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The Causes of the Catalan Secession Movement

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Department of Political Science Honors Thesis

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Introduction

The northeastern Spanish autonomia of Catalonia began its descent into chaos on October 1st 2017 with a referendum. It asked only one question: “¿Quiere que Cataluña sea un estado independiente en forma de república?” “Do you want Catalonia to be an independent state in the form of a Republic?” The voting process itself provoked unrest in the streets and the deployment of riot police.¹ Security forces from the national government were seizing ballots and skirmishing with crowds, the vote had been preemptively declared illegal,² and large portions of the Catalan population itself were boycotting the vote to rob it of legitimacy. Crowds of protestors for and against the referendum were large enough to garner international attention. Days later, local officials announced that they had the results: almost 90 percent support for independence, but with only around 43 percent voter participation.³ Events played out predictably from there. The pro-independence parties declared victory, the national government revoked the region’s autonomy and removed the regional government from office.⁴ Regional government officials took the matter to court before fleeing the country ahead of imminent criminal charges. The repercussions of the referendum continue into the present day: just last

¹ Raphael Minder & Ellen Barry, “Catalonia’s Independence Vote Descends Into Chaos and Clashes,” *New York Times* Oct. 1, 2017

² Raphael Minder, “Spanish Court Moves to Pre-Empt Catalan Independence Declaration,” *New York Times*, Oct. 5, 2017

³ Patrick Kingsley & Jason Horowitz, “Amid Catalan Crisis, Thousands Hold Rallies in Madrid and Barcelona,” *New York Times* Oct. 7 2017

⁴ Raphael Minder & Patrick Kingsley , “Spain Dismisses Catalonia Government After Region Declares Independence,” *New York Times* Oct. 27 2017

year sentencing was completed for many of the officials involved, with punishments upwards of a decade in jail. The leaders are still abroad, and the sentences given are sure to be appealed.⁵

The event has left us with more questions than answers. Why would a region want to secede from a prosperous, first world country that it joined voluntarily? If the grievances are based in fact rather than being products of internal biases and regional political ambitions, why is there such internal disagreement within the region over secession? When we look at other similar secession movements, and even similar secessionist referendums, we don't always see the level of contention and conflict as we did here. Why was the Catalan referendum so much more contentious than that of, say, Scotland? Perhaps most confusingly, what could motivate regional politicians to begin a process they knew had virtually no chance of succeeding and would just as certainly land them in jail, or exile?

In this thesis I will argue that more recent grievances exacerbated by a political structure incentivized conflict and left neither side with the will or ability to back down. The national government's shift to a more combative stance is the clearer of the two factors to see: The Partido Popular, represented by the conservative administration of Mariano Rajoy, was openly suspicious of Catalan regional autonomy. This expressed itself through a range of policy decisions, notably successfully challenging revisions to the Catalan charter or 'estatute,' and the imposition of austerity after the 2008 financial crisis. The regional government, headed by an ideologically opposite liberal coalition, saw in this unwillingness to compromise a chance to deliver on their promises of true Catalan independence.

⁵ Raphael Minder, "Trial of Catalan Independence Leaders Ends in Spain," *New York Times* June 12 2019

To explain the degree of conflict between the two governments, it's insufficient to simply note that they are ideologically opposed. We also have to examine the institutional structure that incentivises conflict, rewarding parties for taking hardline positions. Both Catalonia and Spain are disproportionately affected by minority, single-party rule. Their governing parties tend to rely on a smaller, more extreme base of core supporters rather than appealing to a broader coalition. When the national government and regional government are headed by diametrically opposed parties, both of whom are controlled by more extreme elements and stand to gain from a base energized by an active enemy, the stage is set for real conflict. Catalan independence discourse makes use of both economic and cultural narratives, but a key difference between Catalonia and the many other similar independence movements like Scotland is the structure and incentives of their political system. Where Scotland has a history of collaboration and a national government willing to play ball, leading up to 2017 neither Catalonia nor Spain politically could afford to back down.

This thesis will begin with an overview of Catalonia's history. To start we will go through Catalonia's origins and history predating the modern political landscape, which began roughly around the year 2000. Included in this is the history of Catalan nationalism, the movement that eventually evolved into Catalan secessionism. After that, the section will go over the shift from Catalan nationalism to Catalan secessionism and the events post-2000 that led up to the 2017 referendum. The final part of this review will detail the referendum itself and its consequences.

