ABSTRACT

The Not-So-United Kingdom: Nationalism in Scotland, England, Wales, and Northern Ireland

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The 2014 Scottish Referendum shed light on a problem that has faced the United Kingdom for the past few decades: nationalism. The rise of nationalism in each of the four nations of the United Kingdom poses a threat to the union's very existence. In the celebrated 1992 article "Britishness and Otherness," historian Linda Colley argues that the presence of an external Other historically caused the four contingent nations of the United Kingdom to bind together against this external threat. Absent this threat, the four nations have become more aware of their internal differences, contributing to the rise of nationalist movements. This thesis uses newspaper articles, letters to the editor, opinion polls, and analysis of political discourse to explore perceptions of national identity and nationalism in Scotland, England, Wales, and Northern Ireland to determine the factors that are contributing to the rise of nationalist movements in each of these countries. These sources were used to determine if those making unionist arguments identified an external Other and if those making nationalist claims were more prone to civic nationalism or ethnic nationalism. Much of this analysis seeks to determine if the country is witnessing a nationalist *movement* or simply a nationalist *mood*. A nationalist movement pushes for constitutional change – or even independence – while a nationalist mood is primarily concerned with issues of national identity. The purpose of this thesis is to explore nationalist rhetoric in each of the nations of the United Kingdom to better understand the sources of growing nationalism, its potential impact on the Union, and its relation to Colley's initial thesis.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

As the chants of "Goodbye Empire, Hello World" faded outside the Scottish

Parliament building in Edinburgh during the early hours of September 19, 2014, the

United Kingdom was perhaps left with more questions than answers. With 55.3% of

Scots voting against independence, the results seemed to indicate decisively that the

United Kingdom would remain strongly intact.[1] However, the referendum did little

to reassure Britons that the 307 year-old union would continue to survive. As

statisticians picked apart the results, anxieties over Scotland's future grew. While

73% of Scottish seniors – those over age 65 – voted against independence, 71% of

Scots aged 16-17 voted in favor of independence as well as 59% of Scots between

the ages of 25 and 34.[2] This certainly is not a formula for future stability.

One of the most significant articles in recent British historical scholarship

analyzes the relationship between the four contingent parts of the United Kingdom.

In "Britishness and Otherness," Linda Colley responds to the prominent Four

Nations approach to analyzing the United Kingdom. The Four Nations model views

England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland as four distinct countries, each with

a unique national identity. This perspective sits comfortably with scholars who seek

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[1] "Scotland Decides," *BBC News,* September 18, 2014,
http://www.bbc.com/news/events/scotland-decides/results.

[2] "Scottish independence: poll reveals who voted, how and why," *The Guardian*, September 20, 2014,
http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2014/sep/20/scottish-independence-lord-ashcroft-poll.

to explain the emerging nationalist movements in the Celtic Fringe as well as those who identify a developing English nationalist movement. However, Colley argues that this approach is insufficient in explaining British identity. She contends that this approach "conceals…the fact that the four parts of the United Kingdom have been connected in markedly different ways and with sharply varying degrees of success."[3] For most of its history, the Union did not witness distinct national identities; people tended to ascribe to local loyalties rather than national ones. Colley provides the example of Scottish Lowlanders, who often had more in common with their neighbors in northern England than they did with Scottish Highlanders.

Colley posits a new model of analyzing "Britishness" that harks back to Peter Sahlins' definition of national identity. Sahlins argued that national identity is defined "by the social or territorial boundaries drawn to distinguish the collective self and its implicit negation, the other."[4] Colley uses this definition to assert that British national identity is fluid, and it is dependent upon the relationship of the United Kingdom with those who lie outside its borders. Colley's article explores Britishness primarily in the eighteenth century. Identifying both Catholicism and the French as "Others," Colley asserts that Britishness in the eighteenth century was defined in exact opposition to these factors. Britons united over a shared Protestantism as well as a unified force against the French in a seemingly unending procession of wars between the two nations. However, absent an Other, the United Kingdom becomes increasingly aware of its internal differences. With the end of the

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[3] Linda Colley, "Britishness and Otherness: An Argument," *Journal of British Studies* 31 no. 4 (1992): 314.

[4] Ibid., 311.

Second World War and the loss of its expansive empire, Britain was forced to integrate itself into the larger European community beginning in the 1960s. According to Colley's thesis, this loss of an Other – and the lack of a new Other – has fostered the rise of nationalist movements in the Celtic Fringe and even in England itself. The United Kingdom had to look inward to find an Other, and new perceptions of national identity had to be created in light of Britain's new position in the global community.

This thesis will explore growing nationalist movements in England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland to determine if the strengthening nationalist movement in Scotland – as well as the emerging movements in England, Wales, and potentially Northern Ireland – is a fulfillment of Colley's thesis. To do so, it must be demonstrated that the United Kingdom continues to lack an Other and that this lack of an Other is responsible for the growth of these nationalist movements. Potential Others include Islam, conflict in the Middle East, and the European Union. Each will be considered in turn before the question of nationalism is considered further.

While Colley identified Catholicism as a prominent Other for eighteenth century Britons, Islam can be seen as its twenty-first century counterpart. Since September 11, 2001, anxiety has risen in both the United States and the United Kingdom over growing Muslim populations. Muslims make up roughly 4.5% of the total British population; however, the 2,786,635 Muslims residing in the United Kingdom are not evenly distributed between its four contingent parts.[5] While

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[5] James Kirkup, "British Muslims: integration and segregation are about economics, not values," *The Telegraph,* February 13, 2015,

England is home to 2,660,116 Muslims – roughly 5.0% of the English population,

Muslims make up only 1.45% of the Scottish population, 1.5% of the Welsh

population, and 0.21% of the Northern Irish population.[6] Despite their small

population, Muslims are increasingly seen as a threat to British identity. According

to a 2013 survey conducted by NatCen Social Research, 62% of Britons perceive

Muslims as a threat to British national identity.[7] However, the survey failed to

analyze how these attitudes differed in each of the four nations in the United

Kingdom.

Due to the smaller Muslim populations in the Celtic Fringe, it might be

expected that Muslims are seen as less of a threat to national identity. However,

multiculturalism is often seen as antithetical to nationalist movements. Such

movements rely on a unified sense of self and, therefore, "parochial nationalism

goes naturally with racist and ethnic phobias."[8] So how have the nations of the Celtic

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http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/immigration/11409181/British-Muslims-integration-and-segregation-are-about-economics-not-values.html.

[6] "Scotland's Census 2011," National Records of Scotland, http://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/documents/censusresults/release2a/scotland/KS209SCa.pdf.; "2011 Census, Key Statistics for Local Authorities in England and Wales," Office for National Statistics, http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/re-reference-tables.html?edition=tcm%3A77-286262.; "Religion – Full Detail," Census Office for Northern Ireland, last modified March 27, 2011, http://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/public/home.aspx.

[7] Kirkup, "British Muslims."

[8] Asifa M. Hussain and William L. Miller, *Multicultural Nationalism: Islamophobia, Anglophobia, and Devolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 49.

Fringe balanced multiculturalism – albeit on a minor level – with burgeoning nationalist movements?

To exclude Islam from a list of potential Others, it must be demonstrated that Islamophobia is not a unifying force in the United Kingdom. It must also be shown that Islam is not incompatible with the nationalist movements in the Celtic Fringe. English nationalism will remain an important theme throughout this thesis; however, given that English identity is often conflated to British identity, much of the research will work to differentiate English nationalism from the nationalist movements of the Celtic Fringe. In this instance, that requires showing how Islamophobia present in one nationalist movement does not constitute an Other for the whole of the Union.

In an investigation of multiculturalism and nationalism in Scotland and England, Asifa Hussain and William Miller analyzed Islamophobia in the Scottish and English nationalist movements. They define Islamophobia as the following:

> Islamophobia is indicated by feeling on balance that Muslims: 'take jobs, housing and health care from other people'; 'could never be really committed to Britain/Scotland'; 'are more loyal to other Muslims around the world' than they are to 'this country'; that 'England/Scotland would begin to lose its identity' if more Muslims came; and that they would 'feel unhappy if a close relative married or formed a long-term relationship with a Muslim'.[9]

The study specifically asked respondents if England/Scotland would lose its national identity if its Muslim population continued to grow. Responses to this

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[9] Ibid., 55.

question are particularly pertinent in establishing whether or not Islam can be identified as a unifying Other. While 52% of Scots felt that Scotland would lose some of its national identity if more Muslims entered the country, 69% of English respondents perceived Muslims as a threat to English national identity. When the indicators for Islamophobia are taken collectively, less than half of Scots retain Islamophobic sentiments, compared with 63% of English respondents.[10] The authors of the study ultimately concluded, "Islamophobia is not only significantly greater in England than Scotland, it is also much more closely tied to English nationalism within England than Scottish nationalism within Scotland—with which it hardly correlates at all."[11] Perhaps most important to consider in light of this data is the differing rhetoric surrounding Islam amongst the leaders of the Scottish and English nationalist movements. Hussain and Miller explored this rhetoric and determined that the Scottish Nationalist Party (SNP) leadership is even less Islamophobic than the average SNP voter. Contrarily, Conservatives – the political party historically associated with English nationalism – "are…the most likely to cite race as a necessary condition for being truly English…"[12] This demonstrates the differing role Islam plays in the nationalist movements in England and Scotland. While Islam is overwhelmingly perceived as a threat to English nationalism, Scots have a more relaxed approach to Muslim immigration and are less likely to see Islam as a threat to their nationalist movement. Since England views Islam as a

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[10] Ibid., 56.

[11] Ibid., 65.

[12] Ibid., 60.

threat to its nationalist movement and Scotland is more concerned with integrating

Muslims into its nationalist movement, Islam cannot be a unifying Other for the

United Kingdom.

Foreign entanglements can also serve as a unifying force, pushing internal

differences aside as the four nations bind together to fight a common enemy. For

Colley, eighteenth century Britons united against the French during nearly 125

years of continuous war between the two countries. The closest equivalent to such

an Other in the twenty-first century is the Iraq War and continuing conflict in the

Middle East. To determine if this is a viable Other, it is necessary to analyze each

country's response to Westminster's decision to go to war in the Middle East.

There is no shortage of documented dissent to the Iraq War in both England

and the Celtic Fringe. On February 15, 2003, Britons from across the Union voiced

their opposition to military action in Iraq, following a speech by Prime Minister

Tony Blair calling on the UN to act in Iraq. In London, anywhere from 750,000 to 2

million protestors met at Piccadilly Circus and Hyde Park, sporting signs declaring,

"Make Tea, Not War" and "No War on Iraq."[13] Similar protests took place throughout

the United Kingdom, with tens of thousands of people rallying in Belfast, Northern

Ireland and another 30,000 to 80,000 people meeting in Glasgow, Scotland.[14] More

recently, politicians have speculated that Blair's decision to go to war in Iraq led to

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[13] "'Million' march against Iraq War," *BBC News,* February 16, 2003, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/2765041.stm.

[14] "Thousands back Belfast anti-war rally," *BBC News,* February 15, 2003, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/northern_ireland/2764997.stm.; "Organisers hail anti-war protest," *BBC News,* February 15, 2003, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/scotland/2765093.stm.

the decline of the Labour Party in Scotland, paving the way for the SNP to take control of the Scottish Parliament and, ultimately, Scotland's seats in Westminster.[15] Wales has not been silent about its opposition to Britain's current foreign policy in the Middle East either. Its nationalist party, Plaid Cymru, has been particularly vocal about the disconnect between Westminster's approach to the Middle East and the desires of the Welsh people. In 2014, Plaid Cymru urged the UK government to consider a region-led response to the rise of the Islamic State, arguing, "The shadow of the Iraq war still looms large surely we should be learning from history, not forgetting it."[16] Clearly, the Iraq War – or any other entanglements in the Middle East – has not been a unifying Other for the nations of the Union. Indeed, it has sparked intense opposition from the nationalist parties of the Celtic Fringe.

