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Introduction

I choose this topic because I'm interested in history of the United Kingdom. And now it is even more fascinating, because history is happening in front of our eyes. In a few years we will find out, whether is it possible for Scotland to be totally independent or not. That is why I think this topic is timely now.

So, this topic is actual because now Scotland wants to be independent and many people are talking about its independence and have diametrically different views on the problem, it's abandonment from United Kingdom and Independence Referendum in 2014. It is necessary for people to know what is happening in the world.

In my academic writing I want to know what are the advantages and disadvantages of independent Scotland, of Scotland inside the United Kingdom and what is better for the Scots and for other countries. Also I want to know what may possibly happen to the UK and its economics if Scotland is independent. These questions I want to consider in my work.

Chapter I. A brief history: from loosing independence to reestablished parliament

In this chapter I will try to analyze the history of the intercourse between Scotland and England in order to find out, why the question of independence has always been acute for the two countries and still fails to lose its urgency. [1] [2] [6]

Scotland's relationship with its larger neighbour have often been difficult, none more so than in the "wars of independence" 700 years ago led by William Wallace, a commoner, and then Robert Bruce, who after great difficulties was crowned king of Scotland. At the time of the wars of independence, England was a vastly wealthier and more powerful nation than Scotland, and it had succeeded in at least partially subduing all of its near neighbors, including Wales and Ireland, and was intent on conquering France.

The idea that Scotland could and did stand against England, purely by force of indomitable will, was a source of great national pride in Scotland for generations thereafter. The war did not free Scotland from any further interference by England, nor did it provide her with particularly good government, but it established the Scots reputation as proud and unconquerable people, a legacy they embraced for centuries afterward.

FIRST WAR OF SCOTTISH INDEPENDENCE—WILLIAM WALLACE: 1296-1305

England, under Edward I had brought both Wales and Ireland under its sway, and it desired also to expand its influence over Scotland. England's first strategy for taking over Scotland, was thwarted when the female heir to the Scottish throne, who was betrothed to the son of Edward I, died. The second attempt to assume control of Scotland by promoting a weakling king to the throne, and then running roughshod over the country, was thwarted by William Wallace, a commoner who refused to submit to the indignities of servitude to the English.

When the young queen of Scotland, known as the 'Maid of Norway' died, there was no direct heir to the Scottish throne. Edward I, the English king was quick to promote the cause of John Balliol, and just as quickly demanded he do homage to the English King for all the lands in Scotland, which no Scottish king had ever submitted to before. Balliol paid homage, but refused to provide soldiers to help Edward fight France, since Scotland was a long-time ally of France. Using Balliol's refusal as justification, Edward campaigned in Scotland, first reducing the fortress at Berwick-on-Tweed, and then defeating a large Scottish army at Dunbar. After these smashing victories, Edward experienced little further resistance, and much of the country submitted without further bloodshed. The English governors imposed on the country by Edward however, had little regard for the rights of the Scots, and within a year, William Wallace, a

commoner whose wife was murdered by a local English sheriff, had raised a rebellion across the country.

The great victory of Wallace was at the Battle of Sterling Bridge, where his band of infantry soundly defeated an English Army. This was followed by the battle of Falkirk which would have likely gone in favor of the Scots, had more of the Scottish nobles decided to fight for the Scots instead of the English. Falkirk was victory for the English, but a relatively barren one, although it did convince Wallace of the futility of raising an army of commoners unsupported by the local barons. Wallace was later hunted down and killed and for several years, England reigned supreme in Scotland.

FIRST WAR OF SCOTTISH INDEPENDENCE—ROBERT THE BRUCE: 1306-1328

From the time of Falkirk until Robert Bruce was involved in the Murder of his enemy Red Comyn, Scotland was under the control of the English. Instead of fighting for his independence Bruce tried to gain influence under Edward I. With the murder of Red Comyn however, who had been scheming with Edward against Bruce, he had burned his bridges with the English king. Bruce then openly defied Edward by having himself crowned king of Scotland without his leave. Edward immediately sent an army against Bruce, and in their first encounter, the Scots were routed so badly that Bruce needed to go into hiding for a year. When he finally re-emerged, he took a new approach to fighting the English, and had considerable success as a guerilla fighter.