Once we have that context, I'll use two theoretical frameworks to analyze the modern Catalan independence movement. The first is an analysis of the more recent events precipitating

the referendum. As the older factors that encourage division between Catalonia and Spain have been present since the start without provoking secessionist sentiment, they aren't as useful as more contemporary events and conditions when it comes to explaining the Catalan independence crisis. To explain the modern movement of Catalan secessionism, we need to look to modern events that heightened grievances between the Catalan and Spanish governments such as the 2008 financial crisis and the striking down of Catalan statute revisions. They will be analyzed through the lens of the avenues that social movement theory sees as critical for the emergence of a social movement like Catalan secessionism as outlined by Doug McAdams, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald in their 1996 paper *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*. Specifically these are: rising grievances provoking a movement regardless of odds of success, the odds of success themselves increasing to encourage a nascent movement, and the available organizational resources increasing to allow a nascent movement to grow. This examination should show that the first of these three is the most relevant to the Catalan secessionist movement. Organizational resources have never been a limiting factor for Catalan nationalism, and in 2017 the odds of a successful independence referendum were as dismal as ever. Grievances, however, had been increasing, and the actions and statements of Catalan leaders show that this pressure drove them forward to their disastrous outcome.

The second framework is a comparison between Catalonia's independence movement and the similar movement in Scotland. The similarities between the two give us a solid foundation for comparison: they are both secession movements in regions of a first-world country that have a distinct history and sub-national culture. These similarities also allow us to pinpoint the critical differences. The outcomes of their respective independence referendums

were radically divergent, and an examination of the factors leading to this difference supports the conclusion that the stance of the Spanish national government, incentivized by Spain's political system, is what limited Catalonia's possible outcomes to the disastrous.

To come to these conclusions I examined several different kinds of evidence. The most important basis was secondary sources compiling the history of Spain, Catalonia, and the Catalan independence movement. This category also included surveys of historical and contemporary public opinion to give a quantitative element to the trends outlined in history books.

Additionally, I reviewed newspaper articles from both Spanish and English sources showing how events played out in real time during the 2017 independence crisis. I had the opportunity to travel to Spain during the research process, and was able to talk to both ordinary people on either side of the public discourse and professors of political science with first-hand understanding of Spain's political system and dynamics.

The thesis will proceed as follows: I will review the history of Catalonia, covering both its origins and more recent circumstances. I will examine all the major recent factors from the perspective of social movement theory. The section after will look at Scotland's history before comparing the two regions' respective secession movements. Finally, I will restate the themes and takeaways in a conclusion section.

Structure and Early History of the Spanish System

Answering all these questions is impossible without an understanding of the history and structure of the Spanish government. Much like the United States, Spain is a coalition of sub-states which created a national government while still retaining a portion of their control at the local level. These seventeen regions are referred to as the 'autonomias.' Unlike the United

States, Spain has a unique semi-federal structure of government in which regional officials have decision-making power but rely on the national government for several key responsibilities, most notably the collection and distribution of funds. Several of the autonomias have exceptions, but Catalonia is not one of them. If the local government wants to spend money on a new project they need to requisition funds from the national government. This system applies to services such as national insurance pools as well.

What we now know as modern Spain was established in the 1500s when the various kingdoms of the Iberian Peninsula were united by the royal Habsburg family. Despite a dominant position going into the era of European colonialism, Spain's legacy today is defined by delayed growth relative to other European powers and only partially successful attempts to build a national identity during the transition to the modern nation-state structure.⁶ Much of this was the result of a faltering economy that hampered its efforts to compete. By the time Spain undertook the task of unifying its autonomias, Catalonia and the Basque Country were already consolidating their own identities. The autonomias were by no means equals when it came to power and resources, and Catalonia stood from the start as one of the more potent regions. Coastal trade and production going into the industrial revolution ensured that Catalonia would be an attractive place for economic development, a virtuous cycle continued into the 20th century by immigration into Catalan cities and a thriving export economy.⁷

Spain's internal weakness and fragmentation can be seen in the War of Spanish Succession in 1701. The last of the Hapsburgs, the royal family that unified Spain, died, and the institutions present at the time were not strong enough to prevent massive conflict over

⁶ Andrew Dowling, *The Rise of Catalan Independence: Spain's Territorial Crisis* (New York City, NY: Routledge Publishing 2018) 6

⁷ Dowling, 13.

succession. The defeat of Catalan forces during the siege of Barcelona would later be repurposed in the creation of a national mythos, centered on resisting outside domination.⁸ Today this date is celebrated every year as the Diada, a regional holiday that commemorates those who died in the war and Catalonia's loss of regional autonomy afterward. Despite the early dates of these events and traditions, the narrative itself was constructed retroactively by Catalan politicians and leaders in the early 20th century. But these incidents also do not mean that Catalonia was pursuing secession from the start.