Britain's final potential Other is the European Union – the political and economic alliance formed in 1958 as the European Economic Community and taking its present form in 1993. The European Union boasts 28 member states and primarily functions to develop a standardized legal and economic system for the European continent. Britain's relationship with the EU has been a point of contention for decades, but the issue pushed its way to the forefront of British political discourse with David Cameron's 2013 announcement that Westminster

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[15] "Scottish Labour's downfall 'began with Iraq war,'" *The Scotsman*, June 22, 2015, http://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/top-stories/scottish-labour-s-downfall-began-with-iraq-war-1-3808644#axzz3pQzbWoE1.

[16] "Plaid Cymru urges region-led response to Iraq crisis," *Plaid Cymru – The Party of Wales,* September 26, 2014, https://www.partyof.wales/news/2014/09/26/plaid-cymru-urges-region-led-response-to-iraq-crisis/.

would hold a referendum over Britain's membership in the EU should the

Conservative Party control Parliament after the 2015 general election. After the

Conservative victory in the 2015 election, Cameron restated his promise to hold a

referendum on EU membership before the end of 2017.[17]

The nationalist parties of the Celtic Fringe are not pleased with Cameron's

decision, especially after the Foreign Office Minister in Westminster rejected an SNP

amendment to the EU Referendum Bill that would ensure Britain's exit from the EU

"was dependent on all four nations voting for it."[18] Prior to the Scottish referendum,

the SNP emphasized Scotland's relationship with the EU as a selling point of

independence. While Westminster does not appear to be committed to the EU,

Scotland planned to apply for EU membership should the nation vote in favor of

independence. Since the Scottish referendum, SNP Leader and First Minister of

Scotland Nicola Sturgeon has remained loyal to pro-EU policies and has even

indicated that a British exit from the EU would justify another Scottish

independence vote.[19] The SNP is not the only nationalist party staunchly opposed to

the "Brexit." Plaid Cymru supported the SNP amendment, with its party leader,

Leanne Wood, arguing, "The votes in each of the countries should be added up

[17] UK Parliament, *European Union Referendum Bill (HC Bill 2), 2013,* (London), 1, http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/2015-2016/0002/cbill_2015-20160002_en_2.htm#pb1-l1g5.

[18] "SNP bid for 'quadruple lock' on EU referendum vote rejected," *BBC News,* June 16, 2015, http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-33150080.

[19] Mark Briggs, "Brexit could force new referendum on Scottish independence," *EurActiv,* April 10, 2015, http://www.euractiv.com/sections/uk-europe/brexit-could-force-new-referendum-scottish-independence-313651.

separately and we should only pull out of the EU if all four countries want to do that."[20] Since the rejection of the amendment, Plaid Cymru has echoed the fears voiced by the SNP regarding the impact of a EU referendum on business in the Celtic Fringe.[21] Given the dedication of many Conservatives in England to an EU referendum, it is clear that nationalists across the Union are rallying around a common fear of Britain leaving the EU. Moreover, the Celtic Fringe sees an exit from the EU as a threat to nationalism since each individual nation will not get a say on its position in the EU. Therefore, the EU cannot be established as a unifying Other for the United Kingdom. If anything, the EU has served as a point of division for the nations of the Union.

Since an acceptable Other has not been identified, the remainder of this thesis will seek to understand how perceptions of national identity in each nation and responses to the 2014 Scottish referendum fit with Colley's thesis regarding the relationship between the nations of the United Kingdom when there is not a viable Other. The history of each country's nationalist movement will be considered before turning to newspaper articles and social attitudes surveys from Scotland, England, Wales, and Northern Ireland to determine if there is an emerging dialogue

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[20] Christopher Hope, "Scottish and Welsh nationalists pledge to stop the English leaving EU," *The Telegraph,* February 8, 2015, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstopics/eureferendum/11398744/Scottish-and-Welsh-nationalists-pledge-to-stop-the-English-leaving-EU.html.

[21] Nigel Morris, "EU referendum: Plaid Cymru leader Leanne Wood warns of constitutional 'crisis' if English voters engineer 'Brexit,'" *Independent,* October 22, 2015, http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/eu-referendum-plaid-cymru-leader-leanne-wood-warns-of-constitutional-crisis-if-english-voters-a6705101.html.

surrounding questions of national identity and the continuation of the United Kingdom.

Analysis of claims of national identity in each country and outcomes of political elections reveals that perceptions of national identity do not directly correlate to the growth of nationalist movements. For example, as will be explored in the discussion of Wales, nearly half of Welsh citizens identify as "only Welsh," but Wales arguably has the weakest nationalist movement of the nations of the Celtic Fringe. Rather than an Other serving as a unifying force for the Union or the lack of an Other contributing to nationalism, each nation appears to have its own Other that is influencing nationalist sentiments. For Scotland, this Other takes the form of Conservative economic and social policies. For Northern Ireland, religion serves as the source of nationalism.

These findings challenge Colley's thesis and fit more comfortably with the Four Nations approach that she criticizes. While there are individual examples of regional loyalties being paramount to national identities – such as the low support for Scottish independence in the Border councils of Scotland – nationalism in the Celtic Fringe has more to do with the existence of a divisive Other than the lack of a unifying one. The following pages will explore each country individually, analyzing each country's rejection of potentially unifying Others and the development of new Others exclusive to each country.

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CHAPTER TWO

Scottish Nationalism

Writing in 1969, historian H. J. Hanham argued, "In Europe the normal basis for nationalism is the historic nation – the nation which enjoyed some degree of autonomy during the Middle Ages. European nationalism is…in a sense always backward-looking…always apparently more conscious of the past than of the present."[22] Hanham argues that, for this reason, cultural icons are as important to European nationalism as political ones. However, deeper and more recent investigation into the nationalist movement in Scotland challenges this perception of European nationalism. An examination of newspaper articles and public opinion polls in Scotland during the year leading up to the referendum will reveal that proponents of independence were making primarily economic arguments rather than cultural ones. This diverges significantly from traditional nationalist movements and will ultimately challenge Colley's assessment of the relationship between the four nations of the United Kingdom.

Scotland's complicated relationship with its neighbor to the south began long before the Union of the Parliaments in 1707 or the joining of the Crowns in 1603. Throughout the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries, Scotland's borders and political relationship with England were both fluid and contested. While the Act of Union in 1707 combined the Scottish and English Parliaments in Westminster,

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[22] H.J. Hanham, *Scottish Nationalism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), 10.

Scotland still retained a significant degree of autonomy in regards to education, religion, and law. Scottish sociologists have argued that the union was a *mariage de raison*. It was not bred from conquest or an infatuation with England; rather, it was a negotiated compromise. Scotland would benefit from increased access to English markets, and England no longer had to worry about a Scottish-French alliance.[23]

Despite the economic and political benefits granted to each member of the union, the marriage was an unstable one from the start. The eighteenth century witnessed multiple attempts to thwart English rule by overthrowing the current monarchs and restoring the Stuart dynasty, which was a historically Scottish, Catholic dynasty. Rebellions in 1715 and 1746 nearly overthrew the British state, leading the British government to attempt to "deculturize" the Scottish Highlands and bring Scots in line with British culture. If Hanham's argument accurately applied to Scottish nationalism, proponents of Scottish independence would hark back to notions of Scottish culture prior to Britain's effort to deculturize the country.

The birth of modern Scottish nationalism is often attributed to the discovery of oil in the North Sea in the early 1970s. "It's Scotland's Oil," declared the SNP, hoping to capitalize on the moment (see Figure 1.1). However, the potential riches of North Sea oil also posed many problems. Scotland's labor force was not adequately prepared for rapid extraction, but the government prioritized profits over practicality. The SNP catered to growing resentment toward the British

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[23] David McCrone, "Understanding Scotland and its Futures," Class lecture, Scottish Studies 1A: Conceptualizing Scotland from the University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, Scotland, September 29, 2014.

government by pushing the choice between "rich Scots or poor British."[24] They advanced their argument for Scottish independence by contending that North Sea oil would greatly benefit the Scottish economy only if Scotland functioned as an independent state. Otherwise, Britain would profit while the Scottish economy continued to suffer. In many ways, this argument reflected that made by SNP President Roland Muirhead in the 1930s, who connected Scottish nationalism with anti-imperialism. The nationalist movement of the 1970s relied on economic arguments. The SNP plastered campaign posters throughout Scotland highlighting its position as "the only country in the world ever to discover oil and get poorer."[25]

Figure 1.1[26]

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[24] Christopher Harvie, *Scotland and Nationalism: Scottish Society and Politics 1707 to the Present,* 4th ed. (London: Routledge, 2004), 178.

[25] Reverend Stuart Campbell, *The Wee Blue Book: The Facts The Papers Leave Out* (Wings over Scotland, 2014), 65, http://worldofstuart.excellentcontent.com/WeeBlueBookDesktopEdition.pdf.

[26] "The Movement for the Independence of Scotland," *Propaganda History*, http://propagandahistory.ru/pics/2012/08/1345837804_c5d9.jpg.

Throughout the second half of the twentieth century, Scotland's belief that it was being economically exploited by the English ignited support for the return of a Scottish Parliament. However, the movement faced multiple roadblocks. In 1978, a referendum for the creation of a Scottish Assembly failed after a Labour MP added a provision requiring 40% of the nation to vote in favor. This led the SNP to call for a vote of no confidence against the Labour government. Unfortunately for the SNP, while their vote of no confidence was a success, it triggered eighteen years of anti-devolution rule under the Tories.

The return of a Labour government under Tony Blair in 1997 brought the promise of a devolved parliament for Scotland. Following a second referendum on the issue in 1997, the Scotland Act 1998 established a devolved Scottish Parliament. While this new Parliament possessed a degree of power in relation to taxation in Scotland, Section 28 of the Act affirms the sovereignty of the British Parliament and its authority "to make laws for Scotland."[27] In the first Scottish Parliamentary election in 1999, the SNP won 27% of the seats, with Labour leading the first Scottish Parliament with 43% of the seats.[28] It was not until the 2007 by-election that the SNP began to chip away at typical Labour strongholds and establish itself as the dominant party in Scotland. In 2011, the SNP ran on a policy of providing a referendum on the issue of Scottish independence. This platform won the SNP 69

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[27] Parliament of the United Kingdom, *Scotland Act 1998, Chapter 46* (London: The Stationary Office Limited, 1998), 13. http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/46/section/28.

[28] House of Commons Library, *Scottish Parliament Elections: 6 May 1999,* 6. researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/RP99-50/RP99-50.pdf.

votes in the Scottish Parliament, giving Scotland its first majority government with SNP leader Alex Salmond at the helm.

Independence was on the SNP's agenda long before devolution, but once devolution was achieved, it was able to focus solely on the independence movement. While the claims of the SNP provide an interesting perspective of the issues concerning Scots leading up to the independence referendum, the attitudes of everyday Scottish citizens and those who identify with the SNP provide a more comprehensive analysis of the reasons people supported or rejected Scottish nationalism. Newspaper articles from 2014 as well as a 2008 survey of SNP members reveal whether or not "othering" was a prominent aspect of nationalist political discourse prior to the referendum. Letters submitted to the *Glasgow Herald* by Scots across the nation provide a clearer picture of the issues that influenced Scots when making the decision of whether or not to support independence. These letters can generally be divided into two major categories: claims that exhibit ethnic nationalism and claims that exhibit civic nationalism. Ethnic nationalism is generally what people think of when they hear the word "nationalism." These are the "backward-looking" claims that are look to a shared heritage based on unifying factors, such as language or ethnic ancestry. Civic nationalism is often associated with liberalism, as it emphasizes equality, inclusiveness, and individual rights. In Scottish political discourse, this often touches on issues of immigration, education, and healthcare.

