introduced in 1747, most notably the Act of Proscription that banned the teaching of Gaelic, the wearing of tartan, the holding of ceremonial Highland gatherings and even the playing of bagpipes in

Scotland." (Gold & Gold 12). Its intention was to pacify once and for all the Highlands—and, to some extent, 'tame' it, as it was considered a wild and ungovernable region. Their purpose was not only to erase their culture, but also to end up with clanship. This repression was controversial as well, in the sense that it included the Heritable Jurisdictions Act of 1747, which abolished a great part of the feudal jurisdictions from the country. This Act contradicted the Act of Union, which granted their continuation.

While the repression was fulminant, the Scottish Enlightenment would also be detrimental; as intellectuals sought to be advanced and civilized, Gaelic, which represented the barbarous Highlands, had to be eradicated. Thus, slowly, all national symbols representative for, at least, a part of Scotland, would fade over time.

Romanticism would recover, in a time of early central nationalism, narratives from the Jacobite Risings, what is known as 'romantic Jacobitism'. During the early 19th century, there would be many historical-fiction novels written about these rebellions (Gold & Gold 16). While the Stuart Pretender had been long deceased, Romantics sought to evoke the nostalgic feelings the stories produced on them. In this regard, they contravened what the participants of the Enlightenment had defended; to them, Gaels were survivors of the industrial and modern life. This way, even Stuarts were seen as heroic figures, as they were related to this type of life.

2. The birth of devolution: Home Rule

2.1. Home Rule ambitions

The keyword for describing the political feelings in the 19th century would be 'grievance'. Even though the Scottish had been subdued after the uprisings, resentment began to spread throughout the population: they were unsatisfied regarding how the government was handling their governance. From their view, Westminster was either intervening too

much and therefore abusing centralization, or hardly getting involved when the Scots needed aid—such as with the Highland Potato Famine.[7]

In 1853 the National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights was founded, whose aim was not to dissolve the Union but to seek improvements for Scotland, regarding its conditions at that time. The Association considered that the Union promised conditions they had not yet received. They demanded more Scottish MPs at Westminster and a separate Scottish administration, amongst other amendments.

These requests established the grounds for what became known as the Home Rule movement. Its main representatives were far from fighting for independence, as their claims were only focused on devolution of powers. They wanted Scotland to be able to govern itself through a federal Parliament, and therefore by its own citizens—while Westminster would nevertheless keep its sovereignty. This way, the Union would not be threatened, and the Scottish citizens would manage local affairs better.

Notwithstanding, the Association did not get support from the Liberal Party and was brought to an end as early as only three years later. However, measures such as the Scottish Education Act (1872)[8] caused an increase in the indignation of the population. Besides, the Scots received inspiration from their counterparts; the Home Rule movement was growing in Ireland and it shortly became their main nationalist tendency.

During the next few years, up until the Great War, a series of acts were passed. For instance, in 1884 and 1885, with the Representation of the People Act and the Redistribution of Seats Act, Scottish seats in Westminster were increased to seventy-two. In addition, in 1885 the Scottish Office and the post of Secretary for Scotland were

[7] The Highland Potato Famine was the failure of the potato crop in the 1840s caused by potato blight, which led to a later economic collapse. Great part of the population suffered from starvation and others emigrated.

[8] This act meant an implicit menace to the Scottish-Gaelic language, as pupils who spoke the language were punished. It did not protect parish Scottish schools either, which had a long tradition. For these reasons, it was subjected to strong critics from nationalists.

created. However, this position was not acknowledged as a member of the cabinet of the United Kingdom until the post was re-established as the Secretary of State for Scotland in 1926.

In 1886 the Liberal Party split. This would be one of the causes for the emergence of the Scottish Home Rule Association, the main purpose of which was to restore a Scottish parliament in Edinburgh. In practice, the association was very moderate, and it led to no real change in the organisation of the country. In 1900 a youth movement within the Liberal Party was created, the Young Scots Society, which asked for a complete devolution of powers (Elliott 190). Be that as it may, Scotland would not further Home Rule and it would remain a theoretical concept until much after the outbreak of the Great War.

2.2. The Great War

The breakout of the Great War caused a strong reaction through all Europe—including Scotland. The UK was a leading Allied Power after all, and the Scots fought alongside the British Army. It seems controversial that Scotland embraced the participation in the war with pride. In spite of its complex relationship with England, it is estimated that approximately 190,000 men joined the army—before conscription was introduced a few months later. As for the casualties, historians vary on the numbers. Nevertheless, the common agreement is that their losses were also disproportionally higher in relation to the size of the nation.

Scottish identity was back then shaped by what is known as "unionist-nationalism" (Krancer 52), that is, while keeping a Scottish identity and taking pride in it, they respected the Union as well. This was key for the massive volunteer enlisting in the British army, which was significantly higher than in England or Wales. Aside from

this mentality, the Scots of the pre-war wanted to become part of the martial history of Scotland, which had long been mythicized with the Wars of Independence and figures like Robert the Bruce. The Scottish Regiments that participated in the Great War would later in fact become part of the collective memory.

Scotland had been a preeminent nation in terms of industrial steel and iron production, as it contained cities such as Glasgow including regions like the Clydeside—which was well-known for its heavy engineering and shipbuilding. However, during the Great War, a wartime economy was imposed in the UK. This affected deeply the Scottish citizens, many of whom had in fact already been on strike years before. This period of revolts is known as the "Red Clyside" (Melling 5). 1915 was a particularly rough year, with the Shell Scandal and the Munitions of War Act taking place.[9] Several riots and strikes on Clydeside followed and were suffocated by the government with repressive measures such as the arrest of the movement leaders. The workers would never forget the alliance between the Liberal Party and their bosses, which would later affect the prevalence of the party. Additionally, there was a Rent Strike in Glasgow, which was supported by the Labour movement (Elliott 205).

The influence of the strikers and the choices of the Liberal Party would influence Scottish society in the interwar period. These years would be marked by poverty and the steady rise of nationalism.

[9] The 'Shell Scandal' was reported in the Times newspaper in 1915. It referred to the fact that the British artillery shells were insufficient and had poor quality. It soon became a political issue which led to the collapse of the Liberal government and the subsequent formation of a coalition government, in which David Lloyd-George would become the Minister for Munitions.
The Munitions of War Act (1915) prevented munition workers from resigning or changing their job without the employer's consent.