Origins of Catalan Nationalism

The first expression of a distinct Catalan identity as Catalan nationalism began with the Lliga Regionalista in 1901, a regional coalition of business and political interests aiming to both promote Catalan growth and influence national policy.⁹ The Lliga Regionalista controlled Catalonia virtually unopposed for the beginning of the 20th century, using their clout to organize affairs at home and speak as a block on the national stage. Their message was one of simple Catalan nationalism, lacking any calls for secession. From the founding of Spain through the colonial period, the Catalan elite saw themselves as Spain's natural leaders, a force of guidance and renewal for a flagging empire. Independence would be antithetical to this ideal. Catalonia also had marked economic ties to the rest of Spain. Catalonia had an economic advantage even at this early stage, but the dynamic was not entirely one-sided. Catalan production relied heavily on Spanish consumers. Provoking discord with broader Spain would be disastrous for their economy at this point.

⁸ Dowling, 9.

⁹ Dowling, 10.

The Lliga's project of Spanish leadership ultimately failed to gain appeal in the middle and lower classes, increasingly important groups as the state moved into the modern era. While we do see the emergence of the first narratives portraying Spain as economically extractive during these early decades of the 20th century, a central grievance to modern secessionism, ultimately these were subsumed by class tension and suspicion of Catalan elites during this time. Spain's labor unions were rising in size and influence as the industrial revolution demanded a larger and more organized workforce. Residents from both the Catalan countryside and immigrants from other autonomias moved into the cities and the unions became ever stronger. Tensions grew between them and the Lliga Regionalista, which consisted largely of business interests and political elites. The Lliga became increasingly concerned about the threat of social unrest as the unions threatened the economic and political status quo. They turned their focus inward, prioritizing the preservation of Catalan social and economic stability over dreams of national leadership. This remained their main preoccupation until the end of their dominance during the Riviera Dictatorship.¹⁰ When the dictator General Miguel Primo de Rivera took power in 1923, the Lliga supported him in the hopes of attaining an advantageous position. But Rivera's assault on regional autonomy during his rule cost the Lliga dearly in popularity at home. Their popular support never recovered. Despite the decline of the Lliga, the movement of Catalan nationalism they started saw a surge in support during and after the Riviera Dictatorship. This was true both within Catalonia and across Spain. When the Riviera Dictatorship ended and the second Spanish Republic began in 1931, a measure of political autonomy for Catalonia was

¹⁰ Dowling, 14.

included in the package. For a time, Catalan autonomy enjoyed popularity across all of Spain, but this period was cut short by the Spanish Civil War and the resulting Franco dictatorship.

Franco and his ideology gave new fervor to the task of building a Spanish national identity, and all sub-national identities were assaulted without mercy. Hundreds of thousands of people were killed, dissidents targeted, nongovernmental organizations dissolved. Concentration camps were established. Languages other than Castilian Spanish were banned from government institutions and other spaces such as schools, although enforcement was far from perfect.¹¹ The dictatorship of the Franco regime was a massive centralizing force that rewrote both Spain's political and economic dynamics. Politically, autonomias were reined in as their bureaucratic independence was curtailed. Economically, Franco ensured that Madrid received a disproportionate amount of public investment and funding. All of this waned somewhat in the later years as Francoism faded and Spain began its peculiar slide into democracy. For Catalan nationalists, the oppression of the Franco years did the same thing as the dictatorship of General Riviera: support for Catalan nationalism increased across the board. The Diada of 1977, the first Catalan national day to be held freely since the start of the Franco regime, turned out over 1 million public demonstrators.¹² The Diada the following year, after institutions of democracy had been put in place, was substantially diminished, something Andrew Dowling attributes to their turning attention inward without an external threat in his history 'The Rise of Catalan Independence.'¹³ There is a clear pattern of political and social oppression being followed by heightened support for independence. Unfortunately, this does not directly aid our understanding

¹¹ Juan Maura, (Professor of Spanish), in discussion with the author, April 28 2020

¹² Dowling, 43.

¹³ Eduardo González Calleja, *El Máuser y El Sufragio: Orden público, subversión y Violencia política En La Crisis De La Restauración (1917-1931)*. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1999.

of the 2017 independence crisis: the referendum wasn't preceded by anything near the oppression of the Riviera and Franco dictatorships, and support for Catalan independence outside of Catalonia declined before and during the crisis. At this point, however, Catalan nationalism still did not look like the secessionist movement we see today. For that transition to happen, the movement needed to see a dramatic shift away from the status quo.

The Transition from Nationalism to Secessionism

It's after the end of the Franco regime that Catalan nationalism starts to transform into Catalan secessionism. It's important to note changes in the Catalan economy during this period. The aggressive centralization of Francoism had taken its toll, and Madrid had overtaken Barcelona in development and foreign investment by the late 60s. The production blitz of the industrial revolution faded, and while Catalonia was by no means faltering independently, its relative economic advantage over the other autonomias had taken a hit as Spain's economy evened out. Meanwhile Catalonia transitioned away from relying almost entirely on Spanish consumers by 2003.¹⁴ The old justification for unequal economic policies, namely that Catalonia sat at the top of the Spanish economy because of consumers in other autonomias, no longer applied.