For the purposes of this research, articles from the *Glasgow Herald* and letters written by Scots in response to such articles were collected from January 2014 to September 2014, when the referendum took place. *The Herald* is the most widely circulated national daily newspaper in Scotland.[29] Leading up to the referendum, *The Herald* opposed independence in favor of further devolution, often referred to as "devo-max."[30]

Dividing articles and responses into two categories revealed that Scots were overwhelmingly making their claims based on appeals to civic nationalism, regardless of whether their claims supported or opposed independence. The few times writers invoked ethnic arguments, it was generally in regards to the question: "Do people in Scotland feel more Scottish than British?" This was a particularly interesting question in the South of Scotland, as Colley mentions in her article that the Four Nations model is inadequate largely because it fails to acknowledge "these intricate and myriad regional alignments," such as Scottish Lowlanders having more in common with their neighbors in the North of England rather than with Scottish Highlanders.[31]

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[29] Dominic Ponsford, "UK regional daily print sales down 10.2 per cent as Birmingham Mail loses a quarter of circulation," *PressGazette,* August 26, 2015, http://www.pressgazette.co.uk/uk-regional-daily-print-sales-down-102-cent-birmingham-mail-loses-quarter-sales-year-year.

[30] "The Herald's view: we back staying within UK, but only if there's more far-reaching further devolution," *The Herald*, September 15, 2014, http://www.heraldscotland.com/opinion/13180138.The_Herald_s_view__we_back_staying_within_UK__but_only_if_there_s_more_far_reaching_further_devolution/.

[31] Linda Colley, "Britishness and Otherness: An Argument," *Journal of British Studies* 31 no. 4 (1992): 315.

For the pro-UK Better Together campaign, this issue was integral in garnering opposition to independence. Voters in the South of Scotland strongly opposed independence – with Dumfries & Galloway and the Scottish Borders both voting heavily in favor of the Union. This opposition can be traced back to claims of national identity in the southern regions of Scotland. A ComRes poll conducted in the two border councils in early January 2014 found that 59% of voters said they would vote against independence in the referendum. When asked about national identity, "one in five (21%) people in the region felt 'Scottish not British' and a further quarter (24%) 'more Scottish than British.'"[32] These perceptions of national identity are compatible with the results of the referendum, as roughly 65% of voters in these two electoral councils voted No.[33]

Chiefly, the debate surrounding the referendum in the newspapers both among citizens and editorialists focused on issues of civic nationalism, most notably immigration, the economy, and welfare. Immigration has become an increasingly contentious issue within the United Kingdom, and public opinion surveys have revealed that immigration has surpassed the National Health Service and the economy as the most important issue facing the United Kingdom.[34] As of 2013, over

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[32] Magnus Gardham, "Over half of people in South would vote No," *The Herald,* January 8, 2014, 4.

[33] "Scotland Decides," *BBC News*, http://www.bbc.com/news/events/scotland-decides/results.

[34] "UK Public Opinion toward Immigration: Overall Attitudes and Level of Concern," The Migration Observatory (Oxford: University of Oxford, 2015), 3.

60% of Britons considered immigration as a problem, not an opportunity. However, while almost 60% of Scots support reduced immigration to Scotland, more Scots than not perceive immigration as beneficial to Scotland.[35]

The 2013 local elections and 2014 European elections witnessed the rise of the UK Independence Party, a right-wing populist party with a platform aimed at strengthening "Britishness" and preventing the "Islamification" of Britain. UKIP attempts to position itself as a civic nationalist party, but its policies seem to advance the contrary by rejecting notions of English inclusivity that embraces all nationalities present in England.[36] The ascendancy of UKIP in recent years has influenced Scots' perception of immigration issues and the country's relationship with England and Westminster. After an article in *The Herald* argued that 70% of Scots support UKIP's immigration policy, many Scots responded to *The Herald's* assertion with unwavering support for immigration. One such Scot remarked:

> The Scots at home are made up of Britons, Picts, Scots, Norse, Jutes, Angles, Flemings, Normans and Irish and many others and in more recent years folk from all around the world. The biggest group of immigrants into Scotland at the moment are the 460,000 folk from England who have chosen to live among us. We are indeed a mongrel nation, but what makes us a nation is shared experience, shared

http://www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/sites/files/migobs/Public%20Opinion-Overall%20Attitudes%20and%20Level%20of%20Concern.pdf.

[35] "Immigration and Independence: Public Opinion on Immigration in Scotland in the Context of the Referendum Debate," The Migration Observatory (Oxford: University of Oxford, 2014), 5-6. http://www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/sites/files/migobs/Report%20-%20immigration%20and%20independence_0.pdf.

[36] Andrew Mycock and Richard Hayton, "The Party Politics of Englishness," *The British Journal of Politics & International Relations* 16 no. 2 (2014), 264.

values and shared identity in our communities. You are Scottish
because that is what you chose to be.[37]

Additionally, some argued that the 70% statistic was misleading. Contrary to

other European nations, immigration is not considered a critical issue in Scotland.

Those who do see immigration as a key issue are actually concerned that Scotland

will suffer if immigration is reduced. A declining birth rate as well as mass migration

of young Scots to England and other European countries has these Scots arguing

that immigration, particularly of students and skilled workers, will be crucial to

economic success should Scotland choose to become an independent country. In

fact, in a 2008 survey of SNP members, respondents were asked to rank potential

threats to the Scottish nation. Less than 8% of respondents listed immigration from

outside the UK as one of the three biggest threats to Scotland. Instead, they

identified "being denied North Sea oil revenues," "lack of self-confidence as a

nation," and "London Government" as the top three issues threatening Scotland.[38]

The independence movement's pro-immigration stance has been a point of criticism

for the Vote Yes campaign by the Better Together group. In an analysis of the

relationship between Scottish independence and immigration, *The Herald* asserted:

> Most nationalist parties in Europe are hostile to immigration, like
> Finland's True Finns; Belgium's Vlaam's Blok; and our own British
> National Party and Ukip. However, many Unionists have sought to
> attack the SNP's liberal open borders policy as another 'indy danger.'

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[37] David McEwan Hill, "We must resist those who make immigration a
political weapon," *The Herald*, May 22, 2014, 16.

[38] James Mitchell, Lynn Bennie, and Rob Johns, *The Scottish National Party:
Transition to* Power (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 157.

> Better Together say that, if Scotland votes Yes to independence and
> tries to allow more immigrants to stay here, England will erect border
> posts to keep them out.[39]

In late 2013, the Scottish Government released a white paper outlining its case for independence as well as the logistics of its future relationship with the United Kingdom should Scotland vote Yes for independence. In the white paper, the SNP-run Scottish Government argued that current immigration policy for Scotland, which is controlled by Westminster, "is heavily influenced by the conditions in the south east of England."[40] Westminster's aggressive approach to all types of immigration – from skilled workers to refugees – is contrary to the needs of Scotland and its economy, argued the Scottish Government. Instead, an independent Scotland would "demonstrate our respect for international law, human rights and social justice in offering asylum to those seeking a place of refuge from persecution, war, natural disaster or other major crises."[41] Additionally, the white paper makes both a cultural and economic argument for all migration, stating, "Migrants have played an important part throughout Scottish history in enriching and renewing our

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[39] "Where stands Scotland as politics of race rises in UK?," *The Herald*, January 9, 2014, 13.

[40] Scottish Government, *Scotland's Future: Your Guide to an Independent Scotland* (Edinburgh: APS Group Scotland, 2013), 267.

[41] Ibid., 269.

culture and boosting the economy of the country. We will welcome people who want

to come to work and live in Scotland."[42]

The white paper's argument that migrants have played an important role in

renewing Scottish culture is unique for a nationalist movement. As stated

previously, nationalist movements are typically concerned with a sense of ethnic

unity derived from a shared cultural history. They are inherently backward-looking.

However, the survey of SNP members strengthens the SNP leaders' argument that

this is not the case for the Scottish nationalist movement. When asked what was

important to be considered truly Scottish, respondents determined that "to feel

Scottish" was the primary determinant of Scottishness, with almost 78% selecting

this measure as "very important." The second most important factor was "to respect

Scottish political institutions and laws." "To have been born in Scotland," "to have

Scottish ancestry," and "to have lived in Scotland for most of one's life" were only

considered "very important" by 33%, 24.4%, and 28.1%, respectively.[43]

Additionally, when asked about factors one considers personally important about

being Scottish, "the Scottish people" was overwhelmingly selected as the number

one factor. Only 12.7% chose "Scottish history" as the most significant aspect of

being Scottish and 3.3% chose "Scottish art, music and literature," both factors

typically associated with ethnic nationalist movements.[44]

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[42] Ibid., 269.

[43] James Mitchell et al., *Transition to Power*, 157.

[44] Ibid., 154.

In addition to discussions surrounding immigration, pro-independence rhetoric in local newspapers largely reflected the declarations of the SNP that an independent Scotland would be better off economically. This argument has circulated since the discovery of oil in the North Sea but has shifted from a discussion of oil revenue to one concerned with Tory rule. At independence rallies in Edinburgh and Glasgow, supporters carried signs stating, "End Tory Rule Forever. Vote Yes." These signs reflected a concern throughout Scotland that the dominance of the Conservative Party in Westminster was incompatible with Scottish attitudes. For example, in the 2010 UK General Election, the Conservative Party won 306 seats in Westminster. However, the Conservative Party only won one of Scotland's 59 seats in the House of Commons.[45] By 2015, the SNP won all but three of Scotland's seats in the UK General Election, yet it still only possess 17% of the seats in Westminster, and the Conservatives retained power in Westminster.[46] Scots increasingly felt that their needs were not being represented in a Tory-controlled Parliament that they did not elect.

The Conservative Party's support for austerity policies ran counter to Scottish economic principles. SNP Treasury spokesman Stewart Hosie argued, "No matter how hard they try to hide it, it is becoming increasingly clear what a No vote

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[45] The Electoral Commission, "2010 UK General Elections Results." http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/find-information-by-subject/elections-and-referendums/past-elections-and-referendums/uk-general-elections/2010-uk-general-election-results.

[46] The Electoral Commission, "UK Parliamentary general election 2015." http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/find-information-by-subject/elections-and-referendums/upcoming-elections-and-referendums/uk-parliamentary-general-election-2015.

means for Scotland – more welfare cuts, more spending cuts and more years of

economic mismanagement."[47] In the Scottish Government's white paper, it argues

that Scotland's limited control over taxation is detrimental to the Scottish economy.

Under the current system, Scotland only has control over 15% of its tax revenues.[48]

An independent Scotland would have total control over both tax rates and the

allocation of tax revenues. The Scottish Government argues that total control over

taxation would allow Scotland to align allocation of tax revenues with Scottish

principles, circumstances, and priorities without having to raise taxes. It hopes to

design a new tax system that is more efficient and less discriminatory. They argue

that the current tax system and spending cuts imposed by Westminster do little to

tackle issues of economic inequality – a priority for an independent Scotland.

Letters and articles in *The Herald* largely dealt with economic concerns about

independence. In a letter responding to an article connecting immigration and the

economy, one Scot lamented:

> UK economic strategy is dominated by the needs of London and the
> south-east and Scotland is simply a distant and peripheral region but
> an outstandingly good oil-based income generator for the Treasury
> and an excellent pool of talented people… [Independence] is the only
> option that will provide Scotland with the fiscal levers to develop its
> own economic strategies, invest in infrastructure, stimulate industrial
> and commercial growth, build more homes, creates jobs in Scotland

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[47] Michael Settle, "Scots funding 'faces huge cut after election,'" *The Herald*, January 7, 2014, 6.