2.3. The interwar period: deconstruction of unionist-nationalism

While it seems that the Great War strengthened the relations between Scotland and England, this spirit would be shattered in the interwar period. The Scots, who had just in the previous decades embraced unionist-nationalism and fought alongside the British in the war, were starting to reconsider this view. The main reason of the discontentment was the post-war conditions which hit the country immediately after the crude wartimes, which "would call that perceived equality into question" (Krancer 55).

This inequality could be better perceived in industrial regions mostly dependent on exportations, such as Scotland. Their poverty levels were higher than in other regions of the UK, and it generated reaction amongst the population. On the 31st January 1919, several riots in Glasgow against rent levels and in favour of a shorter working week culminated in the 'Battle of George Square'.[10] The situation worsened during the next few years with the increase in taxation, that in the 1920s resulted in the "Geddes axe" (Beaumont 4), a series of spending cuts in fields such as housing, education and police. These measures were unpopular and generated an extended feeling of discontent among the citizens, who would also face the decrease in traditional industries incomes.

The circumstances were aggravated from 1929 onwards, as Scotland was one of the regions most affected by the Depression. There was high unemployment due to the industrial nature of the region, which led to malnourishment and an increase in epidemics, especially in the areas most affected by poverty. The crisis affected agriculture and fishing, which were also in decline. Scots became more suspicious and unsatisfied as unemployment in Scotland was generally more than a 50 percent higher than in England (Paker 51—see appendix A), the control of their railway system went to London and four

[10] This violent confrontation, also known as "Bloody Friday" or "Black Friday", resulted in no fatalities despite the intervention of the police and the military. In the end, the strikers renounced their cause and resigned themselves to the 47-hour work week.

of their banks were taken over by London, too (Krancer 57). The fact that England was not sharing the same adversities, made the Scots begin to feel detached. Therefore, a previous generalized feeling of unionist-nationalism would slowly give way to a stronger nationalism.

2.4. The rise of nationalism: origins of the SNP

In 1918 Roland Muirhead, a member of the Labour Party, decided to revive the Scottish Home Rule Association, this time independent of the Liberal Party. After the 1924 United Kingdom general election, a minority labour government led by Ramsay MacDonald was installed in Westminster with the support of the Liberals. However, they only had 151 seats in comparison to the Conservatives 412.

Given the political background, it seemed that Scotland finally had an actual possibility of restoring its parliament. However, the situation was much more complex than it appeared to be, as the government was not powerful enough (and did not show enough interest) to consider the Home Rule requirements. Consequently, the members of the Association found an answer to the issue: the creation of a Scottish political party. Thus, the so-called National Party of Scotland would be formed in 1928.

The Scottish National Party (SNP) was founded in 1934 from a union of the most conservative members of the National Party of Scotland and the Scottish Party—which had been founded just two years earlier. However, the success of the SNP was not immediate, as it did not even win one seat in the 1935 general election. Besides, from the very beginning of its foundation, the party had internal conflicts between the members who wanted it to remain a cultural matter and those who wanted it to focus on the electoral processes. There were expulsions and secessions to form other associations, such as the cross-party Scottish Convention in 1942 (Lynch 237).

The relationship of the nationalists with England was complex. The political atmosphere in the UK in the 1930s was that of caution, as there were extreme nationalist, socialist and right wing movements throughout the country. At a time like this, the government of Westminster had two options: to apply centralized policies or to yield and grant Scotland legislative devolution (Elliott 219). And an administration in Edinburgh could prove useful, as it would therefore be able to look out for the necessities of the citizens, which had long been forgotten. The devolution was executed by a unionist politician, and its positive results were those expected: the Home Rule movement diluted to a certain extent, and Scotland was better administrated.

Nevertheless, the SNP contested just a handful of elections between 1934 and 1964—and had relatively little success. This is because of the effects of the Second World War on the population. Just as had happened in the Great War, the conflict brought the Union together and a sense of unity was generally shared within the UK. Scotland took part in the war, and during the conflict and the post-war period, its economy improved significantly from the interwar crisis. Despite the centralized intervention policies, Scots were persuaded and promised decentralization measures that would never materialize, as the Labour Party in the general election of 1950 would not include Home Rule in its program.

As for the Scottish National Party, it would not become a real opponent until much later in the 1960s. This does not mean that they did not do any work; for instance, after 1945, along with the Scottish Convention, it started petitioning for a Scottish Parliament. Despite their intentions, they were essentially powerless. This does not mean, though, that Scottish nationalism had disappeared, as illustrated by the theft of the Stone of Scone on Christmas Day 1950 from Westminster Abbey.

In the same way it had happened during the interwar period, discontentment arose the moment the production of Scottish industries began to decrease, as Europe was recovering from the conflict. Not only that, but the British economy was not at its peak. In this way, there were not enough funds to financially support all territories. In this unfavourable context, the SNP gained a seat at the Hamilton by-election of 1967, after Tom Fraser, a former Labour MP, had resigned. From this moment onwards, the SNP would always be represented in the House of Commons.

For the time being, this was not a call for independence—what the nationalists wanted was simply more autonomy. However, time would tell. With the discovery in 1970 of reserves of oil in the North Sea, the Union and the relationships within were bound to be altered.

3. Devolution

3.1. Thatcherism: reaction towards 'devolution'

3.1.1. Scotland's gold mine: the North Sea oil

In October 1970, a reservoir of crude oil was discovered in the Forties field, 110 miles east off the coast of Aberdeen. According to reports, this meant a great change in British economics, as almost all of the oil of the country was imported. However, the oil would not be produced until five years later, in 1975.

At the moment of the discovery, Great Britain did not have the appropriate resources to perform safe and profitable oil extractions. These technologies would be imported from America, and most of the area would be privatised within the following years under the Labour and Conservative governments—despite the Scottish nationalist claims of implanting a model such as Norwegian oil, which was nationalised.