At the same time, the political landscape was changing. Spain's right-wing political party, El Partido Popular (PP), took a dominant position in the national government, despite very low support within Catalonia, by employing a narrative that highlighted national unity and a suspicion toward Catalan autonomy. Before this period, independence hadn't garnered much support outside of extremist leftist discourse.

¹⁴ Dowling, 145.

These leftist fringes no longer felt content to stand outside conventional politics with the Partido Popular looming on the national stage. They began looking for an inroad into regional politics, and found one in the Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (ERC). The ERC was a political party that had gone from dominant in the early decades of the 20th century to barely holding together after the assault of Francoism. The post-Franco elections of the 80s had brought it even closer to the breaking point. It was fragmented and unstable, looking for a direction it could go after repeated electoral defeats. An alliance of leftist parties executed a semi-hostile takeover of the ERC to create a new vehicle with which to challenge the center-right coalition that had dominated Catalan regional politics since the Franco Regime.¹⁵ With them they brought a strong and vocal support for Catalan independence, the first time in modern Catalan politics the topic was a priority for a major political party. Their timing was perfect. The political dynamics inside Catalonia were becoming stale, with the leading center-right coalition comfortably riding into office with support from a minority of the population. The leaders of Catalonia had become tainted in the eyes of the Catalan people. This reflected their dealings with the national government, which was now viewed as a hostile entity under the rule of the Partido Popular. While the reformed ERC didn't immediately reshape the political landscape, it began to present both itself and the narrative of Catalan independence to a receptive populace in the final decades of the 20th century.

Post 2000, the new ERC continued to gain momentum and established a narrative of itself as a renewing youth movement. In 2003, a coalition of leftist parties including the new ERC took control of the regional governing body, the Generalitat.¹⁶ The cessation of previously

¹⁵ Dowling, 73.

¹⁶ Pere Rusiñol, "Los partidos de izquierda suman la mayoría más holgada en el Parlament desde la recuperación de autogobierno," *El País* Nov. 18 2003

amicable relations with the national government combined with the decline of Catalonia relative to the other autonomias created a strong narrative of economic grievance, and a push for a reformation of Catalonia's relationship with broader Spain. The ERC's position as a potent force within Catalan politics hasn't changed much since this time, but its efficacy as part of a governing coalition has. The coalition's hold lasted just over a decade before internal infighting and a torturous constitutional reform process eroded their support.

Around the 2000s many of the autonomias were updating their relationship with the national government, specifically their Statutes of Autonomy. Catalonia did the same, but its revised version was challenged in court by the Partido Popular and ruled unconstitutional.¹⁷ This was both caused by and exacerbated fears that the unity of Spain was under threat, an effective rallying cry for the conservative national parties that challenged the revision. In the 2010s, even the parties of Catalonia outside the coalition quickly realized that the public had begun to perceive the political discourse as a conflict between a national, conservative enemy and a liberal, separatist self.¹⁸ They were now forced to acknowledge independence was an important issue or be rendered irrelevant. These are the forces that allowed independence to go mainstream. The new importance of independence played well for the ERC within Catalonia and the Partido Popular on the national stage. For the ERC, the new framing of the debate gave other local parties the choice of supporting independence or allying themselves with a hostile foreign party. For the PP, renewed cries for Catalan independence could be shown to their base as

¹⁷ Josep Brunet & Josep Calvet, "El TC avala la mayor parte del Estatut pero recorta 14 artículos," *La Vanguardia* Jun. 28 2010

¹⁸ Cesar Garcia, "The Power of Myths and Storytelling in Nation Building: The Campaign for the Independence of Catalonia from Spain," *Canadian Journal of Communication* 43, no. 2 (2018), accessed May 7, 2020 <https://www.cjc-online.ca/index.php/journal/article/view/3226>

demonstrations of why a strong, centralizing national government was more necessary than ever. This rising antagonism between regional and national governments was only exacerbated by the arrival of an economic recession.

The 2008 Financial Crisis

It was against this unstable political backdrop that the financial crisis of 2008 hit Spain. Spain, while initially shielded from the worst effects of the recession, was still impacted hard. Catalan officials were by and large not blamed for the economic difficulties, because they had limited control over fiscal policy. It was instead the national government that bore the brunt of Catalan ire, exemplified by the return of the chant ‘Espanya ens roba,’ or ‘Spain robs us,’ a narrative that, while decades old, surged after the recession. Some Catalans saw less prosperous regions as particularly dangerous to pension and insurance pools, both of which operated on the national rather than autonomia level. Catalonia takes a net loss for these national insurance pools since its position near the top of the Spanish economy means it pays more into them than it receives. As with all net losers in insurance pools, there is a suspicion that they are being taken advantage of by the poorer autonomias.