[48] Scottish Government, *Scotland's Future,* 117.

and retain its people.[49]

This argument was not uncommon among Scots writing into *The Herald.* Another

Scot highlighted the "untapped assets" that Scotland can benefit from if only it

escaped Westminster's grasp:

> We have enviable assets and untapped assets. As well as energy (oil,
> shale oil, coal, nuclear, hydro, timber, wind and tidal), we have
> remarkable intellectual property, world-class universities, light
> engineering, shipbuilding, electronics, pharmaceuticals, textiles,
> whisky, tourism and agriculture (including vegetables and soft
> fruits).[50]

Another frustrated Scot wrote:

> It is successive Westminster parties who have been responsible for
> imposing unwelcome, unpopular, and un-voted-for policies on
> Scotland for at least three decades, in the form of the poll tax, illegal
> wars and, most recently, the bedroom tax and severe cuts in the
> welfare state.[51]

This concern with the welfare state is prevalent throughout Scottish

newspapers and pro-independence writings. While the Conservative Government in

Westminster wants to make cuts to the welfare state, Scotland is looking to expand

it, primarily in the field of education. The Scottish Government's white paper

highlights the connection between poverty and academic achievement and hopes to

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[49] Bob Hamilton, "Great prophets and losses in the debate on independence,"
The Herald, January 8, 2014, 14.

[50] Stuart Wright, "Do not forsake the Scottish identity that exists in England,"
The Herald, March 3, 2014, 14.

[51] Maggie Milne, "Scotland's history shows it to be one of the oldest civic
nations," *The Herald*, April 16, 2014, 12.

mitigate the effects of poverty on education by making education accessible for all

children. This involves keeping Scotland's universities tuition-free, providing public

pre-school education to three and four year olds, as well as disadvantaged two year

olds, and providing free childcare. In a debate on Scottish independence at the

Scottish Parliament, then-First Minister Alex Salmond announced a plan to provide

free school lunches to all students during their first three years of primary school.

John Dickie, the head of the Child Poverty Action Group in Scotland, responded to

Salmond's announcement, saying, "A universal approach to healthy free school

lunches provides a huge boost to children and parents at a time when they are

under increasing pressure from tax credit and benefit cuts, soaring food and energy

prices and stagnating wages."[52] In addition to benefiting disadvantaged students,

the Scottish Government believes that expanded school lunches and free childcare

under an independent Scotland would save families money and allow more mothers

to enter the workforce, which would ultimately stimulate the Scottish economy.

Issues surrounding the Scottish economy are closely tied with another popular

point of conversation within the Scottish nationalist movement: social justice. Scots

pride themselves on being part of a socially just people but believe Scotland would

be more socially just if it did not have to abide by laws put in place by Westminster.

The white paper declares:

> Social justice is about wellbeing and opportunity for all and, with
> independence, the Scottish Parliament and Government can improve
> the quality of life for most people in Scotland, as well as securing the

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[52] Magnus Gardham, "Salmond: thousands more to be given free childcare,"
The Herald, January 8, 2014, 6.

wellbeing of the most vulnerable. We can do more to promote the
cohesiveness of society, to enable equality of opportunity and respect
and build the intrinsic dignity of individuals and communities.[53]

The white paper argues that an independent Scotland will be more socially just

because it will create a stronger welfare system, implement a fairer tax and benefits

system, and focus on preventing inequality by promoting education, employment,

and stronger wages for the less privileged. Anxiety over the moral position of the

United Kingdom has increased in Scotland primarily due to the rise of UKIP,

conservative economic policies that favor the wealthy, and a lack of concern for

environmental issues in Westminster. One former Labour regional council leader

argued:

> I don't see it as me personally benefiting from independence at my
> age, but I honestly believe it is for my grandchildren… It is an
> opportunity for them to live in a more egalitarian country that will
> have done away with nuclear weapons and living in a more green-
> related approach to the economy.[54]

SNP leader Alex Salmond argued repeatedly throughout 2014 that the anti-

immigration policies of UKIP are diametrically opposed to Scottish values:

> The anti-immigrant message being peddled by Ukip is one that leaves
> people in Scotland feeling deeply uncomfortable. We pride ourselves
> on being a welcoming, tolerant country and Ukip's brand of nasty
> intolerance has no place here.[55]

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[53] Scottish Government, *Scotland's Future*, 151.

[54] Robbie Dinwoodie, "Mulvey backs Yes campaign for the sake of his
grandchildren," *The Herald*, January 6, 2014, 6.

[55] Kate Devlin, "Salmond in call to fight Ukip 'intolerance' at the ballot box,"
The Herald, May 17, 2014, 6.

With its emphasis on the benefits of immigration, the failure of austerity

economic policies in Westminster, and a call for a more socially just country, it is

clear that the rhetoric used by those supporting independence for Scotland

primarily relied on claims of civic nationalism. Interestingly, even those opposing

the Scottish nationalist movement were more interested in the economic benefits of

remaining in the UK rather than a threatened sense of Britishness. As one Scot

contended in a letter to the editor:

> The SNP have lost the argument on the economic benefits of
> independence. There are no gains to be had, only losses. Extra oil
> revenues would not offset the loss of current transfers from
> Westminster. Public and private pensions would be degraded.
> Financial, insurance, retail, transport, defence and postal services
> would cost us more. Fuel bills would be no lower... So the debate for
> the next nine months comes down to national identity. And there is
> little succor even in that for the SNP.[56]

It is interesting to see even those opposed to independence commenting on the lack

of enthusiasm for claims of ethnic nationalism in the Scottish independence

movement. Additionally, even pro-independence claims looking to ethnic

nationalism ultimately turned into discussions of civic nationalism. In an editorial in

The Herald on the day of the referendum, one writer stated:

> Amidst the swirl of assertions and counter assertions as to whether an
> independent Scotland would be economically better or worse off, a

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[56] Richard Mowbray, "Great prophets and losses in the debate on
independence," *The Herald*, January 8, 2014, 14.

more fundamental issue, that of identity and values, is arguably being overlooked.[57]

However, the writer goes on to argue that Scotland's Presbyterian roots caused it to promote egalitarianism and social responsibility. He argues that this identity is being dissolved by the Anglicization of Scotland:

> The dominant culture of England is increasingly of an individualistic, free-market, neo-liberalism. This has led to increasing inequality with its toxic effects, politically-driven austerity and a push to dismantle any form of the welfare state.[58]

This emphasis on civic nationalism as opposed to ethnic nationalism fits interestingly with Colley's thesis that "we usually decide who we are by reference to who and what we are not."[59] This would usually assume that the lack of an Other within political discourse would lead to a national self-consciousness about what it means to be Scottish as opposed to British. However, in this instance, Scottishness is not discussed in ethnic or cultural terms; rather, it looks at its national character as opposed to that of the UK as a whole. This manifests itself in anxieties over egalitarianism and social justice and how those principles are influenced by economic policy. Instead of reducing Scottishness to racial or religious characteristics, the nationalist movement identifies Scottish national identity as forged over shared principles of individual rights and equality. For Scottish nationalists, the Other is not the English themselves but the policies of successive

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[57] Ian Kerr, "To opt for No would be to vote for an end to our identity and values," *The Herald*, Septmber 18, 2014, 17.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Colley, "Britishness and Otherness," 311.

Tory administrations and the exclusionary principles forwarded by the current

Westminster government.

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CHAPTER THREE

English Nationalism

Despite the success of Prime Minister David Cameron and the Better

Together campaign in keeping the Union together in 2014, Scotland is not the only

country within the United Kingdom with a growing nationalist movement. Colley's

observation of internal strife due to the absence of an Other is not exclusive to the

Celtic Fringe. The Scottish nationalist movement arguably has an emerging English

counterpart. Many English increasingly question the purpose of the Union and

England's place in it following devolution in 1998.[60] Historians have debated

whether English nationalism is a *movement* seeking an end to the Union or simply a

mood linked to concerns about what it means to be British as opposed to English.[61]

The former would manifest itself in a visible push for constitutional change, while

the latter would seek to bring questions of national identity to the forefront in

English culture without an evident political movement. This chapter will explore

the growth of English nationalism since devolution and will examine how English

nationalists responded to the rise of the Scottish nationalist movement and the 2014

Scottish referendum.

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[60] Arthur Aughey, "Anxiety and injustice: the anatomy of contemporary English nationalism," *Nations and Nationalism* 16 no. 3 (2010): 507.

[61] For more information on this debate, see Arthur Aughey, "A could no bigger than a man's hand," *Parliamentary Brief,* July 14, 2008; Krishan Kumar, *The Idea of Englishness: English Culture, National Identity and Social Thought* (London: Routledge, 2015); Andrew Mycock and Richard Hayton, "The Party Politics of Englishness," *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 16 (2014).

Three separate Acts of Parliament established devolved parliaments in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland in 1998. While the three nations would still fall under the jurisdiction of Westminster in certain policy areas, devolution granted the nations of the Celtic Fringe varying degrees of greater administrative, legislative, and budgetary autonomy. However, during the debates in Westminster concerning devolution, Scottish Labour MP for West Lothian Tam Dalyell asked "how it could be fair once a Scottish parliament was in existence that he…would continue to have a vote on legislation that affected health and education in West Bromwich (a town in the West Midlands of England), whereas a fellow MP from West Bromwich would no longer have any say on such matters as they affected…West Lothian."[62] This became known as the West Lothian Question, or the English Question, and remained a prominent question in British political discourse until the victory of the Conservatives in the general election in 2015.

An analysis of claims of national identity immediately following devolution can help reveal the degree to which the English Question has impacted English nationalism. Interestingly, social attitudes surveys in Scotland, Wales, and England show that devolution had a stronger impact on claims of national identity in England than it did in Scotland or Wales. In 1974, 65% of Scots identified as Scottish rather than British. By 2003 – four years after devolution – this number had increased only seven points to 72%.[63] In England, devolution caused a sizable

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[62] John Curtice, "A Stronger or Weaker Union? Public Reactions to Asymmetric Devolution in the United Kingdom," *Publius* 36 no. 1 (2006): 105.

[63] Ibid., 98.

decrease in those identifying as British rather than English. Two years before

devolution went into effect, only one-third of English respondents identified as

English rather than British. By 1999, the percentage identifying as English was equal

to those identifying as British.[64]

Colley could challenge this data as failing to account for overlapping senses of

identity. The survey fails to acknowledge that a respondent could identify as both

Scottish and British and that these identities can change depending on a variety of

factors. This was one of Colley's criticisms of the Four Nations approach. She argued,

"Imposing a strict three- or four-nation model onto these intricate and myriad

regional alignments is difficult and distorting… It was quite possible for an

individual to see himself as being, at one and the same time, a citizen of Edinburgh, a

Lowlander, a Scot, and a Briton."[65] An individual who identifies as both a Scot and a

Briton is less likely to demonstrate nationalist tendencies than an individual who

identifies exclusively as a Scot. For this reason, it is necessary to distinguish

between those who have dual identities within England and those who consider

themselves English but not British.

In 1988, Luis Moreno formulated the Moreno question to investigate

instances of dual identity. This five-point scale was developed for groups like the

Scots who exist as "substate peripheral nations" with varying attitudes toward home

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[64] Ibid.

[65] Linda Colley, "Britishness and Otherness: An Argument," *Journal of British Studies* 31 no. 4 (1992): 315.

rule within the larger British framework.[66] Applied to dual identities in England, the

scale would have respondents place themselves at any of five points with "English,

not British" at one end and "British, not English" at the other. The three middle

points are for individuals with overlapping identities – those who feel equally

British and English, those who feel slightly more British, and those who feel slightly

more English. The Moreno data from 2013 reveals dual identity in Wales and

Scotland, though a vast majority of respondents still felt either equally British and

Welsh/Scottish or more Welsh/Scottish than British, with only 17% and 8%

identifying as more British than Welsh/Scottish, respectively.[67] Data collected from

the British Social Attitudes Survey between 1997 and 2012 show a ten-point

increase between 1997 and 1999 in the "English, not British" category from 7% to

17%, but the numbers have remained consistent in all categories since 1999, with

17% identifying as "English, not British" in 2012.[68]

Interestingly, while perceptions of national identity have remained

consistent since devolution, English political attitudes have not. This is most obvious

in the rise of the UK Independence Party (UKIP), a right-wing political party

concerned with immigration, the EU, and the West Lothian Question. Support for

UKIP closely mirrored the results of study of Englishness on the Moreno scale, with

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[66] Luis Moreno, "Scotland and Catalonia: The Path to Home Rule," *Scottish Government Yearbook 1988* (1988): 166.