The North Sea oil discovery hinted at a positive outcome for the Scottish nationalists, as it raised the possibility of a viable independent Scotland. During that decade, the 'It's Scotland's Oil' campaign promoted by the SNP helped undermine the previous conception that Scotland would not survive as an independent country because of its lack of resources. The campaign was so influential that it helped the SNP gain more than 30% of the total Scottish Votes at the 1974 General Election.

3.1.2. The 1979 Referendum

The Scotland Act was passed in 1978, which allowed for a referendum on Scottish devolution to be held on the 1st of March of the following year. On that day, the voters were asked the question "Do you want the provisions of the Scotland Act 1978 to be put into effect?". What this question implied was the formation of a legislative Assembly in Edinburgh.

This consultation resulted from the previous agreement of both the Conservative and Labour parties, which were mainly led by the electoral success of the Scottish National Party at the 1974 General Election. They recognized that the Scottish society demanded a change, and they hoped that an offer of a parliamentary assembly in Scotland would bring nationalism to a halt—before the claims moved from 'devolution' towards 'independence' (Elliott 225). At the same time, a referendum on a devolved assembly in Wales was also conducted.

Speaking of which, what these measures show is one of the views in Westminster from the decade: that devolution was the only way of preserving the UK as one in a context of economic failure and general social unrest. In an attempt to evade social upheaval directed towards politicians, the government decided that what was best was to

give the people what they seemed to want. Nevertheless, this was not the only held view: others thought that the referendum would lead to a future rupture of the Union.

The fact that the Act was passed towards the end of 1978 gave the main parties a few months to organise the campaign. On the 'Yes' side, that is, the side in favour of the devolved assembly, were part of the Labour Party, the SNP, the Yes for Scotland group, the Alliance for an Assembly, the Liberals and the Communists. On the 'No' side, that is, those against the petition, were mainly the Conservatives, part of the Labour Party and the group Scotland Says No.

What these divisions depicted was a deep fragmentation of the 'Yes' campaign, with many different groups and ideologies that defended the same cause. They would, for instance, provide different considerations as to how the new assembly should function or how much power it should have. On the other hand, the 'No' side would present itself stronger and would prove to give firmer views on the case, as there was more common agreement than in the former side.

MORI[11] carried out three surveys during the previous weeks (see appendix B). In these surveys, published in two different media, the 'no' vote kept gaining popularity as the weeks went by. In the end, the referendum results proclaimed the victory of the devolutionists with 51.6% versus 48.4% of those who were against it. However, "the Government's wishes required 40% of the whole electorate to vote in favour of devolution before the Act could be put into effect" (Perman 54–55). As the total turnout was only of 63.8%, this meant that only 32.85% of the whole electorate had voted in favour. Therefore, these results would count for nothing.

[11] Currently known as "Ipsos", this company would conduct surveys and polls in a wide range of methodologies. Nowadays, the company is part of the British Polling Council and the Market Research Society.

As a result of this and a one-off association of the SNP with the Conservatives, the Labour government fell. In the following 1979 General Election the Conservatives would win under the leadership of Margaret Thatcher, which would be devastating for Scotland.

3.1.3. The 'Poll Tax' and the Thatcher Myth

The government led by Mrs. Thatcher was determined to bring the devolutionist claim to an end. Popularly known as the "Iron Lady", the Prime Minister would not bend to political pressure or give in for anything at least in slight opposition to her firm unionist beliefs. She would therefore introduce strict, old-style unionist policies with no regard to Scottish sensibilities.

In this sense, "she privatized industry, closed down the mines and pushed through a series of policies that jarred with the sensibilities and aspirations of the Scottish electorate" (Elliott 230). At a time of social unrest and unemployment rates that had doubled during the second half of the 1970s—and would rise even more during the following decade— (Fraser & Sinfield 143), these measures did not sit well with the Scottish.

At the same time, North Sea Oil was beginning to provide the first benefits. The SNP in particular noticed the advantages it could have on a damaged Scottish economy, and argued that the large revenues it was producing should go to Scotland. Nevertheless, Thatcher was of the view that the Scottish had become dependent on the handouts from the government, and therefore were changing into lazy citizens. In reality, state interventionism had helped keep the Scottish economy afloat—and the Conservative government presided by Thatcher was willing to destroy its advances. Besides, several other reforms introduced by the Conservative government caused dependency, to some

extent, that many Scottish structures and institutions became similar to their English counterparts. This raised disquiet amongst the population—they did not want to lose their distinctiveness.

This is mainly why in the 1987 General Election the Scottish Conservative Party won almost no votes. However, this defeat did not prevent Mrs. Thatcher, who was once again elected Prime Minister, from introducing the 'Poll Tax' in Scotland only two years later. This matter would be extremely detrimental for the Conservatives—and Thatcher herself would be forced to resign only a year later.

The main issue with the Community Charge, commonly known as the 'Poll Tax',[12] is that it was introduced experimentally in Scotland a year prior to being introduced in England. The tax, which was controversial enough itself, could in fact be considered a violation of the Acts of Union—as they stated that all territories within the UK should have the same tax regulations. The Tax was severely criticised and removed after the resignation of the Prime Minister.

As a consequence of those years of stern Conservative government, Thatcher became another vilified figure in the history of Scotland—who would appear in later campaigns as an image of warning, such as during the 1997 referendum campaign. While the reforms proposed by her government meant a decline in the Scottish economy (including inflation and high unemployment, aside from a rise in indirect taxation), the fact that she was branded as 'anti-Scottish' can be considered excessive. Nevertheless, as Stewart outlines:

> As Thatcher departed Downing Street, in November 1990, her legacy was a Britain intensely divided by class, nationality, and between those in employment and those out of work. In Scotland these divisions, which had been a crucial factor in Thatcher's British electoral success, unified Scots against Thatcher and the Scottish

[12] The Community Charge was a system of taxation that was meant to substitute the previous rating system. It implied that all citizens had to equally contribute and pay the same tax, despite their differences in income or place of residence.

> Conservatives, leading to the emergence of a new Scottish consensus in favour of constitutional change. (Stewart 302)

3.2. 1997 referendum: the foundation of the Scottish parliament

Even after John Major changed course of the political actions towards Scotland, the damage by Thatcher had already been made. Scottish citizens were resentful from the policies that had been applied by his predecessor, and despite his more flexible approach to Unionism, there was practically nothing to be done to mend it.