The financial crisis affected many of the trends already occurring in Catalonia, but its short term effects should not be discounted. From 2006 to 2011, unemployment in Catalonia went from 6 percent to 24 percent.¹⁹ Almost one in five people lost their jobs. Just in 2009, more than 14,000 small businesses closed shop. The sheer amount of economic damage spilled over into the traditionally insulated middle class. It is noteworthy that much of the ground gained by the Catalan secession movement is in the middle class, among those whom the financial crisis

¹⁹ Dowling, 133.

was most traumatic. Catalonia is also generally more prone to social unrest than the other autonomias, with an unusually high income gap for a Spanish territory. Factors such as poverty rate and wealth gap were only exacerbated by the financial crisis. Dowling places much of the blame for the current crisis on the recession and its ramifications, labelling it “arguably the largest single determinant of the turn to independence within Catalan society.”²⁰

The conservative Rajoy administration, he says, changed their approach to the autonomias during this period. They curtailed spending even more, enforcing strict austerity. Catalonia already saw a national government run by the PP as inherently hostile. Austerity only reinforced the perception of Spain as an extractive foreign power, costing almost 10 percent GDP per year.²¹ In 2010, with national fiscal policy becoming less favorable the by year for Catalans, the Spanish supreme court struck down many provisions of a proposed revision to the Catalan estatute, the foundational document outlining the powers of the Catalan government and its relationship with the national government. The revised estatute had given the government increased autonomy and included a number of cultural touchstones such as reinforcing Catalan’s place as an equal language to Castilian Spanish.²² Facing apparently irreconcilable differences, Catalonia’s leftist coalition began looking for a way out.

Beginnings of the 2017 Independence Crisis

In 2014, pro-independence parties organized early elections in an effort to finally get a reliable measure of public support for independence. Previous polls had been foiled by non-participation of opposed parties, returning a measurement of massive support among a non-majority slice of the population. But around this time the politics of secession were

²⁰ Dowling, 123.

²¹ Dowling, 138.

²² El País, “Estatuto de Cataluña: siete recursos y cuatro recusaciones,” *El País* Jun. 28 2010

increasingly coming to a head. By the end of the 2010s the conservative and anti-independence Partido Popular had managed to gain an overall majority on the national stage, leading the federal government to be increasingly antagonistic toward Catalonia. Harsh austerity measures seemed intended to stymie the regional government, and a challenge to statute revisions from the Partido Popular sank many of the new clauses that Catalan leadership most valued. As a result of these policies, others, and sheer rhetoric, Catalonia consistently has the least support for the PP among all the autonomias.

The movement for independence saw an opportunity in the regional elections of that year. Opposition groups would previously simply boycott any public opinion polls, leading to results in which almost everyone who voted supported independence but less than half of voters participated. This effectively sabotaged secessionist opinion polling attempts. In 2015, though, secessionist parties from both ends of the political spectrum within Catalonia formed a new coalition, ‘together for yes.’ This allowed them to characterize a set of snap elections as exclusively about independence. Opposition parties could no longer simply not participate in the exercise, since having their voters boycott it would lose them all power in the region. The result was perhaps the first real test of secession’s individual electoral power, and a split electorate. 47.8 percent voted in favor of secession and 50.6 percent voted against. It’s noteworthy that this number doesn’t necessarily indicate the actual level of support. Recall that Spain’s semi-federal system requires the regional government to bargain with Madrid for funds, and the independence movement has often been used as a looming threat should Madrid withhold funds as the Rajoy administration had been doing. Polling indicates that as many as 25 percent of the voters for independence state their goal as a better bargaining position with Madrid rather than secession

itself.²³ Despite this, pro-independence parties declared a popular mandate for secession and began to leverage their regional majority to push an aggressive secessionist agenda.

This seeming victory was not without cost. It galvanized opponents of secession both in Catalonia and throughout Spain. Support in subsequent elections tapered off, and the coalition itself was plagued by infighting. While the renewed ERC had achieved its goal of normalizing secession, pro-independence sentiment never rose above 50 percent. A ‘non-binding consultation’ vote in 2014 had also failed to garner a majority in favor of secession. Nevertheless, the secessionist movement felt they had no choice but to move forward. Delaying only risked that they would lose their grasp on power to either their own internal strife or an increasingly unimpressed public. Their coalition was increasingly fragile. The only way to move forward, it seemed, was with drastic action.