[67] Curtice, "A Stronger or Weaker Union?," 100.

[68] "Trends in National Identity," British Social Atittudes Survey, NatCen Social Research, http://www.bsa.natcen.ac.uk/latest-report/british-social-attitudes-30/devolution/trends-in-national-identity.aspx.

UKIP winning almost 13% of the vote in the 2015 general election, only four points

below the 17% identifying as English as opposed to British in 2012.[69] While

positioning itself as a British Unionist party, Party Leader Nigel Farage announced in

2011 that establishing an English Parliament "is the only way of saving the Union."[70]

Rather than seeing itself as an English separatist party, it argues that English

nationalism must be embraced to temper English resentment toward asymmetric

devolution policies and keep the Union intact.

However, vestiges of English nationalism are no longer exclusive to UKIP.

Britain's most prominent political parties – the Conservative Party, the Liberal

Democrats, and the Labour Party – are all becoming increasingly Anglicized. The

Conservative Party, which currently possesses a majority of seats in Parliament, has

traditionally been the Party of Unionism while attempting to avoid seeming too

Anglo-centric. William Hague, who served as the Party's leader during devolution,

contended, "English nationalism is the most dangerous of all forms of nationalism

that can arise within the United Kingdom."[71] He even rejected the establishment of

an English Parliament, instead favoring a system of English votes for English laws.[72]

However, Hague stepped down as the Party's leader in 2001, and English votes for

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[69] "Election 2015 Results," *BBC News,*
http://www.bbc.com/news/election/2015/results.

[70] Nigel Farage, "Speech at the UKIP Party Conference," Eastbourne,
September 9, 2011, http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b014k6nb.

[71] "English Nationalism 'threat to the UK,'" *BBC News*, January 9, 2000,
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/596703.stm.

[72] Andrew Mycock and Richard Hayton, "The Party Politics of Englishness,"
The British Journal of Politics and International Relations 16 (2014): 257.

English laws did not pass in Westminster until 2015. When David Cameron became the leader of the Conservative Party in 2005, he focused on the technicalities of implementing an English votes for English laws system, in hopes that by "seeking to address the constitutional anomaly of the West Lothian Question, the Conservatives [would be] able to maintain their traditional Unionist standpoint and sidestep the broader question of growing cultural and political identification with Englishness."[73]

The Labour Party was the outlier in British politics until the election in 2015. In the 2010 British general election, the Labour Party under Scottish MP Gordon Brown secured 41 of Scotland's 59 seats in Westminster. Historically, Labour has dominated Scottish politics in Westminster, holding the plurality of Scottish seats in Westminster since 1955. Since devolution, the Conservative Party has been absent in Scottish politics, never winning more than a single seat.[74] This placed Labour in an uncomfortable position. While the other major political parties were discussing the West Lothian Question, Labour felt little incentive to engage the matter due to its widespread support outside of England. In a political climate that seemed to emphasize Englishness over Britishness since devolution, Labour appeared to be the anomaly. Brown's vision of multicultural Britishness drew critics from within his own party who believed this was central to Labour's defeat in 2010. After Gordon Brown stepped down from party leadership in 2010, English MP Edward Miliband hoped to respond to critics such as Labour MP John Denham, who argued:

[73] Ibid., 257-8.

[74] "Election 2010 Results," *BBC News*, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/election2010/results/.

We should acknowledge our own English identity, letting candidates stand as English Labour alongside our colleagues who stand as Welsh and Scottish Labour. We should talk of the English NHS or English universities, when that is what we mean. We should support Labour local authorities and working with others to promote a modern inclusive vision of Englishness, (and not just on St George's Day).[75]

These same sentiments were visible in Miliband's speeches, particularly in 2012 – a year of celebrated Englishness. In a speech at London's Royal Festival Hall, Miliband laid out Labour's case for a distinct Englishness:

I believe we can all be proud of our country, the United Kingdom. And of the nations that comprise it… That means England too. And those on the left have not been clear enough about this in the recent past. We must be in the future. We should embrace a positive, outward looking version of English identity.[76]

However, Miliband's speech demonstrated the challenging position Labour found itself in prior to the Scottish referendum. While declaring a pride in English identity, he also emphasized the unique British nature of his own story as an English Jew who is the son of Jewish refugees. Much of the speech highlighted Labour's belief that identities can be overlapping – one can be both English and British. At the same time, the speech condemned forms of nationalism – namely, Scottish nationalism – arguing, "the logic of the nationalists' case goes beyond politics and the economy. It insists that the identification with one of our nations is diminished by the identity with our country a whole. After all, they want to force people to choose. To be

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[75] John Denham, "The Rise of English Pride," *Institute for Public Policy Research,* https://johndenham.wordpress.com/articles-speeches-and-essays/the-rise-of-english-pride/.

[76] Edward Miliband, "Ed Miliband's Englishness Speech in Full," *Politics.Co.Uk*, June 7, 2012, http://www.politics.co.uk/comment-analysis/2012/06/07/ed-miliband-s-englishness-speech-in-full.

Scottish or British. I say you can be both."[77] Miliband was attempting to pander to a

growing sense of Englishness within British politics while denouncing nationalism

in the Celtic Fringe.

This tension was further exacerbated by the results of the 2015 general

election, where the debate between unionists and nationalists became manifest in

Westminster. After the 2010 and 2015 general elections, the *Daily Mail* published

electoral maps, highlighting the most significant outcomes of each election. The

maps reproduced below demonstrate the change in the British political landscape

following the 2015 election.[78]

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[77] Ibid.

[78] "State of the parties: A picture of a nation divided," *Daily Mail*, May 7, 2010, http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/election/article-1274963/UK-ELECTION-RESULTS-2010-State-parties-A-picture-nation-divided.html.; "The night England turned blue... And Scotland yellow as Liberal Democrat orange is virtually wiped off the map," *Daily Mail*, May 8, 2015, http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3074293/The-night-England-turned-blue-Scotland-yellow-Lib-Dem-orange-virtually-wiped-map.html.

Figure 2.1: 2010 General Election Map

This map paints a picture of a nation divided, with a routed Labour party retreating to its urban heartlands and the rest of England turning into a sea of blue. In inner London and Birmingham, South Wales, central Scotland and the great industrial conurbations of the North, Labour still holds sway, but the red enclaves are shrinking fast. The Liberal Democrats too have crashed back to earth. After the euphoria of two weeks ago, the map shows they have once again been pushed to the margins of politics.

KEY TO MAP
- Conservative
- Labour
- LibDem
- Green
- UKIP
- BNP
- Plaid Cymru
- SNP
- Democratic Unionist
- Social Democratic and Labour Party
- Sinn Fein
- Alliance
- Independent
- Ulster Unionist

STATE OF THE PARTIES

TORIES 306 seats (+97) — 36.1% of vote

LABOUR 258 seats (–91) — 29%

LIBDEM 57 seats (–5) — 23%

OTHER 28 seats — 11.9%

SCOTLAND Labour majority 23 seats

LONDON

WALES Labour majority 12 seats

ENGLAND Conservative majority 62 seats

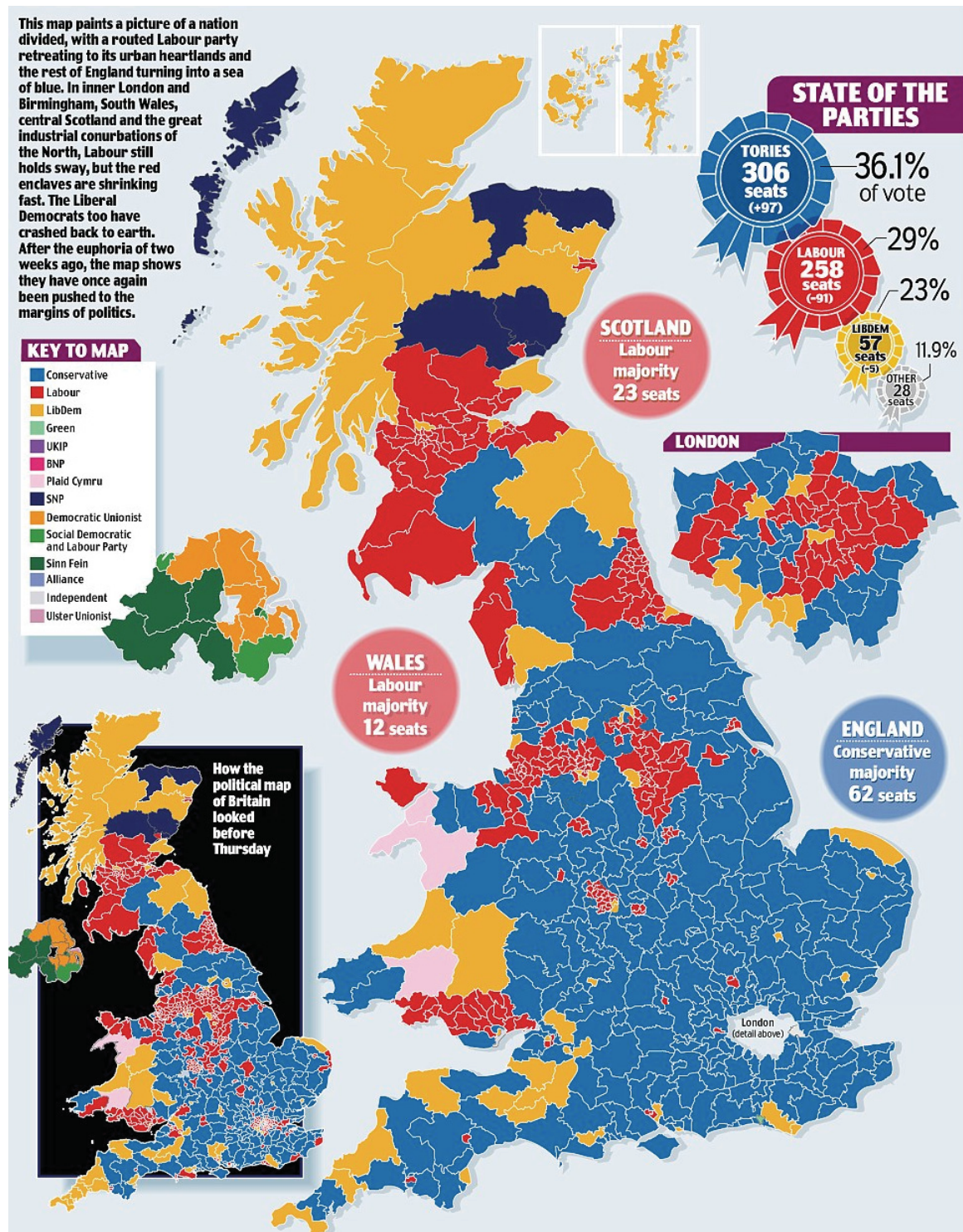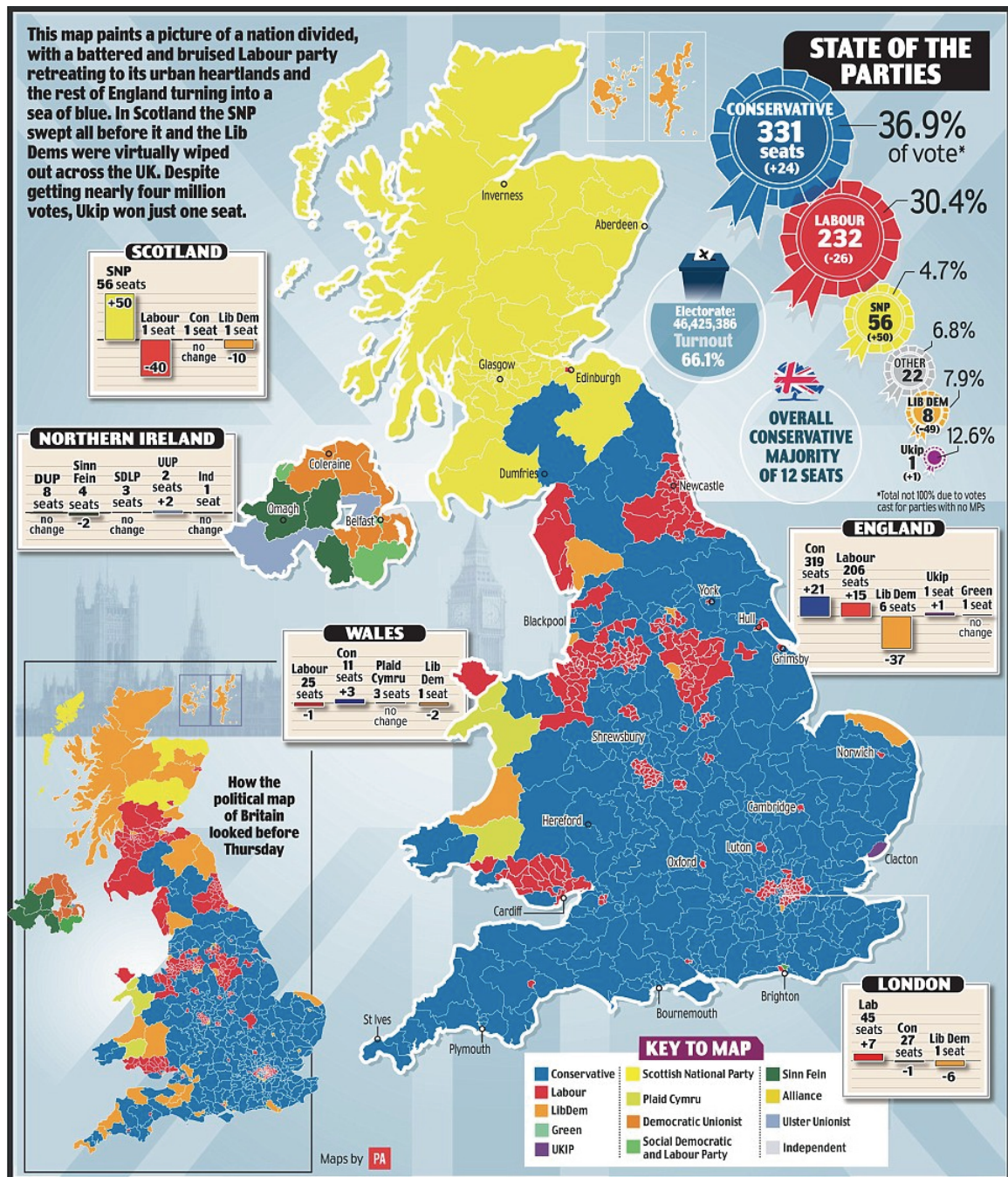How the political map of Britain looked before Thursday