In 1979, even before the Thatcher campaign had implemented its major actions in Scotland, a civic Campaign for a Scottish Assembly was created at a moment in which the Labour Party was strongly divided, and the spirits of the SNP were rock-bottom (Elliott 231). Nevertheless, as years went by and the SNP began to regain popularity, the Labour Party grasped the idea of devolution once more.

At first, the party participated in a convention called 'Campaign for a Scottish Assembly' in 1990. There, the idea of a legislative assembly constituency was thoroughly discussed. Given the fact that a devolution supporter, John Smith, was elected leader of the Labour Party in 1992, it seemed that the party would be in favour of the claim. Even after two years later Smith would pass away, the new leader, Tony Blair, would stay true to the cause. In fact, the party included the referendum in their manifesto commitment in the campaign for the 1997 General Election.

After having ruled for eighteen consecutive years, the Conservative Party would be superseded by the Labour Party at the 1997 General Election. Tony Blair, its leader, was elected Prime Minister of the government the 2nd of May 1997. The Referendums (Scotland and Wales) Act 1997 was introduced only two weeks after the Prime Minister was elected, and would receive royal assent that same summer. The Referendum would be held on the 11th of September that same year.

During the months leading to the referendum, the campaign was organised in two sides. The 'Yes camp', under the slogan *Scotland Forward,* included the Labour Party, the Liberal Democrats and the SNP, led by the charismatic Alex Salmond, who had been head of the party since 1990. Instead, the 'No camp', under the slogan *Think Twice,* was mainly constituted by the Scottish Conservatives. Given the "polarised and politicised nature of the devolution campaign" (Pattie 12), the results would be dependent on the popularity of the parties in the different areas. Nevertheless, as the statistics pointed out during the previous weeks (see appendix C), this time devolution had a better chance of winning.

On the day of the consultation, Scottish citizens were asked two questions. The first ballot paper included the assertion "I agree there should be a Scottish Parliament" versus "I do not agree there should be a Scottish Parliament", in which citizens had to mark the correct option for them. On the second ballot paper, citizens had to choose between "I agree that a Scottish Parliament should have tax-varying powers" or "I do not agree that a Scottish Parliament should have tax-varying powers", this question being the novelty in respect to the 1979 referendum.

The results were clear: from a 61.8% adjusted turnout, 74.3% voted in favour of the establishment of a Scottish Parliament, and 63.5% supported that it should have tax-varying powers (see appendix D). This last proposal was less apparent, though, as it was only backed by a 38.9% of the adjusted electorate—if the 40% rule from the previous 1979 referendum had been applied on this consultation, the results would again have counted for nothing. (see appendix D). This outcome proves the faith that citizens had in devolution, as the faculty of varying taxes might mean increased taxes in Scotland in the future. However, by law, its power was limited to "a modest 3 pence in the pound" (Pattie 15).

For the first time since 1707, after the union of England and Scotland, the Scottish would have their own legislative assembly. Therefore, the cause for Home Rule, which had been active since roughly a hundred years, would be brought to an end by this triumphant devolution referendum. The Parliament was created through the passing of the 1998 Scotland Act. Nevertheless, the Parliament would not be formally established until 1999.

The nature of the Scottish Parliament has been controversial almost since its formation. Current debates revolve around two main issues: the West Lothian question and asymmetrical devolution.

On the one hand, the former refers to the issue that Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish MPs can vote on legislation that, in principle, would only affect England, while English MPs cannot do the same when it comes to Devolved Parliaments. This issue was named after Tam Dalyell, who had been an MP for West Lothian. In 1977, during a debate on devolution, he inquired: "For how long will English constituencies and English Honourable members tolerate… At least 119 Honourable Members from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland exercising an important and probably often decisive, effect on English politics while they themselves have no say in the same matters in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland?" (qtd. in The Constitution Society). Certainly, this would cause trouble, as proven by the amendment to the Health and Social Care Bill and the Higher Education Bill in 2003.[13] In 2015 a solution for this was introduced: the 'English Votes for English Laws', commonly known as EVEL, which would grant more legislative powers to English MPs (see Appendix E). However, this measure has been criticised for not being sufficient (Gover & Kenny 778).

[13] Both of these Bills were rejected because of this system; they would have been passed if only English MPs had voted for them.

On the other hand, asymmetrical devolution refers to the fact that devolution has not been applied to all nations within the UK. For instance, Scotland has more devolved powers than Wales, and even more than England. There have been proposals of founding an English Parliament, but most of them have been rejected on the basis that England would then receive too much power.

3.3. From Home Rule to independentism: the 2014 referendum

After the Good Friday Agreement of April 1998,[14] the government adopted a more relaxed position towards devolution, on the assumption that the cause for Scottish independence would fade away with time (Elliott 232). The nationalist movements would indeed be mitigated, as a result of the recent formation of the parliament and the urgency to prove to the rest of the UK that the government in Scotland could be successful.

The first elections took place in 1999, by which Labour and Liberal Democrats formed a coalition government.[15] It would not be until 2007 that the SNP became the most voted party, and formed a minority government presided over by Alex Salmond as First Minister. Their politics had moved from devolution, now adopted by the Scottish Labour Party, towards independentism, making use of the tercentenary of the Acts of Union for the campaign.

While the independence was the long-term goal of the SNP, at first the party focused on establishing a stable government. It seems that the citizens were satisfied, as in the 2011 election, the party gained a total of sixty-nine seats out of 129 in the Scottish parliament (Elliott 240). Now, they could accomplish what they had promised in their

[14] The Good Friday Agreement consisted of a pair of agreements to suffocate the violence of the Troubles (an ethnonationalist conflict) in Northern Ireland, ongoing since the 1960s.
[15] The Scottish Parliament was devised in a way that it would prevent the dominance of a single party.

election manifesto: a referendum on the independence of Scotland. Nevertheless, at that moment it was not at all clear that the majority of the country would vote in favour of independence, and therefore Salmond took his time negotiating with Westminster before taking any action.