Once Bruce started winning battles, many Scots who had previously hesitated joined his cause. He took castle after castle, with many towns and fortresses garrisoned by Scots instead of Englishmen, surrendering without a fight. To add to his good fortune, Edward I was in very ill health and his son Edward II, had no compelling interest in the Scottish war and willingly made peace. For several years after the death of Edward I, his son did not oppose Bruce's growing influence in Scotland, although neither Britain, nor any other monarchical power in Europe recognized him as an independent king. In 1314 however, Bruce besieged Stirling Castle, and the governor there agreed to submit to him on a certain date if England did not relieve him. This compelled the reluctant Edward II into action, and he raised an enormous army to meet the rebellious Scots in battle, and the famous battle of Bannockburn ensued. The Scots were outnumbered, outgunned, and nearly without cavalry, but they won a decisive victory against the English and followed this up with several incursions into English territory. Reluctantly England agreed to recognize Scotland as an independent kingdom, owing only a nominal allegiance to England. Under the reign of a strong king, Robert the Bruce, Scotland re-established its independence from England.

SECOND WAR OF SCOTTISH INDEPENDENCE: 1332-1346

With the death of Robert Bruce and the rise of Edward III the situation in Scotland again became unsettled. Bruce, a very strong king, had left his kingdom to his young and weak son, David II, and Edward III, son of the weakling, Edward II, was a strong and willful king like his grandfather. He would not submit to the humiliation of losing Scotland, and with the help of Edward Balliol, grandson of the former 'King' of Scotland, he attempted to launch another war on Scotland. In general, the pitched battles during the second war of Independence went badly for Scotland, but the project of getting Scotland to submit went badly for England. Much of the country side was ravaged. Much of the population had retreated to the mountains, and fifteen years of war accomplished little other than to destroy much of the Scotland lowlands, and further impoverish the people. The war was greatly complicated by the fact that England and France were also at war, so the French offered to "help" the Scots resist the English, but their main objective was to move the battle to Scotland rather than France.

David II was either exiled, or imprisoned for much of his reign, and during this time Scotland was really ruled by Robert Stuart, the Grandson of Robert Bruce. When David II died without an heir, the Scots insisted on crowning Robert II king, although naturally this was contested by England. Under Robert II, the war with England degenerated into periodic border raids, that are better described as ongoing Anglo Scottish Wars. For the next century England was primarily occupied with the Hundred-Years War in France, and although Scottish-English relations were not good, and the Kings of England continually interfered in the affairs of Scotland, the Stuart line was not contested. Beginning with the reign of Robert II in 1471, the Stuarts ruled Scotland for over 217 years.

After other cross border disputes, including Scotland's defeat at Flodden by the English in 1513, the Scottish and English crowns were unified in 1603 when King James VI of Scotland became overall monarch of the British Isles.

In 1707, that union was cemented by Scotland and England's political union, forced on Scotland in part by a financial crisis following the abject failure of its colony in Panama, the so-called Darien adventure. All political power moved to London, but Scotland retained its own legal system, churches and universities. In 1745, the pretender to the British throne, Bonnie Prince Charlie, led the Jacobite revolt against Hanoverian rule by London. Despite reaching as far south as Derby, that ended in crushing defeat at Culloden in 1746.

In the 1800s, Scotland's economy strengthened, its cities boomed and its citizens took a leading role in the British Empire. But proposals to give Scotland some form of "home rule" within the UK have been live since William Gladstone's era as Liberal leader in the 1880s. After

several failed attempts at Westminster, notably in 1913 and 1979, a Scottish parliament was finally reestablished in 1999 in Edinburgh with wide-ranging policy making and legal powers but dependent on a direct grant from London.