London (detail above)

Figure 2.2: 2015 General Election Map

The most obvious change takes place in Scotland, where Labour faced a staggering defeat at the hands of the SNP. The Scottish Nationalist Party gained 50 seats in Westminster, while Labour lost 40 of its previous 41 seats. After the election, the SNP held all but three of Scotland's seats in Westminster, with the other three seats equally distributed among the Conservatives, Labour, and the Liberal Democrats. The electoral maps also reveal tensions in Wales and Northern Ireland, where the seats were divided up between nationalist parties and unionist parties. These will be discussed in the next chapter.

The realization that none of the major British political parties would exert influence in Scotland impacted each party's relationship with Britishness. Following Labour's disastrous defeat across the Union, Edward Miliband stepped down as the Party's leader and was succeeded by MP Jeremy Corbyn. The new Labour leader provides a stark contrast to Miliband while serving as an interesting case study for Labour's precarious relationship with Englishness. While Miliband was outspoken about his opposition to Scottish nationalism, Corbyn presents a warmer tone toward nationalists in the United Kingdom. After the referendum, Corbyn criticized the Scottish Labour Party for teaming up with Scottish Conservatives in the Better Together campaign, arguing this was the cause of Labour's defeat in Scotland. When further pressed about his relationship with British Unionism, Corbyn commented, "I would prefer the UK to stay together, yes, but I recognise the right of people to take

the decision on their own autonomy and independence."[79] This approach was not

always warmly welcomed by his colleagues within the Party, though. Former

Shadow Education Secretary Tristram Hunt argued, "Our sense of Englishness

matters to us more and more, and the Labour Party has fallen on the wrong side of

that cultural divide."[80] He may be right, as 57% of people in England believe Labour

"puts the interests of others before the interests of England."[81]

While Labour's losers may criticize Corbyn's coldness toward Unionism, the

loss of Scotland in the 2015 general election means that Labour is becoming just as

Anglicized as Britain's other major political parties. Labour's most recent party

manifesto reflects this anglicization, only mentioning Scotland seven times in the

eighty-page document. The only mention of Scotland pertains to supporting further

devolution.[82] The bulk of the document focuses on issues such as education and

welfare – issues that Westminster only deliberates on for England, not the entirety

of the United Kingdom.

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[79] Michael Settle, "Corbyn: I'm a Socialist not a Unionist," *The Herald*, August 17, 2015, http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/13609421.Corbyn__I_m_a_Socialist_not_a_Unionist/.

[80] Ben Glaze, "Labour must learn to embrace Englishness, says Tristram Hunt," *Mirror*, February 4, 2016, http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/labour-must-learn-embrace-englishness-7306073.

[81] James Morris, "Labour's Englishness problem isn't imaginary. It is real and pressing," *NewStatesman*, March 10, 2016, http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/staggers/2016/03/labours-englishness-problem-isnt-imaginary-it-real-and-pressing.

[82] "Britain Can Be Better: The Labour Party Manifesto 2015," *Labour,* http://www.labour.org.uk/page/-/BritainCanBeBetter-TheLabourPartyManifesto2015.pdf.

The United Kingdom's 2015 local elections – which excluded London, Scotland, and Wales – are arguably most revealing about English attitudes toward English nationalism. Much of the discourse surrounding English nationalism has called for further devolution of power to local councils in addition to the establishment of an English Parliament. Of the four major political parties competing for English councils, two saw substantial gains, while the other two lost councils. The two successful parties were the two parties most often linked with Englishness: the Conservative Party and UKIP. The Conservatives increased their control of English councils by winning 541 additional councillors and 32 more councils. UKIP's victories were more significant, as it picked up its first council. By winning 33 of Thanet's 56 seats, UKIP gained control of its first council in the district where party leader Nigel Farage failed to gain a parliamentary seat.[83]

The success of UKIP in the coastal district of Thanet, located in the southeastern tip of England, reflects a broader trend for English nationalism. While UKIP claims to defend the entirety of the Union from threats to Britishness, it draws its primary support from the south and midlands.[84] This is consistent with research conducted on regional perceptions of Englishness. In a study of Englishness, one respondent argued, "the issue of English identity seems to be more difficult to grasp than that of Scottish, Irish or Welsh identity. The English seem to identify more

[83] "Election 2015: UKIP controls Thanet Council," *BBC News*, May 10, 2015, http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-32672010.

[84] Mycock and Hayton, "The Party Politics of Englishness," 264.

readily with their regional identity rather than their Englishness."[85] Another

respondent argued, "if anyone asked where I come from I would say Yorkshire not

England."[86] This reflects Colley's thesis that regional identities can often be just as

important, if not moreso, than national distinctions. This same principle applies to

perceptions of Englishness. Those living furthest from the Celtic Fringe are more

likely to identify with Englishness rather than Britishness. Concerns with Unionism

can be attributed to the conflation of Englishness with Empire rather than a genuine

concern for the contributions of Scotland within the Union.

In 2010, Aughey observed, "It is difficult to come to a certain conclusion

about the politics of Englishness because things may change rapidly in the next few

years."[87] The significant differences between the election results in 2010 and 2015

underscore this assessment of the British political landscape. This is further

complicated by the tenuous relationship between England and its Celtic neighbors,

most manifest in the growth of the SNP in Scotland and the emergence of an English

nationalist mood in England. The decline of Labour in Scotland and the rise of UKIP

and the continued dominance of the Tories in England reveal the developing politics

of Englishness and the desire for England to assert its own identity within the Union.

This call for an acknowledgment of Englishness has emerged in response to

devolution and the Scottish referendum, as evidenced by social atittudes surveys

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[85] Jack McCabe, Shaun McDaid, and Andrew Mycock, "My England? A study of England and Englishness," University of Huddlesfield, http://www.hud.ac.uk/media/universityofhuddersfield/content/image/news/newsstories/1404-april2014/in-page-story-image/04-englishness-main3.pdf.

[86] Ibid.

[87] Aughey, "Anxiety and Injustice," 520.

and studies of Englishness on the Moreno scale. This burgeoning nationalism in England and Scotland provides difficulties in understanding Colley's argument about Britishness. While England and Scotland are not united over an external Other, English nationalism does identify external threats to Britishness in the forms of the EU and Islam. However, as demonstrated earlier, these are not concerns for Scottish nationalists; rather, they are things the SNP has actively embraced.

Northern Ireland and Wales will further complicate the projection of Colley's thesis onto the current political situation in the United Kingdom. In the following chapter, I will briefly discuss the historical position of both Northern Ireland and Wales within the Union before analyzing nationalist movements in each country. Then I will examine social attitudes surveys, newspaper articles, and election results in each country to establish how the Northern Irish and the Welsh understand themselves culturally and politically within the United Kingdom.

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CHAPTER FOUR

Northern Irish and Welsh Nationalism

Northern Ireland and Wales both provide complicating narratives to Colley's thesis, partially due to their unique histories and relationships with England. Each of these will be explored in depth in this chapter, perhaps more so than claims of national identity. These histories are essential to understand how each of these countries relates to the United Kingdom and what nationalist movements within each country represents to its people. While each of these countries serves as a potential foil to Colley's argument, they do so for significantly different reasons. For the Welsh, the argument for a nationalist movement is somewhat similar to that forwarded in Scotland – claims of national identity and economic necessity functioning within a civic nationalist framework. However, in Northern Ireland, religious identities play a much larger role in understanding its emerging nationalist movement. These become significant as they demonstrate why a nationalist movement was able to grow and thrive so quickly in Scotland compared to the other nations of the Celtic Fringe. However, nationalism has not been absent in these countries and the reasons for and demands of these nationalist movements must be explored to determine if they are compatible with Colley's understanding of nationalism within the United Kingdom.

There is a common joke in Northern Ireland in which one man asks another, "Are you Catholic or Protestant?" The man responds, "Neither, I'm Jewish." The questioner pauses: "But are you a Catholic Jew or a Protestant Jew?" Such is the

nature of religious and political discourse in Northern Ireland, never entirely

removed from the tumultuous period of the late twentieth century known as The

Troubles.[88] This conflict between the Protestant Unionist majority and Catholic

nationalist minority officially ended in 1998 with the Good Friday Agreement – the

same agreement that brought devolution to Northern Ireland – but the sources of

this conflict were never entirely eliminated.

Much of the current discord in Northern Ireland can be traced back almost a

century to the creation of the Irish Free State in 1922. Nationalist sentiments

developed in Ireland in the nineteenth century in response to rising republicanism

throughout Europe. Nationalists in Ireland believed that the Catholic population in

Ireland was being treated unfairly under British rule. Throughout the late

nineteenth century, "fenian" organizations – groups dedicated to ending British

imperial rule – staged revolts across the island, which culminated in the Easter

Rising of 1916. While this armed insurrection did not end well for the

revolutionaries, the British response – executing the rebellion's leaders and

instituting martial law – completely legitimized the claims of fenian leaders, leading

to the rise of the nationalist political organization known as Sinn Féin. In the 1918

election, Sinn Féin won nearly three quarters of Ireland's seats in Westminster.[89]

Days after the election, Sinn Féin organized its own government in Ireland and

penned a Declaration of Independence from British rule. Over the next few years, a

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[88] "Scottish ballot is not stoking nationalism in Northern Ireland," *The Conversation*, April 11, 2014.