This result came just after the defeat of the Labour Party at Westminster in the 2010 election, which led to a coalition government between the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats. David Cameron was elected Prime Minister, and negotiations between Alex Salmond and him ended with the 'Edinburgh Agreement' of 15 October 2012. This agreement comprised the holding of a referendum for the independence of Scotland on the 18th of September 2014.[16]

The referendum campaign was followed all over the country with great interest. It would not omit anything regarding the history of Scotland within the UK, from the Acts of Union, the subsequent rebellions and their repression to the discovery of the 'North Sea Oil' and the possibilities it aroused to build a country with a prosperous economy. Debates would mostly spiral, therefore, around the nature of statehood and economic matters such as currencies, pensions or the welfare state (Hughes 36).

The *Yes Scotland* campaign was in favour of independence, and was formed by an alliance of the Scottish Nationalist Party, the Scottish Socialist Party and the Scottish Green Party. On the other side was the *Better Together* campaign, formed by the three main unionist parties in Scotland: the Scottish Labour Party, the Scottish Conservatives and the Scottish Liberal Democrats. Because the campaign against independence was led by these three forces, at the beginning it seemed straightforward what the outcome would be. However, as the months went by, polls results began to shift.

[16] Some concessions were made by both parties, as the PM insisted on having two questions, instead of including the third option that Salmond wanted to include. This third question, which would not be included after all, focused on the concept of maximum devolution, the so-called 'Devo-Max'.

In the end, and with the remarkable turnout of 85%, Scottish citizens voted against independence in what would be a close result: 55.3% voted against, while 44.7% voted in favour. This proved that, at least for the time being, a narrow majority of Scottish citizens preferred to remain within the UK. Nevertheless, the cause for independence has not still been put to bed, as only two years ago the First Minister of Scotland, Nicola Sturgeon, asked for another referendum on the matter.

4. Present times: the issue of Brexit

On 2013, the Prime Minister David Cameron announced that "if a Conservative Government was elected to power following the General Election of 2015, it would hold a national referendum on European Union (EU) membership, framed as an in/out question during the next Parliament." (Uberoi 4). Cameron delivered his promise: shortly after the election, the government submitted the European Union Referendum Bill 2015–2016. This bill asserted that there would be a referendum held on the EU membership before 2017, though the exact date would be set up later by a series of regulations.

The consultation was held on the 23rd of June 2016, under the question: "Should the United Kingdom remain a member of the European Union or leave the European Union?". Those in favour of remaining a member of the UE were organised under the Britain Stronger in Europe campaign, which included several political groups. On the other hand, the ones campaigning for the withdrawal of the EU formed two groups: Leave.EU and Vote Leave. The former was mostly backed by the UK Independence Party, while the latter was endorsed by the Conservatives—though both campaigns included members from a range of parties.

During the previous months leading to the referendum, surveys conducted in diverse media (including the BBC, *What UK Thinks EU* and *The Telegraph*) seemed to

indicate a Remain win. Even the polling poll day published by the company *YouGov* depicted a clear Remain win, by 52% (see Appendix F). Despite the predictions, 51.9% across the UK from a turnout of 72.2% voted in favour of Leave. Instead, 48.1% voted for Remain, which meant that the Leave vote won by only a 3.8%-point margin (Uberoi 5).

Votes were not distributed evenly, as Remain had won in Scotland and Northern Ireland (see Appendix G). Voting was distributed along counting regions, of which Scotland showed the lowest percentage of Leave votes, merely 38.0%. Turnout was also a bit lower (67.2%). Edinburgh won the most votes for Remain, even though most counting areas in Scotland shared this result (see Appendix H).

This situation took place only two years after the 2014 Scottish independence referendum, following the General Election of 2015—in which the SNP won 56 of the 59 Scottish seats and became the third-largest party in Parliament. The leader of the SNP, Nicola Sturgeon, soon argued that having to accept the fate of the UK was quite unfair, given the results of the region. In fact, most of the Remain voters feared the possible economic circumstances following the EU withdrawal, thus their vote choice.

Nevertheless, Sturgeon would not risk another unsuccessful referendum, so she waited to demand another consultation on independence until the British Prime Minister, Theresa May, announced that the formal negotiation period would start end of March 2017. The idea of the SNP was to conduct a consultation between 2018 and 2019. Certainly, the view of Sturgeon that the British government was not paying enough attention to Scotland and its needs, might as well have convinced a great section of Scottish voters. Nevertheless, polls seem to indicate that, once again, this referendum would not have had a positive outcome (see Appendix I). Only after the formal exit of the

EU did it look like independentism was rising in Scotland—but there is considerable variation throughout the years, until our present times.

This is why independence for Scotland, for now, still seems like an unattainable aspiration. Nevertheless, since the COVID-19 pandemic, numbers have been varying. Only time will tell, though economic conditions and political relations with England and Europe will certainly affect the outcome of this issue.

5. Conclusion

Scotland has always had a nationalist tendency, while its interests have fluctuated depending on the historical period and its necessities. Besides, the English-Scottish relation has been shaped by disturbances and riots, going as far back as the 13th century, and up until the present day.

The main issue when it comes to approaching Scottish nationalism is its lack of identity. Whereas in other countries there are widespread traditions, a shared culture or language, the Scottish case is completely different. From the very beginning, Scotland was fragmented into the Highlands, the Islands and the Lowlands, and its border with England was a very conflictive area, even after the Union. This represents a challenge when it comes to building a common national identity, with a common purpose and clear ideals. This is why in each devolutionist or independence movement, the reasons behind them vary.

The first revolts against England after the Union of Crowns occurred for a number of reasons, the background of which was the feeling of being a second-rate member of this union. This might be one of the single generic motives that has lasted until nowadays. Another shared reason may be repression, which is related to the foresaid. While oppression is enforced to control population and suppress rebellions, it generally brings

people together. This is what led to the Jacobite risings, but also to Red Clydeside or the protests against the 'Poll Tax'. In these three situations, citizens believed the governors were taking their rights away, and this was the cause that united them to protest.

There is a line that can be followed along the centuries. In the very beginning, since the Acts of Union, claims were mainly about devolution (or Home Rule), and it focused on legislative organs. These demands appeared quite late in time, around a hundred years after the Union. In this sense, the repression and censorship after the Jacobite Risings was indispensable: a fragmented nation like Scotland lost the few symbols that constituted its identity. Subsequently, these symbols would be weakened even more, especially when it came to Gaelic. The intention behind these prohibitions was to undermine all national sentiments, and to strengthen the union by means of anglicizing Scotland. This they achieved by said repression and by promoting intertwining of both England and Scotland.