So from this chapter we can draw out a conclusion, that the tension was not born in the last decades, but has become a result of several centuries of collisions.

Chapter II.

Present day situation and the possible outcome

In this chapter I will try to analyze the contemporary situation and the contrasting views on the issue, as well as the possible effects, which the process of separation may have on the population. [3] [4] [8]

According to the historian, the tension between the two countries started to get heated again at the end of the 20-s century. Under Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, critics claimed the country was used as a Petri dish for free market experiments ahead of England.

Scotland lost one-fifth of its workforce within the first two years of the administration as state subsidies were pulled from loss-making mining, steel and textile industries. Scotland was handed the poll tax in 1989 - one year ahead of England. More than 1.5m refused to pay the tax and Scottish miners joined the 1984-85 strike.

The Iron Lady was unapologetic, saying in 2009: "I wanted to break the culture of dependency. Only a handful of die-hards would have argued Scottish industry could have carried on as it was in the 70s."

The the Scottish National Party (SNP) were founded in 1934 but achieved little electoral success in Westminster. A referendum on devolution in 1979 fell short of the 40 % threshold - but a second referendum in 1997 passed, leading to the creation of the Scottish Parliament in 1999.

1996 The tensions between the Scottish and English were summed up by Ewan McGregor in Danny Boyle's cult film *Trainspotting*. McGregor's character Rentboy standing on a bleak Scottish hillside rants at his friends: "You're proud to be Scottish? It's sh*te being Scottish." "We're the lowest of the low, the scum of the f*cking earth. Most wretched, miserable, servile, pathetic trash, that was ever sh*t into civilization." "Some people hate the English, I don't they're just w*nkers...we are on the other hand are colonized by w*nkers." [5]

In 2011 old rivalries are still poorly hidden: Mr. Salmond this week accused David Cameron of being "almost Thatcher-esquire" in "trampling over Scotland".

In May 2011, Salmond and the SNP unexpectedly won an historic landslide victory giving the nationalists majority control of the Scottish parliament, enabling the first minister to demand that referendum on full independence.

At the same time only around a third of Scotland's 4 million voters believe that Scotland should leave the UK and become independent, ending the 305-year-old political union with England. They believe Scotland's economy, its social policies and its creativity would flourish if it had much greater autonomy. A majority of Scots disagree. They believe Scotland is more

secure within the UK, but many want the Scottish parliament to have greater financial and legal powers.

The argument is now very real after Alex Salmond, the first minister of Scotland, and David Cameron, the UK prime minister, signed the "Edinburgh agreement" on 15 October which will give the Scottish parliament the legal power to stage an historic referendum on independence before the end of 2014. Salmond is believed to favour October 2014 for the vote but has not yet revealed his preferred date.

But how did the pair get to this stage?

In May 2007 Alex Salmond became first minister after his party won minority control of Holyrood. The seeds of the referendum are sown at the 2007 Holyrood election when the Scottish National Party breaks Labour's eight-year dominance of the Scottish Parliament. The party wins 47 seats, one more than its Scottish Labour Party rival. Despite initial talks with other parties, the SNP forms a minority government with Alex Salmond taking on the post of first minister.

In February 2010 the Scottish government publishes a draft bill into its proposed referendum on independence. It says voters will have the option of voting for either new powers for the Scottish Parliament or full independence from the UK. First Minister Alex Salmond describes the Referendum Bill as an opportunity for Scots to have a say on their nation's future. Opposition parties say they will vote down the proposals.

The bill includes proposed ballot papers for a two question referendum.

1. The first question asks whether the Scottish Parliament should have more devolved responsibility.
2. The second question asks whether the Scottish Parliament should also have its powers extended to enable independence to be achieved.

But with a minority SNP government and no backing from unionist parties, Scots in 2010 do not have their say on their nation's future.