[89] "The Irish Election of 1918," Economic and Social Research Council, http://www.ark.ac.uk/elections/h1918.htm

guerilla military known as the Irish Republican Army fought British troops stationed

in Ireland. The gruesome actions of the British military during what came to be

known as the Anglo-Irish War led to widespread support for the republican cause.

In May 1921, the British government partitioned Ireland, creating Northern Ireland

out of six counties in the northern part of the island. However, when drawing the

line between what would become the Irish Free State and Northern Ireland, the

British government ignored the election results of 1918, placing counties

sympathetic to the nationalist cause in Northern Ireland. While the Anglo-Irish

Treaty of 1921 created the Irish Free State as a Dominion of the British Empire, Irish

republicans opposed the division of the island, arguing that it betrayed the Irish

Republic that had declared independence during the Easter Rising. This led to a

bloody civil war between republicans and nationalists, both of whom wanted an

independent Ireland but disagreed on Westminster's plans to accomplish that goal.

The "pro-treaty" faction ultimately won the civil war, largely thanks to superior

weapons supplied by the British. However, the ideals of the war remained relevant

in Irish politics throughout the twentieth century.

Dissatisfaction with British rule in Ireland had as much to do with beliefs

about national self-determination as it did with religious divisions. While the

predominantly Catholic population of Ireland argued that they were being

persecuted at the hands of the British because of their religious beliefs, the minority

Protestant population feared becoming a persecuted minority under an

independent Ireland. The Protestant population in Ireland has been located

primarily in the northern region of Ireland since the seventeenth century when

Protestants from Britain arrived to settle several plantations gained by the state under Common Law during the reign of James I.[90]

The Protestant majority in the new Northern Ireland ensured that Unionist parties would always represent Northern Ireland in Westminster. Despite a fairly even proportion of unionists and nationalists in the counties of Northern Ireland following the civil war, the constituencies were effectively gerrymandered to ensure Protestant Unionist rule.[91] Inspired by the growing Civil Rights movement in the United States, Catholics in Northern Ireland took to the streets in 1968 to vocalize their grievances against what they perceived as "the inherent discrimination of the political and economic structures of the Province."[92] This ignited three decades of guerrilla warfare between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland known as the Troubles.

Resolving the conflict proved to be difficult for the British government, which had intervened after declaring a state of emergency. Re-partitioning the island was off the table due to the large Catholic population in Belfast and Protestants opposed British rule if internment was not implemented first.[93] In the Belfast Agreement of 1998, Westminster decided that Northern Ireland would remain part of the United

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[90] "Flight of the Earls," *The Oxford Companion to Irish History* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1998), 201.

[91] "Northern Ireland House of Commons Election Results," http://www.election.demon.co.uk/stormont/counties.html.

[92] Caroline Kennedy-Pipe, *The Origins of the Present Troubles in Northern Ireland* (Addison Wesley Longman Limited: London, 1997), 31.

[93] Brian Barton, "The Historical Background to the Belfast Agreement" in *The Northern Ireland Question: The Peace Process and the Belfast Agreement,* eds. Brian Barton and Patrick J. Roche (Palgrave Macmillan: London, 2009), 12.

Kingdom as long as a majority of its inhabitants supported this. If the majority of people residing in Northern Ireland and the remainder of the island ever favored a united, independent Ireland, the British government would be required to implement that option.[94] This provision within the agreement has raised questions about the state of Irish nationalism. How has the Belfast Agreement affected nationalism, particularly within Northern Ireland? Has the possibility of a united Ireland sparked a stronger nationalist movement in Northern Ireland, or has the Agreement tamed concerns of a nationalist movement by granting the ability to remove itself from British control to the citizens themselves?

An analysis of political outcomes in Northern Ireland since the Agreement provide some insight into how the possibility of a unified Ireland has affected voters in Northern Ireland. Elections at every level of government since 1997 reveal that "elections in Northern Ireland remain contests marked by almost total correlation between religious affiliation and political preference."[95] While voting percentages for each party changed every election, the percentage voting for unionist parties and the percentage voting for nationalist parties remained fairly consistent, as demonstrated in Figure 3.1. The Democratic Unionist Party and Ulster Unionist Party both represent proponents of unionism within Northern Ireland, while Sinn Féin and the Social Democratic and Labour Party are nationalist parties.

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[94] "Northern Ireland Peace Agreement," United Nations Peacemaker, http://peacemaker.un.org/uk-ireland-good-friday98.

[95] Jonathan Tonge, "From conflict to communal politics: the politics of peace" in *Northern Ireland After the Troubles: A Society in Transition* (Manchester University Press: Manchester, 2008), 59.

Figure 3.1: Westminster Election Results (%)[96]

Election	Democratic Unionist Party	Ulster Unionist Party	Sinn Féin	Social Democratic and Labour Party
1997	13.6%	32.7%	16.1%	24.1%
2001	22.5%	26.8%	21.7%	21.0%
2005	33.7%	17.7%	24.3%	17.5%
2010	25.0%	15.2%*	25.5%	16.5%
2015	25.7%	16.0%	24.5%	13.9%

*Under UCUNF – a short-lived merger of the UUP and the Conservative Party.[97]

These results reveal that, politically, the Northern Irish remain divided fairly evenly on the question of unionism. Even more telling is the way Northern Ireland's religious divide is manifested in these results, as demonstrated in Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2: Party Affiliation by Religion (%)[98]

	Catholic	Protestant	No Religion
UUP	0	22	7
DUP	1	40	10
SDLP	25	1	3
SF	31	0	6
None of these	26	17	47

While the two sides appear locked in a stalemate, receiving nearly equal support at the polls, nationalist expectations are low within Northern Ireland. When asked whether it is likely or unlikely that there will be a United Ireland within the

[96] Ark, Northern Ireland Social and Political Archive, www.ark.ac.uk/elections/.

[97] Stephen Walker, "Tories wanted to merge with UUP," *BBC News*, March 30, 2009, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/northern_ireland/7971533.stm.

[98] Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey, 2014, Political Attitudes, www.ark.ac.uk/nilt/2014/.

next twenty years, only 16% believed it was "very likely" or "quite likely," while

72% believed it was "very unlikely" or "quite unlikely."[99] One possibility for this

pessimism is the demographics of the nationalist movement. In Scotland, the

independence movement is largely fueled by young Scots – primarily those between

the ages of 16 and 34. However, in Northern Ireland, the proportion of respondents

identifying themselves as "nationalists" is roughly equal to those identifying as

"unionists" across every age group.[100] The Scottish referendum appears to have

impacted Northern Ireland less than it impacted England. While the referendum

sparked concerns over English national identity and the future of the Union, the

Northern Irish admit to being largely unconvinced by the outcomes of Scottish

nationalism, as shown in Figure 3.3.

Figure 3.3: "Did the result of the Scottish Referendum make you think differently about the long-term future for Northern Ireland?" by Religion (%)[101]

	Catholic	Protestant	No Religion
Yes	27	31	26
No	62	67	67
Don't Know	11	3	7

Protestant support for unionism has little to do with unifying fears of an

external Other. For Protestants in Northern Ireland, the Other exists in the form of

Catholicism. As Colley argues, historically, "Catholics were beyond the boundaries,

always on the outside even if they were British-born: they did not and could not

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[99] Ibid.

[100] Ibid.

[101] Ibid.

belong."[102] However, this is no longer the case for the rest of the Union. While the

possibility of becoming a Protestant minority in a unified Ireland remains a fear for

Northern Irish unionists, Catholicism is not an external Other that concerns England,

Scotland, or Wales. The same holds true for the European Union as an external

Other. For many in Northern Ireland, the EU is perceived as the glue that has

preserved the fragile peace between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland

since 1998. Shared membership in the EU has also provided a degree of unity

between the two countries on the island. Economists and politicians who support

Britain's membership in the EU "warn that a Brexit would fracture Northern Irish

peace by further isolating it from the Republic of Ireland and cutting off local

communities from international funding."[103] Monetary assistance from the EU has

played a large role in rebuilding the island after the war, and the EU continues to

fund initiatives in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland that aim at

integrating Protestants and Catholics. The UUP, SDLP, and Sinn Féin have all

expressed support for Britain's continued membership in the EU, showing that the

European Union may actually be a point of unity for the Northern Irish.[104]

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[102] Linda Colley, "Britishness and Otherness: An Argument," *Journal of British Studies* 31 no. 4 (1992): 320.

[103] Jess McHugh, "What Would A Brexit Mean For Northern Ireland Peace? UK-European Union Referendum Looms In 2016," *International Business Times,* January 1, 2016, http://www.ibtimes.com/what-would-brexit-mean-northern-ireland-peace-uk-european-union-referendum-looms-2016-2244089.

[104] "Ulster Unionist Party Supports Staying in EU," *Belfast Telegraph*, March 5, 2016, http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/ulster-unionist-party-supports-staying-in-eu-34514128.html.

It is clear that Northern Ireland complicates Colley's argument that nationalism is fueled by the absence of an Other and unity is strengthened when an Other poses a threat to the United Kingdom. Religious sectarianism rather than support or opposition for England's role in Northern Irish affairs drives nationalism on the island. While Catholics argue they are a persecuted minority and desire to join the Catholic-majority Republic of Ireland, Protestants support unionism because they would become the minority in a unified Ireland. Potential Others that have inspired nationalist movements in England actually serve as a cause of division between England and the constituent members of the Union. While nationalist groups in England, such as UKIP, oppose Britain's membership in the EU, Northern Ireland sees EU membership as a crucial to the continued cooperation between Protestant and Catholics as well as between the two nations inhabiting the small island. If anything, English nationalism's support for "Brexit" could further fracture the Union, as "leaders in Northern Ireland and Scotland have already hinted that if that were the case they would lobby for their territories to leave the U.K. to stay in the EU."[105]

Partially due to its long history with England, the Welsh perspectives on nationalism and British Others differ greatly from those forwarded in the rest of the Celtic Fringe. Wales has functioned under English laws since the mid-sixteenth century, though England established its presence in Wales long before then. While the Acts of Union in 1536 and 1543 formalized the legal assimilation of the two

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[105] McHugh, "What Would A Brexit Mean For Northern Ireland Peace?"

countries, "Union had really been achieved by the Statute of Wales in 1284."[106] The transition to unionism after the Acts of Union was much smoother than that witnessed in Scotland. Prior to the Union, Wales already had a strong economic relationship with England and the Acts addressed most of the grievances expressed by the Welsh during England's conquest of the country in previous centuries.[107] However, early integration with England did not hinder Welsh cultural development. Wales retained a distinct identity rooted in its Celtic origins. The 2011 Census revealed that a sizable portion of the Welsh population still speaks the Welsh language (see Figure 3.4), and the country is officially bilingual.