The World Wars were both parentheses of the Scottish nationalist situation, for patriotism was mostly dedicated to the UK as a whole. Even so, nationalist tendencies were amongst the population, most of which stemming from Scottish legendary martial figures. Scottish nationalism would emerge again with the devolutionist campaigns of the latter decades from the 20th century. However, industrialization had even deepened the gap between Scottish citizens, who were still reluctant on uniting under one front. Nevertheless, the 1979 Referendum was a success except for the turnout, and the 1997 Referendum and the subsequent Parliament foundation was another victory for devolution. Eventually, it was time to ask for more. Home Rule was accomplished, and now the evolutionary line pointed to the maximum form of devolution possible: independence. Nevertheless, Scotland voters, without a clear identity or national standardized symbols, were fragmented. Independence would not be then, but there is

always a possibility that it might occur in the near future—especially after Brexit, and the economic problems and social unrest it has brought to the UK.

In brief, while there is an evolutionary line that can be followed through Scottish history, it is not until Home Rule that the connection becomes clearer. That being said, each of the moments in which nationalist tendencies were at their peak happened for a particular and diverse range of reasons. One can stem the root of these causes, which would be taking back the powers that England withdrew from Scotland from the Acts of Union onwards. Nevertheless, social and economic context-related factors are to be considered when examining the situation, especially when there is inequality between the regions constituting the UK—mostly, when England has better conditions than Scotland. Besides, Scottish identity is deeply fragmented not only because of class, nationality or even employment divergences, but mostly because of a lack of common identity symbols such as a language or widespread traditions. This explains the results of the last Referendum on Independence.

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Appensdix

Appendix A: Unemployment rates in Britain (1923–1936)

Year	London	South East	South West	Midlands	North East	North West	Scotland	Wales	N. Ireland
1923	10.1	9.2	10.6	10.7	12.2	14.5	14.3	6.4	18.2
1924	9.0	7.5	9.1	9.0	10.9	12.9	12.4	8.6	16.6
1925	7.8	5.9	8.5	9.1	15.0	11.4	15.2	16.5	23.9
1926	6.9	5.4	8.4	11.0	17.2	14.7	16.4	18.0	23.2
1927	5.8	5.0	7.2	8.4	13.7	10.7	10.6	19.5	13.2
1928	5.6	5.4	8.1	9.9	15.1	12.4	11.7	23.0	17.0
1929	5.6	5.6	8.1	9.3	13.7	13.3	12.1	19.3	14.8
1930	8.1	8.0	10.4	14.7	20.2	23.8	18.5	25.9	23.8
1931	12.2	12.0	14.5	20.3	27.4	28.2	26.6	32.4	27.8
1932	13.5	14.3	17.1	20.1	28.5	25.8	27.7	36.5	27.2
1933	11.8	11.5	15.7	17.4	26.0	23.5	26.1	34.6	26.5
1934	9.2	8.7	13.1	2.9	22.1	20.8	23.1	32.3	23.4
1935	8.5	8.1	11.6	11.2	20.7	19.7	21.3	31.2	24.8
1936	7.2	7.3	9.4	9.2	16.8	17.1	18.7	29.4	22.7

Source: Paker, Meredith. "Industrial, regional, and gender divides in British unemployment between the wars". *University of Oxford: Department of Economics*, October 2020. https://www.economics.ox.ac.uk/files/jobmarketpaper-meredithpakerpdf. Accessed 6 May 2023.

Appendix B: Surveys on the 1979 Referendum by IPSOS

Q1. As you may know, the Scottish people will vote on 1st March in a referendum to decide whether there should be a Scottish Assembly or not. How likely are you to vote in this referendum?

	%
Absolutely certain will vote	51
Fairly certain will vote	25
Not sure whether will vote or not	9
Fairly certain will not vote	4
Absolutely certain will not vote	7
Don't know	3

Q2. If you do vote in this referendum will you vote for the setting up of a Scottish Assembly or not?

	All	Absolutely certain to vote
	%	%
Yes, will vote for Scottish Assembly	49	55
No, will vote opposing Scottish Assembly	26	28
Will not vote	7	*
Don't know	19	16

Source: "Devolution Referendum Campaign – Survey 1", *Ipsos*, https://www.ipsos.com/en-uk/1979-devolution-referendum-campaign-survey-1. Accessed 1 May 2023.

Q. As you may know, the Scottish people will vote on 1st March in a referendum to decide whether there should be a Scottish Assembly or not. How likely are you to vote in this referendum?

	%
Absolutely certain will vote	70
Fairly certain will vote	8
Not sure whether will vote or not	5
Fairly certain will not vote	2
Absolutely certain will not vote	8
Don't know	6

Q. If you do vote in this referendum, will you vote for the setting up of a Scottish Assembly or not?

	%
Yes, will vote for Scottish Assembly	38
No, will vote opposing Scottish Assembly	38
Will not vote	7
Don't know	15
Refused	2

Source: "Devolution Referendum Campaign – Survey 3", *Ipsos*, https://www.ipsos.com/en-uk/1979-devolution-referendum-campaign-survey-3. Accessed 1 May 2023.

Appendix C: Opinion Polls on the 1997 Referendum

Support For a Scottish Parliament in Opinion Polls

Should there be a Scottish parliament?

Company	Sponsor	Publication	Yes %	No %	Don't know %
System 3	Herald	June 1997	64	21	15
System 3	Herald	July 1997	68	21	10
System 3	Herald	August 1997	65	19	16
System 3	Herald	2/9/97	61	23	18
NOP	Sunday Times	7/9/97	63	21	16
ICM	Scotland on Sunday	7/9/97	60	25	15
MORI	STV	8/9/97	67	22	11
System 3	Herald	10/9/97	61	20	19
ICM	Scotsman	10/9/97	63	25	12

Should a Scottish Parliament have tax-varying powers?