In May 2011 SNP already have 69 seats. The Scottish National Party storms to victory at the Scottish Parliament election in May 2011. SNP leader Mr Salmond says the majority win is "a victory for a society and a nation".

During an address in Edinburgh after the win, Mr Salmond says: "I'll govern for all of the ambitions for Scotland and all the people who imagine that we can live in a better land. "This party, the Scottish party, the national party, carries your hope. We shall carry it carefully and make the nation proud." At that time, the first minister is vague about timings, saying the referendum will be held in "the second half" of his new governmental term.

At its autumn conference (October 2011), the SNP officially launches its drive for independence - announcing details of an "unprecedented" campaign to win the forthcoming referendum.

In January 2012 David Cameron says: "I strongly support the United Kingdom".

Prime Minister David Cameron, speaking on the BBC's Andrew Marr programme, says clarity is needed over the independence referendum. He tells the broadcaster that "in the coming days" the UK government will set out the legal position concerning a vote on Scotland's constitutional position.

The prime minister says: "We owe the Scottish people something that is fair, legal and decisive so in the coming days we will be setting out clearly what the legal situation is." He goes on to argue that the referendum should be "sooner rather than later".

Scottish Secretary Michael Moore makes a statement in the House of Commons saying the Scottish government does not have legal power for a referendum on independence.

Do you agree that Scotland should be an independent country?"

The question Alex Salmond wants for the referendum 25 January, 2012. Scotland's First Minister Alex Salmond sets out the question he intends to ask voters in a referendum on Scottish independence.

The SNP leader says the country's electorate will be asked: "Do you agree that Scotland should be an independent country?" in a ballot which he wants to hold in 2014.

In a statement to MSPs, Mr Salmond describes the question as "short, straightforward and clear", saying the people of Scotland will be asked to make the most important decision facing the country in 300 years.

First Minister Alex Salmond says he and Scottish Secretary Michael Moore make "modest progress" at independence referendum talks. The pair meets in Edinburgh to try to iron out the differences between the Scottish and Westminster governments over how the vote should be run.

Mr Moore says there is still disagreement over the issue of timing. The first minister says no agreement on "substantive issues" is reached and that discussions will continue. Mr Salmond meets Prime Minister David Cameron later in the middle of the month. Alex Salmond and David Cameron met in February to discuss the referendum deal.

9 October 2012 Labour's commission examining further powers for the Scottish Parliament meets - seven months after it was announced. Labour's commission will examine whether more powers should be handed to the Scottish Parliament

Alex Salmond and David Cameron sign the agreement 15 October 2012. Ministers from the UK and Scottish governments reach a deal over the independence referendum.

The final issues are settled between the two governments and the historic Edinburgh Agreement is signed by Prime Minister David Cameron and First Minister Alex Salmond.

The agreement paves the way for a vote in autumn 2014, with a single Yes/No question on Scotland leaving the UK. It will also allow 16 and 17-year-olds to take part in the ballot.

The UK government, which has responsibility over constitutional issues, will grant limited powers to the Scottish Parliament to hold a legal referendum, under a mechanism called Section 30, order which amends the Scotland Act that set up the Holyrood parliament in 1999 will be passed by the House of Commons and agreed by February 2013 by the Privy Council.

Now that Salmond and Cameron have signed the "Edinburgh agreement", at a face to face meeting on 15 October, the work on transferring the legal powers to stage the referendum has begun.

Alex Salmond has posed the question "Do you agree that Scotland should be an independent country?" as his preferred question on independence. Election and polling [App. 3] experts say that is not neutral enough, since people find it harder to reject a question asking them to "agree" to something. The Electoral Commission could well ask for that to be amended, to make it more neutral.

The bill is timetabled to get royal assent in November 2013, when the Scottish government will also publish a white paper detailing its "prospectus for independence" and setting out the Scottish National party's vision for an independent Scotland.