As Catalan officials began organizing around an official referendum for October 1st, the national government moved to halt it by whatever means they could. The Tribunal Constitucional called a special session to declare it preemptively illegal, prime minister Rajoy publicly refused to rule out invoking emergency clauses that would remove Catalan autonomy, and police raided the offices of Catalan’s regional government and arrested 14 people, failing to find the thousands of ballots stashed away at a secret location but warning officials they could be prosecuted for participating in the referendum planning.²⁴ The national government seized tighter

²³ Lucía Medina, *Les Eleccions al Parlament de Catalunya del 27S: Polarització en Clau Identitària i Divisió de l’Electorat* (Barcelona: Quaderns de l’ICPS 2015), 1–11

²⁴ Raphael Minder, “Catalan Independence Bid Pushes Spain Toward Crisis,” *New York Time* Sep. 8 2017’

control of regional spending.²⁵ Despite these efforts, it became clear that the referendum would be attempted on the planned date of October 1st.

Catalonia's foreign affairs chief at the time, Raul Romeva, characterized the planned date as a 'celebration.' On the date of the referendum, police forces from the central government quickly put a stop to that thinking. They clashed with thousands of demonstrators, employing rubber bullets and nightsticks against the protestors.²⁶ Regional police and firefighters intervened to protect the civilians. Catalan officials claimed that despite interference, most polling places remained open. Within days they announced a result: 90 percent support but only 40 percent participation. Like the previous snap elections and nonbinding consultations, secessionists had failed to get the outright majority that they sought. As protests died down, regional officials began negotiating with the national government, looking for assurances and a way forward. Catalan leaders made hesitant, noncommittal declarations and delayed an immediate independence bill. They hoped to find a path that could avoid the central government invoking emergency powers and taking bureaucratic control of the Catalan government. 25 days later, on October 26th, they announced that negotiations had failed.²⁷ They would present the independence resolution to the generalitat with no guarantees. Less than a week earlier, Prime Minister Rajoy and the Spanish Senate had laid the groundwork for an administrative takeover.

On October 27th, the Catalan parliament declared regional independence and was promptly dismissed by the national government, forcing new elections.²⁸ It was the first time

²⁵ Raphael Minder, "Tensions Rise in Spain as Catalonia Referendum Near," *New York Times* Sep. 20 2017

²⁶ Raphael Minder, "Catalonia's Independence Vote Descends Into Chaos," *New York Times* Oct 1 2017

²⁷ Raphael Minder, "Catalan Leaders Will Let Lawmakers Decide on Independence," *New York Times* Oct. 26 2017

²⁸ Raphael Minder & Patrick Kingsley, "Spain Dismisses Catalonia Government After Region Declares Independence," *New York Times* Oct. 27 2017

article 155 had been used since the signing of the 1978 constitution at the end of the Franco Regime. International members of the EU made it clear that they would not be acknowledging Catalonia as an independent state. In an effort to protect members of the Catalan parliament from prosecution, the vote was held by secret ballot, with most opposition members leaving beforehand. Carles Puigdemont fled the country, seeking refuge in Brussels. This did not stop Spain from issuing arrest warrants for Mr. Puigdemont and over 20 other officials responsible for the referendum.

Ahead of December elections, the governing coalition fractured as the socialist party supported Rajoy's takeover of the Catalan government and eventually voted to leave the coalition altogether over the fallout from the independence vote.^{29 30} During the elections, the separatists managed to cling to a position of leadership despite large gains from the opposition, the main party of which went from 25 seats in 2015 to 36 in 2017. The three-party coalition that had driven the independence referendum created a government with 70 seats out of the 68 required for a majority, the tiny socialist party CUP pushing them over the line with its 4 seats. The process of forming a government was only made more difficult by their presumptive leader, Carles Puigdemont, being overseas to avoid imprisonment.³¹

In the present day, not much has changed legally surrounding the events of the independence referendum. Article 155 continues to be in effect, and continues to be challenged

²⁹ Clara Blanchar & Jesús García, "El partido de Ada Colau rompe su pacto de gobierno con el PSC en el Ayuntamiento de Barcelona," *El País* Nov. 13 2017

³⁰ Raphael Minder, "In Barcelona Rajoy Calls for Record Turnout to Defeat Secessionism," *New York Times* Nov. 12 2017

³¹ Lecours, André. "The Political Consequences of Independence Referenda in Liberal Democracies: Quebec, Scotland, and Catalonia." *Polity* 50, no. 2 (2018): 243–74. <https://doi.org/10.1086/696709>.

in both court and parliament by Catalan leaders.³² The arrested politicians and workers responsible for the referendum received a variety of judgements, mostly guilty and with the longest reaching up to 13 years in prison. The courts opted for the lesser charge of sedition rather than outright rebellion.³³ Sedition charges also renew extradition efforts for Mr. Puigdemont, who has avoided deportation from Belgium on the grounds that his actions did not amount to a rebellion. The sentences sparked large protests in Catalonia, where riot police used batons to control crowds attempting to occupy the airport. Anniversaries such as the Diada and the date of the referendum continue to be flash points for protest, with crowds of 600,000 in 2018.³⁴ Both Catalonia and Spain have faced political difficulties as parties routinely struggle to form governments in an increasingly divided political landscape. 2019's election marked the fourth national election in four years.³⁵