Company	Sponsor	Publication	Yes %	No %	Don't know %
System 3	Herald	June 1997	53	28	19
System 3	Herald	July 1997	56	26	18
System 3	Herald	August 1997	54	27	19
System 3	Herald	2/9/97	47	32	21
NOP	Sunday Times	7/9/97	51	34	15
ICM	Scotland on Sunday	7/9/97	45	38	17
MORI	STV	8/9/97	51	32	17
System 3	Herald	10/9/97	45	31	24
ICM	Scotsman	10/9/97	48	40	12

Source: Pattie, Charles, et al. "The 1997 Scottish Referendum: an Analysis of the Results". *Scottish Affairs,* vol. 22, no. 1, 1998, pp. 1–15. Doi: 10.3366/scot.1998.0002.

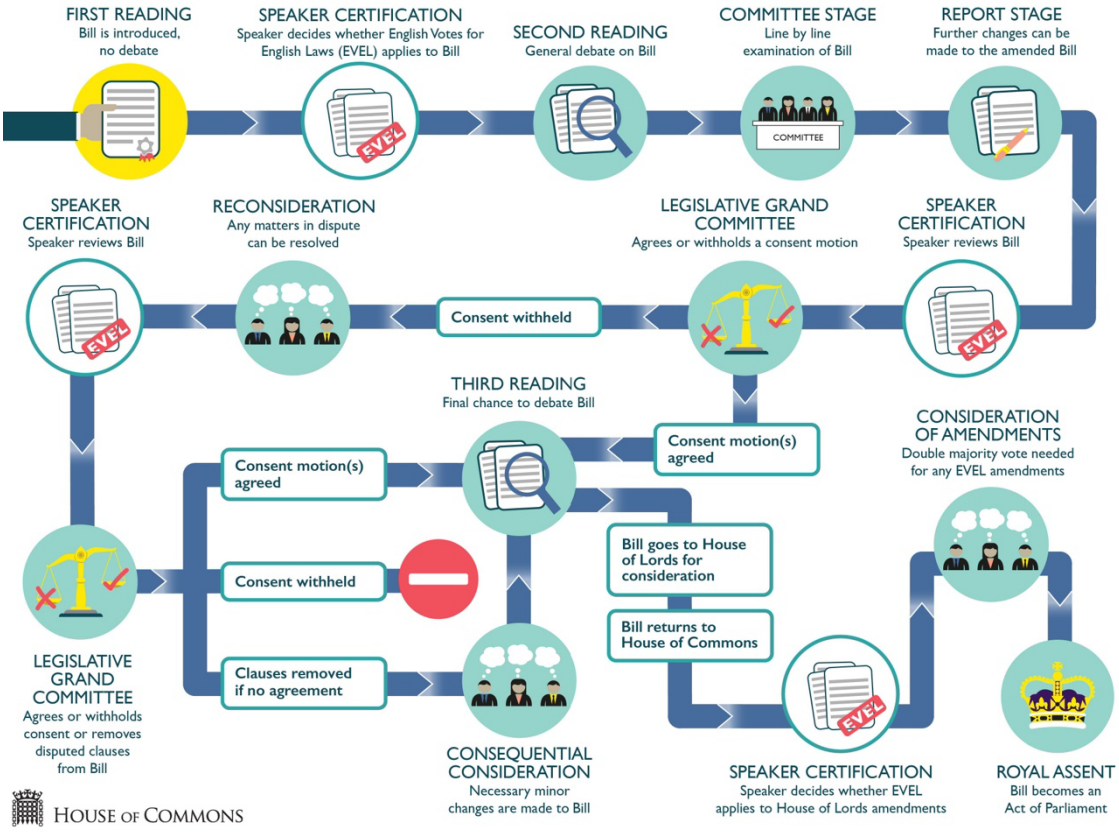
Appendix D: 1997 Referendum results

The Referendum Results

	% of votes cast	% of electorate	% of adjusted electorate
Q1. Support a Scottish parliament			
Yes	74.3	44.7	45.7
No	25.7	15.5	15.8
Q2. Support tax-varying powers			
Yes	63.5	38.1	38.9
No	36.5	21.9	22.4
Turnout		60.4	61.8

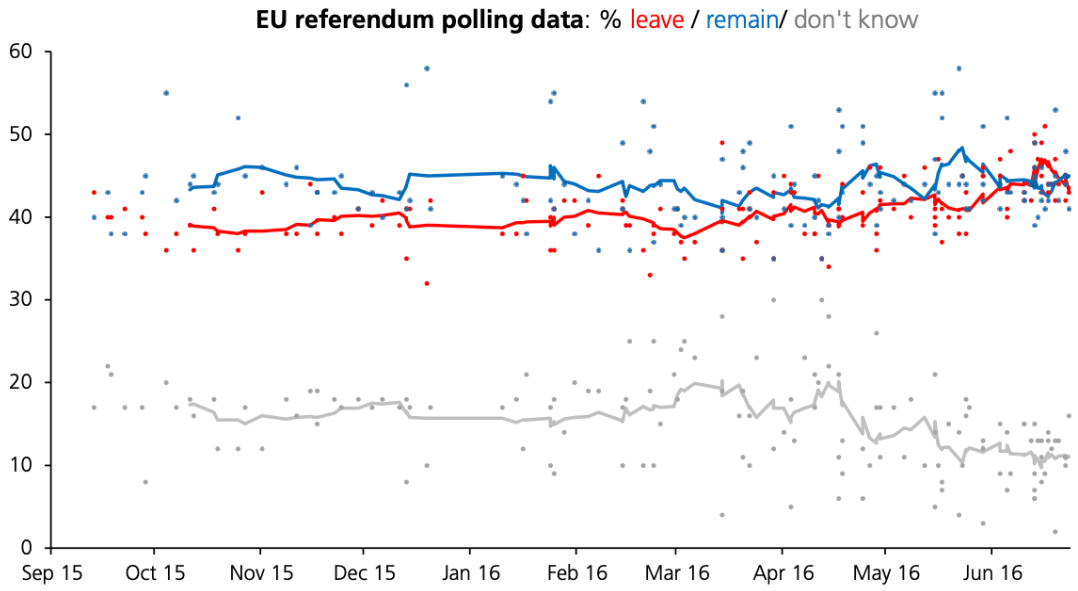
Source: Pattie, Charles, et al. "The 1997 Scottish Referendum: an Analysis of the Results". *Scottish Affairs,* vol. 22, no. 1, 1998, pp. 1–15. Doi: 10.3366/scot.1998.0002.