In June 2014, the final 16 week referendum campaign leading up to a referendum expected to be held in October would be due to start. Then both pro-independence and pro-UK campaigns will intensify, with millions of pounds being spent on television broadcasts, advertising and rallies.

Alongside all these steps on the referendum, the UK government will be putting the final touches to new measures to give the Scottish parliament the authority to set its own income tax rates, borrow some £2bn, and devolve stamp duty (the tax on house sales), land tax and landfill tax, in new powers that will come into force in 2016 – assuming the SNP loses the referendum.

If Scotland will be independent, it should mean for Scots a greater direct say over one's government and more political freedom, but also greater economic risks, less security and more differences with England.

For England and non-Scottish UK citizens it will cause smaller economy, oil and whisky might be more expensive, British identity would be diluted and Britain's status overseas could be weaker. And for other world it won't be a great deal, as Scotland is expected to remain in the EU, so, just there will be few major changes for tourists or investors. [App. 1, 2]

Chapter III. Pros and contras Independence

In this chapter I will try to analyze disadvantages and advantages of independent Scotland. [7]

Now in Scotland there are three positions of possible form of Scottish government [App. 1]: oppose independence (Status quo), support independence and devo plus (Devo max).

Status quo is a form of government where the UK government in charge of most taxation, welfare and economy. Advantages: The UK is the most successful economic and political union of modern times – change needs to be slow and careful. The UK brings security and shared risk, and common values. Disadvantages: It fails to recognise Scotland's unique needs, values and aspirations; Scotland's interests are always secondary to England's. The UK is run by parties which Scotland rejected.

Independence is giving Scotland full control over all taxes, laws and North Sea oil while keeping sterling and the Queen. Advantages: There is no reason why Scotland cannot control its own destiny, become equal to England, and take its full place in the world. Scotland and England would remain firm friends. Disadvantages: Scotland would face greater financial risks, lose the security of UK, and gain little that further devolution would give. It would rely on a foreign bank and be in damaging competition with its closest, larger neighbour.

Devo plus - ensures that Scotland has to raise the taxes it spends while keeping defence, pensions and foreign affairs at UK level. Advantages: Scotland needs to take responsibility for the taxes it spends, and mould policies to its needs and raise the taxes to match its spending. Disadvantages: Giving Scotland control over taxation and welfare would heavily impact all parts of the UK, require reform of the UK parliament and undermine internal unity.

Also there are some positions about Independence Referendum: SNP position and Unionist position [App.2].

SNP position wants the referendum towards the end of its five-year Holyrood term. Backs a "yes/no" ballot but is open minded on including a second "devo max" question. SNP position wants 16 and 17-year-olds to be able to vote in the referendum and a special commission to conduct the referendum.

Unionist position wants the referendum "sooner rather than later", a one question "yes/no" ballot. Backs the status quo with 18 and over able to vote. And Unionist position wants the Electoral Commission to oversee the vote.

Here are some arguments pro and contra Scottish independence:

ARGUMENTS FOR:

- Britishness is dying. Scotland has its own parliament, its own laws and legal system. National feeling and self-confidence are high. It is time to take the next step.
- Semi-independence is unsatisfactory. Fiscal powers and economic control remain at Westminster. Independence will allow Scotland to cut business taxes (like Ireland) to promote economic growth.
- Other small countries like Norway and the Republic of Ireland are more successful and more dynamic. An independent Scotland will have the tools to match them.
- Independence would give Scotland clout where it matters: a seat at the UN and in the EU Council of Ministers. Scottish interests, eg. fisheries and agriculture, are poorly served in Brussels by UK ministers.
- Relations between Scots and English are deteriorating. Independence would free Scotland from dependency and England from resentment. An amicable no-faults divorce is better than a bickering marriage.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST:

- The Union has served both countries well for 300 years. Devolution is a young experiment, and it is too soon to judge it.
- There is a gap between public spending in Scotland (£40bn) and revenue raised there (£27bn). A Scottish government would have to choose between higher taxes and cuts in public services.
- Scotland has more influence in Brussels as part of the UK than it could have as an independent state.
- The integrated British economy is more capable than an independent Scotland would be of meeting the challenges of globalisation. Likewise, having independent defence and security structures would overstrain Scotland's resources.
- Scots should recognise that devolution has put England at a disadvantage, and should press for reforms to the way Westminster works. Satisfying English grievances would put the marriage back on an even keel. Divorce is unnecessary and would be painful.