Even outside of the political ramifications, Catalonia's economy suffered as businesses pulled out of the region, a process that included one of Spain's largest banks. The movement was aided by changes in federal regulation ahead of the referendum that lowered the administrative requirements for moving businesses. In just over two months, 3,000 companies moved their headquarters out of Catalonia.³⁶ ³⁷ The average number of businesses leaving per day jumped

³² Àngels Piñol, "Puigdemont evita la autocrítica en el Parlament y califica el 155 de 'golpe de Estado moderno,'" *El País* Feb. 4 2020

³³ Raphael Minder, "Catalan Separatist Leaders Get Lengthy Prison Terms for Sedition," *New York Times* Oct. 19 2019

³⁴ Raphael Minder, "600,000 Protestors in Barcelona Call for Independence From Spain," *New York Times* Sep. 11 2019

³⁵ Raphael Minder, "Catalan Separatist Leaders Get Lengthy Prison Terms for Sedition," *New York Times* Oct. 19 2019

³⁶ *El País*, "Más de 3.000 empresas han llevado su sede fuera de Cataluña desde el referéndum," *El País* Dec. 13 2017

³⁷ Lluís Pellicer, "Las grandes empresas que se han ido de Cataluña," *El País* Dec. 13 2017

from two in 2016 to 15-20 during the referendum. On the day Rajoy announced he was moving ahead with the application of article 155, 268 businesses left Catalonia.

It's hard to argue that Catalonia is better off than it was before the referendum. The leaders responsible for it are in jail or hiding abroad, the Catalan electorate is more divided than ever in contrast to claims that the referendum would finally unite the region. Businesses fled, and while Catalonia featured very prominently in the most recent electoral debates, those elections netted gains for the Spanish nationalist Partido Popular. In Catalonia, while the separatists have managed to barely maintain their governing coalition, the largest party is the anti-independence Ciutadans.

The Causes of Catalan Secessionism

Where does that leave us with regards to the underlying causes of the 2017 independence crisis? It's clear from a review of history that the Catalan secessionism seen today is a relatively new phenomenon, distinct from the Catalan nationalism begun by the Lliga Regionalista. It also seems that we have two distinct types of causes: background trends passively pushing Catalan politics toward secession and events that directly precipitated the referendum of 2017. With this in mind, we can try and figure out the main reason behind the independence crisis. A useful tool in this are the writings of Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald on social movements.

They outline three requirements for a social movement: political opportunity, framing processes, and mobilizing structures.³⁸ Political opportunity means exactly that: a movement needs some mechanism through which it can actually lead to change, some possibility it can

³⁸ Doug McAdam, John D McCarthy, and Mayer N Zald. *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*. Cambridge University Press, 1996.

achieve its goals. Framing processes refer to social or rhetorical structures that can translate public grievances into political action. Mobilizing structures refer to the organizational aspect of a movement: how is it recruiting new members? How compartmentalized is it? Does it have a distinct chain of leadership, and if so how quickly and effectively can they respond to changes and opportunities? All three of these aspects need to be fulfilled in some capacity for a movement to form: if it lacks the possibility of success, the ability to express grievances as political action, or organizational structure, it's very unlikely to be effective. These same three requirements can be used to explain why a movement is taking action, such as latent Catalan secessionist sentiment turning to overt political challenge. I could be explained by a shift in the opportunity structure from unfavorable to favorable, an increase in grievances that forces conflict regardless of odds, or newly available resources that allow a movement to capitalize on favorable prospects.³⁹ Which if any of these possibilities were at play in the crisis of 2017?

The most fundamental of background factors is the separation of the Catalan people from the rest of Spain. Henry Hale argues that the difference between an ethnofederal system that encourages stability and one that encourages conflict lies in whether or not sub-national ethnicities are heavily concentrated in their own region.⁴⁰ If a given ethnicity is not distributed but grouped in one territory, it encourages that territory to see itself as distinct from the national government. Its citizens begin to see it as a rival sovereignty existing within the union, representing them better than the national government. This situation clearly applies to Catalonia. There are plenty of other autonomias in Spain that, like Catalonia, have distinctive cultural practices and economic systems. What sets Catalonia apart is the conscious efforts of

³⁹ Peter Vondoepp (professor of political science), in discussion with author April 2020

⁴⁰ Henry Hale, "Divided We Stand: Institutional Sources of Ethnofederal State Survival and Collapse." *World Politics* 56, no. 2 (2004): 165-93. Accessed May 8, 2020. www.jstor.org/stable/25054254.

elites at the start of the twentieth century to build a Catalan national identity. This is represented first and perhaps clearest by the Lliga Regionalista, the political group of Catalan elites most powerful during the early 20th century.