Despite Wales' stronger sense of national identity, nationalism has struggled to establish a foothold in the small country. Since the late nineteenth century, small groups in Wales have pushed for increasing autonomy, but their goals have always been minor compared to those of nationalist groups in Scotland and Northern Ireland. It was not until 1925 that Wales witnessed the rise of a viable nationalist party thanks to working class attraction to socialism and trade union activity.[108]
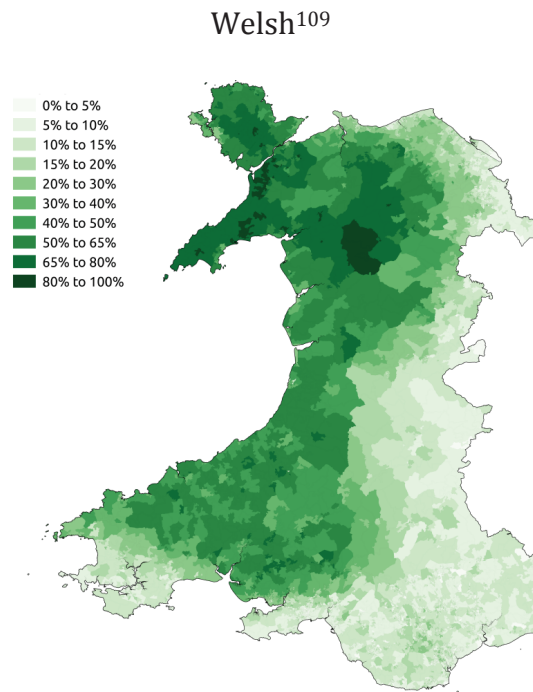
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[106] J. Graham Jones, *The History of Wales* (University of Wales Press: Cardiff, 2014), 55.

[107] Ibid., 56.

[108] Jones, *The History of Wales*, 156.

Figure 3.4: Proportion of Respondents in 2011 Census Able to Speak

Welsh[109]

Plaid Cymru sought to differentiate itself from previous failed attempts at inspiring

a nationalist movement in Wales, positioning itself as "a fiercely autonomous,

nationalist political party, which sought, first and foremost, to defend the Welsh

language."[110]

      Throughout much of the twentieth century, Plaid Cymru made few inroads in

the general elections, primarily gaining support in small rural communities. Labour

received strong support throughout Wales throughout the mid-twentieth century.

Plaid Cymru struggled to compete with Labour's hegemony, but it was successful in

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[109] "Welsh Speakers by LSOA, 2011 Census," Stats Wales, *Welsh Government*, https://statswales.wales.gov.uk/Catalogue/Welsh-Language/WelshSpeakers-by-LSOA-2011Census.

[110] Ibid.

pushing Labour further to the Left in the 1950s and 1960s. By the end of the 1960s, Labour began to consider "a more far-reaching scheme of devolution."[111] Fearing the acceleration of nationalism in the Celtic Fringe, "Labour hoped to demonstrate that the aspirations of people in Scotland and Wales could be met within the structures of the United Kingdom."[112] By the 1970s, Plaid Cymru garnered enough support in the general elections – as did the Scottish Nationalist Party – that devolution was placed on Westminster's political agenda.

Immediately after devolution, Plaid Cymru fared slightly better in elections, winning roughly 30% of the vote in the 1999 National Assembly for Wales (NAW) elections.[113] However, the party has failed to replicate such results in more recent elections, even falling behind the Conservative Party in the 2011 election. This could be attributed to the differing role national identity plays in Wales than it does in other parts of the Union. While Scottish nationalists are primarily concerned with issues such as immigration, taxation, and social justice, Welsh discussion surrounding independence focuses on significantly different issues. A 2003 article in Wales' *Western Mail* described the unique understanding of national identity in Wales thusly:

> To the vast majority of people in Wales, loyalty to one identity does not mean denial of another. They feel part of their local community,

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[111] Ibid., 172.

[112] John Curtice, "Is Devolution Succouring Nationalism?" *Contemporary Wales* 14 no. 1 (2001): 80.

[113] Richard Wyn Jones and Roger Scully, "Devolution and Electoral Politics in Scotland and Wales," *Publius* 46 no. 2 (2006): 118.

and they feel Welsh, British and increasingly European too. Opinion polls show we Welsh people have a sense of dual identity. Of being both Welsh and British. Or sharing in the same cultural interests as people in other parts of Britain.[114]

Many argue that Labour succeeded in Wales at mitigating the influence of nationalism by supporting devolution. Unlike in Scotland, where nearly three-quarters of the population voted in favor of devolution in 1997, the Welsh referendum voted for devolution by the slim margin of 50.3% to 49.7%.[115] Further, for many who voted in favor of devolution in Wales, they, too, hoped it would reduce nationalist sentiment in the country: "Devolution never was – and indeed must not be – a separatist vehicle. Otherwise I would not have personally campaigned so hard for a YES vote in the 1997 referendum."[116] Instead, supporters of devolution often support extended devolution, hoping for greater autonomy for the National Assembly in specific policy areas. In a 2004 letter to the editor, one Welsh nationalist argued:

> Plaid Cymru has a policy of 'independence' that is impractical and indeed undesirable; I suspect that many Plaid voters secretly agree, and also find the language now used by the party inconsistent with the whole tradition of the national movement. Many of us who are socialists, internationalists and Welsh nationalists with a small 'n',

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[114] Peter Hain, "Separatists fail to understand we are not only proud to be Welsh, but proud to be British as well," *Western Mail*, January 17, 2003, 2.

[115] "Results of Devolution Referendums (1979 & 1997)," *House of Commons Library*, http://www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/RP97-113.pdf.

[116] Hain, "Separatists fail to understand we are not only proud to be Welsh, but proud to be British as well," 2.

would like to see Wales and Scotland have greater influence on the conduct of British foreign policy - not less, or even none.[117]

This option was presented as a possibility to the Welsh people in 2011 through a referendum. The referendum specifically asked, "Do you want the Assembly now to be able to make laws on all matters in the 20 subject areas it has powers for?" Unlike the previous referendum, this one passed by a large majority, with 64.5% of Welsh voters supporting expanded devolution.[118] However, for the most part, the Welsh seem content with retaining control of these new powers and rejecting any further form of nationalism, such as a push for independence. In the aftermath of the Scottish referendum, only 3% of Welsh voters supported independence. While this marked a record low, the highest percentage of support for independence in recent years hovered around 10%, still demonstrating a lack of enthusiasm for independence.[119]

Interestingly, the Welsh tend to feel an even stronger sense of national identity than the Scots. In a 2011 survey, roughly 58% of respondents described themselves as "only Welsh," as opposed to 7% feeling "both Welsh and British," and

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[117] Dafyff Cadog, "Impractical Nationalism," *Western Mail,* May 29, 2004, 14.

[118] "Welsh Referendum: Voters give emphatic Yes on powers," *BBC News*, March 4, 2011, http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-wales-politics-12648649.

[119] Steven Morris, "Just 3% back Welsh independence," *The Guardian*, September 24, 2014, http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2014/sep/24/3-per-cent-back-welsh-independence.

16% identifying as "only British."[120] There was little variance across age groups, showing that perceptions of national identity and feelings of nationalism are not fueled by a specific age demographic, as they are in Scotland.

Similar to Northern Ireland, voters in Wales largely support British membership in the European Union, believing it is crucial to economic development in the country. Continuing the pattern across the Celtic Fringe of separatist parties favoring EU membership, Plaid Cymru released a manifesto in 2015 arguing the necessity of voting to stay in the EU. Its arguments were primarily economic: "150,000 Welsh jobs – more than 1 in 10 – depend on EU trade," "EU funding supports 16,000 Welsh farmers – up to 80% of farming income," and "Each person in Wales gets £40 more from the EU than they put in."[121] Even Tory MPs in Wales have remained fairly silent on the issue, with only three of the eleven Tory MPs in Wales vocalizing their support for Brexit.[122]

The position of nationalism in Wales differs from that in both Scotland and Northern Ireland, further complicating how historians and political scientists should understand the Union. While supporters of devolution argued that an overlapping sense of identity was unique to the Welsh population, surveys reveal that over half of the population identifies itself as "Welsh only." Further, over 60% of the

[120] "Dynamics of Diversity: Evidence from the 2011 Census," *ESRC Centre on Dynamics of Ethnicity*, November 2014, http://www.ethnicity.ac.uk/medialibrary/briefings/dynamicsofdiversity/code-census-briefing-national-identity-wales.pdf.

[121] "Cymru'n Gyntaf: Wales First. 2014 European Election Manifesto," https://partyof.wales/uploads/Ewrop_2014_/EU_Manifesto_English.pdf.

[122] "EU membership benefits for Wales are disputed," February 21, 2016, http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-wales-politics-35625904.

population voted in favor of increased devolution in 2011, but since then, Plaid Cymru has struggled to gain traction, demonstrating a lack of enthusiasm for outright independence. Despite its ties to Britain, Wales still appears to be largely in favor of remaining part of the European Union for many of the same reasons vocalized in Scotland and Northern Ireland. In my concluding chapter, the findings presented in the previous three chapters will be synthesized with Colley's original argument in hopes of determining its relevance in the Union's current political climate.

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CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion

The purpose of this project was to determine the applicability of Colley's argument regarding Britishness in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to the twenty-first century. By studying each nation individually and attempting to identify how both individuals and nationalist political parties perceive their position within the Union, the Others of each nation and its people became clearer. According to Colley's thesis, the lack of an external Other, as established in the introduction to this project, would lead to internal divisions as each nation became increasingly aware of its differences from the rest of the Union.

The findings of this study both confirmed and challenged Colley's argument. The lack of a unifying external Other, such as the EU or Islam, has correlated with the growth of nationalism throughout the United Kingdom. However, rather than simply recognizing internal differences and using those differences to advocate for nationalism, the story is a bit more complex. Each nation within the Union has identifiable Others that fuel its nationalist movement, but these Others are not always related to disparities between the four nations of the Union. Northern Ireland presents the most obvious case of this situation. The lack of an Other has not caused Northern Ireland to establish a distinct Northern Irish identity that is perceived to be at odds with the aims of the Union. Instead, nationalism in Northern Ireland is fueled by differences among the people of Northern Ireland itself. For Northern Ireland, England, Scotland, or Wales is not its Other; rather, religion is the

Other. As demonstrated previously, this is apparent by the correlation between voting patterns and religious identity – namely, Protestant versus Catholic.

For England, there is an external Other that powers its growing sense of nationalism. This is largely due to the historical conflation of Englishness with Britishness. For groups such as the Conservative Party and UKIP who are concerned with Englishness, the European Union and the influx of Muslim immigrants are threats to what it means to be British. The case of England further complicates Colley's thesis, as there is an increasing concern with establishing a distinct sense of Englishness, but even nationalist groups within England half-heartedly oppose the breakup of the Union. This may be attributable to nationalism itself. For centuries, England has largely understood itself through its empire. To lose the last vestiges of its once-expansive empire would be to lose an important source of identity.

England's external Other has failed to extend past its borders, as nationalist movements in the Celtic Fringe have tended to embrace immigration and the EU. However, it would be imprudent to assume this will soon lead to the end of the Union. With Scotland serving as an exception, there is little enthusiasm for a complete breakup of the Union, even within the nationalist movements themselves. This could be for a multitude of historical and economic reasons, but, for the most part, Wales and Northern Ireland simply see the Union as beneficial. As long as the Union does not attempt to impede the development of each nation's cultural identity, Wales and Northern Ireland seem either content with the Union or see its continuation as inevitable, as may be the case for Catholics in Northern Ireland.

Ultimately, this research revealed the difficulties of establishing a solid framework for understanding the relationship between the four nations of the United Kingdom. While it challenges Colley's argument, it also rejects the Four Nations approach. The election results in the Border councils of Scotland and the religious tensions in Northern Ireland reveal that the Union is not simply comprised of four distinct nations that identify each other as a threat to individual identities and interests. While this is sometimes the case – such as with Welsh concern for national identity or the loyalty of the Celtic Fringe to the EU, it is not an appropriate framework for understanding the entirety of the Union.

This project will not conclude by attempting to forward a new framework. Rather, this research demonstrates the complexity of the relationship between each of the four nations within the United Kingdom and exhibits the necessity of dissecting these burgeoning nationalist movements to determine each group's objectives. Independence is not always the endgame of these movements and often their objections are not merely with the existence of the Union. If groups like the Better Together campaign truly hope to maintain the Union, it is necessary that they seek to understand these disparities and address them on an individual level.

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