Appendix E: how EVEL works



Source: "English votes for English laws: House of Commons bill procedure", *UK Parliament*, https://www.parliament.uk/about/how/laws/bills/public/english-votes-for-english-laws/. Accessed 2 May 2023.

Appendix F: YouGov poll on Brexit



Source: Uberoi, Elise. "Analysis of the EU Referendum results 2016", *House of Commons Library,* 29 June 2016. https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-7639/CBP-7639.pdf. Accessed 10 May 2023.

Appendix G: Results by region on Brexit

Results by region, ranked by highest vote share for Leave

Counting region	Remain	Leave	Rejected votes	Total votes cast (incl. rejected)	Remain (% of valid votes)	Leave (% of valid votes)	Turnout (valid votes as % of electorate)	Turnup (total votes cast as % of electorate)	Electorate
West Midlands	1,207,175	1,755,687	2,507	2,965,369	40.7%	59.3%	72.0%	72.0%	4,116,572
East Midlands	1,033,036	1,475,479	1,981	2,510,496	41.2%	58.8%	74.1%	74.2%	3,384,299
North East	562,595	778,103	689	1,341,387	42.0%	58.0%	69.3%	69.3%	1,934,341
Yorkshire and the Humber	1,158,298	1,580,937	1,937	2,741,172	42.3%	57.7%	70.6%	70.7%	3,877,780
East of England	1,448,616	1,880,367	2,329	3,331,312	43.5%	56.5%	75.7%	75.7%	4,398,796
North West	1,699,020	1,966,925	2,682	3,668,627	46.3%	53.7%	69.9%	70.0%	5,241,568
South West and Gibraltar	1,503,019	1,669,711	2,179	3,174,909	47.4%	52.6%	76.7%	76.7%	4,138,134
Wales	772,347	854,572	1,135	1,628,054	47.5%	52.5%	71.7%	71.7%	2,270,272
South East	2,391,718	2,567,965	3,427	4,963,110	48.2%	51.8%	76.7%	76.8%	6,465,404
Northern Ireland	440,707	349,442	374	790,523	55.8%	44.2%	62.7%	62.7%	1,260,955
London	2,263,519	1,513,232	4,453	3,781,204	59.9%	40.1%	69.6%	69.7%	5,424,768
Scotland	1,661,191	1,018,322	1,666	2,681,179	62.0%	38.0%	67.2%	67.2%	3,987,112
United Kingdom	**16,141,241**	**17,410,742**	**25,359**	**33,577,342**	**48.1%**	**51.9%**	**72.2%**	**72.2%**	**46,500,001**

Source: Uberoi, Elise. "Analysis of the EU Referendum results 2016." *House of Commons Library,* 29 June 2016. https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-7639/CBP-7639.pdf. Accessed 10 May 2023.

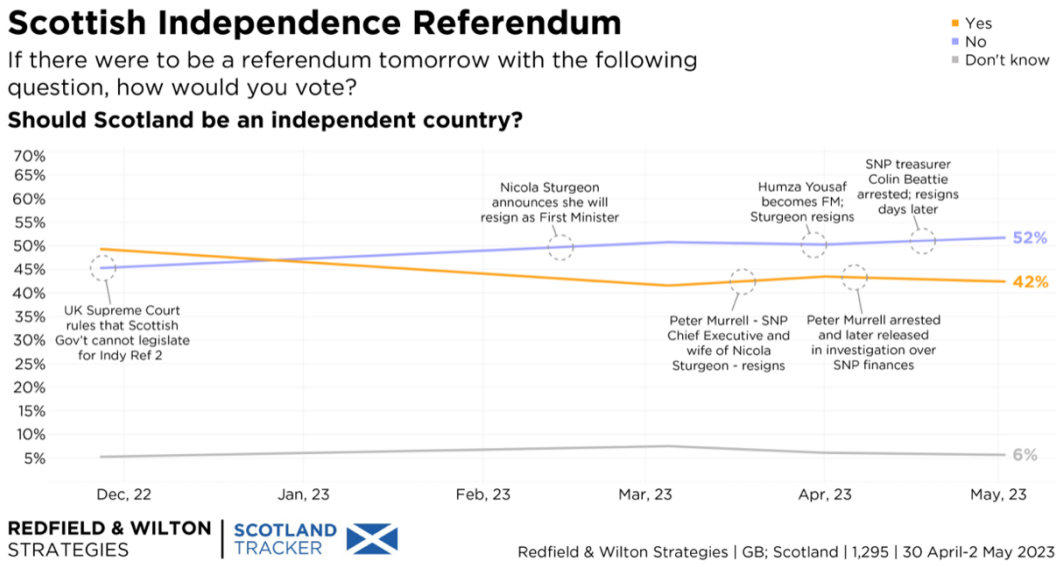
Appendix H: Voting shares in Scottish zones

Highest vote shares for Remain and Leave (counting areas)

	Leave			Remain	
1	Moray	49.9%	1	Edinburgh	74.4%
2	Dumfries and Galloway	46.9%	2	East Renfrewshire	74.3%
3	Aberdeenshire	45.0%	3	East Dunbartonshire	71.4%
4	Eilean Siar	44.8%	4	Stirling	67.7%
5	Angus	44.7%	5	Glasgow City	66.6%
6	Highland	44.0%	6	Renfrewshire	64.8%
7	Shetland Islands	43.5%	7	East Lothian	64.6%
8	Falkirk	43.2%	8	Inverclyde	63.8%
9	North Ayrshire	43.1%	9	Orkney Islands	63.2%
10	Clackmannanshire	42.2%	10	South Lanarkshire	63.1%

Source: Uberoi, Elise. "Analysis of the EU Referendum results 2016", *House of Commons Library,* 29 June 2016. https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-7639/CBP-7639.pdf. Accessed 17 May 2023.

Appendix I: Scottish Independence Referendum poll (May 2023)



Source: R&WS Research Team. "Scottish Independence Referendum & Westminster Voting Intention (30 April – 2 May 2023)", *Redfield & Wilton Strategies,* 29 June 2016. https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-7639/CBP-7639.pdf. Accessed 16 May 2023.