Conclusion

During my research I have found out that the problem of independence has been in the due course for several centuries. The Scots fought for the right to have their own border, their own government and general sovereignty, which resulted in three wars leading them to almost completely fall under English control.

Nowadays as Scotland already has its own Parliament, it wants to make a step further and create a Referendum. After analyzing the opinion polls and browsing through the pros and cons of the process of separation, I came to the conclusion that though Scotland will face some major problems in economics and foreign policy, as they will no longer have Britain's support, it is still worth for the country to get separated from the UK.

Appendix

Appendix 1

Option	Arguments for	Arguments against	Who supports
Status quo - the UK government in charge of most taxation, welfare and economy	The UK is the most successful economic and political union of modern times – change needs to be slow and careful. The UK brings security and shared risk, and common values.	It fails to recognise Scotland's unique needs, values and aspirations; Scotland's interests are always secondary to England's. The UK is run by parties which Scotland rejected.	Ruth Davidson, Scottish Tory leader; Lord Forsyth, former Scottish secretary; Sir Malcolm Rifkind, former foreign secretary.
Devo plus - ensures that Scotland has to raise the taxes it spends while keeping defence, pensions and foreign affairs at UK level	Scotland needs to take responsibility for the taxes it spends, and mould policies to its needs and raise the taxes to match its spending.	Giving Scotland control over taxation and welfare would heavily impact all parts of the UK, require reform of the UK parliament and undermine internal unity.	Reform Scotland think tank; Scottish Liberal Democrats; possibly Alistair Darling; devo plus campaign; senior figures in Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations.
Independence - giving Scotland full control over all taxes, laws and North Sea oil while keeping sterling and the Queen	There is no reason why Scotland cannot control its own destiny, become equal to England, and take its full place in the world. Scotland and England would remain firm friends.	Scotland would face greater financial risks, lose the security of UK, and gain little that further devolution would give. It would rely on a foreign bank and be in damaging competition with its closest, larger neighbour.	Alex Salmond, Scottish National party, Scottish Green party, Sir Sean Connery, Sir Brian Souter, Stagecoach owner, the Scottish Socialist party and Solidarity.

Appendix 2

SNP position	Unionist position
Wants the referendum towards the end of its five-year Holyrood term	Wants the referendum "sooner rather than later"
Backs a "yes/no" ballot but is open minded on including a second "devo max" question	Wants a one question "yes/no" ballot
Wants 16 and 17-year-olds to be able to vote in the referendum	Backs the status quo with 18 and over able to vote
Wants a special commission to conduct the referendum	Wants the Electoral Commission to oversee the vote

Appendix 3

Date	Polling agency	Support Independence	Oppose Independence	Undecided	Support Devomax
1 November 2011	TNS BMRB	28	29	10	33
January 2012	Ipsos MORI	39	50	11	
13 January 2012	ICM	26	33	10	26
8 February 2012	YouGov	30	54	16	
June 2012	Ipsos MORI	35	55	10	
14 June 2012	Ipsos MORI	27	29	4	41
19 August 2012	YouGov	27	60	13	
8 October 2012	TNS BMRB	28	53	19	
15 October 2012	Ipsos MORI	28	52	19	
21 October 2012	Panelbase	37	45	18	
26 October 2012	YouGov	23	25	11	41
January 2013	Angus Reid Public Opinion	32	50	16	
14 January 2013	TNS BMRB	28	48	24	
27 January 2013	Panelbase	34	47	19	

Sources

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