The Lliga consisted largely of rich industrialists and agricultural landholders, and explicitly drove forward a narrative of Catalan leadership and exceptionalism. The efforts were regional, and as such there are not large populations of Catalans within the other autonomias, at least not enough to threaten their political order. The delayed efforts of Spain to undertake that same task of building a national identity meant that within Catalonia there was little chance of the weaker narratives of Spanish nationalism taking root. A story of persecution and renewal was retroactively constructed by elites and then massively reinforced by the efforts of the Riviera and Franco regimes. By treating Catalan nationalism as a threat to their unifying efforts, the dictators ensured that for the foreseeable future distinct Catalan identity would shape the landscape of political discourse in the autonomia.

The region has adjusted to this, and focal points for national pride have been created. The Catalan language can be seen as this: statistics indicate that it hasn't been commonly used as a principle communication method since the late 60s, and bilingualism is the norm.⁴¹ But, despite this, it has been a focal point of Catalan cultural revitalization efforts, and a barometer for the health of distinct Catalan culture. When groups such as the Crida, a small but vocal Catalan cultural organization active after the Franco regime, wanted to revitalize Catalan culture after the

⁴¹ Xavier Vila, "'Hem guanyat l'escola però hem perdut el pati?'. Els usos lingüístics a les escoles catalanes," *Llengua, Societat i Comunicació*, no. 1 2004, 8–15
<https://www.raco.cat/index.php/LSC/article/view/40442>

Franco dictatorship they pushed for broader public use of Catalan.⁴² Holidays such as the Diada also serve this function and are frequently focal points for unrest or political demonstration.

All of this contributes to Catalonia seeing itself as a distinct subnational identity. Those feelings certainly affect the political landscape, with the Spanish nationalist PP having the least support of any autonomia within Catalonia and few of the Catalan nationalist parties having any influence outside of the region. However, none of it accounts for the 2017 crisis itself, since it was more or less the same then as it had been before. You didn't see the same level of nationalist tension as during the Franco or Riviera dictatorships, and as a matter of fact more Catalans than ever saw themselves as having a dual identity, equally Catalan and Spanish.⁴³

Catalonia's economy is also a vital factor. Tracking the strength of the Catalan economy relative to those of the other autonomies explains some of the most prevalent narratives and trends within the discourse of Catalan secessionism. The economy feeds into other issues: why did Catalonia have a distinct national identity to begin with? At least partially because they had an economy distinct from that of broader Spain, based on coastal industry, industrialization, and foreign investment. Catalonia has always been one of the more prosperous economies in the region, so it's no surprise that the Lliga Regionalista saw themselves as natural leaders and rejuvenators of Spain. This difference has also led to suspicion on both sides of the Catalan border. Broader Spain suspects that Catalonia might be taking opportunities from them, and Catalonia feels taken advantage of by unequal economic policies put in place due to their higher economic status.

⁴² Dowling, 47.

⁴³ Dowling, 25.

More recent increasing tensions can be traced to relative economic strength as well. As Spain modernized, the economic gaps between autonomias started to shrink. Madrid in particular leveraged the favoritism shown to it during the Franco dictatorship and was able to usurp Barcelona's position as the most prosperous city in Spain. In Catalonia, it felt as though the federal government had saddled them with progressively more economic handicaps until they could no longer effectively compete with the rest of Spain. Foreign investment, once concentrated in Barcelona, had moved elsewhere. The gut punch of the 2008 financial crisis had crippled even the middle class. Now, despite having lost their position atop the economic heap they were still subjected to what they viewed as political and economic exploitation by the rest of Spain. These trends fall neatly into the avenue of increased grievances. As noted earlier the 2008 financial crisis hit Catalonia hard, and many of the areas where secessionist sentiment expanded preceding the crisis were middle-class: precisely those who had seen their purses hit unexpectedly and blamed the national government. These increased feelings of economic grievance also tie into the structure of Spain's broader political power structure.

Recall that Spain has a highly unusual, 'semi-federal' political structure. The autonomias have the ability to self-regulate, pass laws, and structure their own sub-national government. They lack, however, the ability to collect and distribute funds on their own. There are some exceptions, both in autonomias that made special deals and specific issues that are given a pass across the board, but Catalonia is not one of those autonomias. As such all funds collected must be passed on to the federal government, and any projects that require funds must first draft a proposal and have it approved by the federal government. Because of this, the regional and federal government have closer ties than in many other federal systems. All funds are pooled at

the national level, but distribution to a given area is not necessarily equal to the funds allocated in return. This creates a system of donor autonomias, the more prosperous regions seeing a net movement of funds out of their coffers and towards less prosperous regions. Of particular note are the national insurance pools, or ‘cajas.’ These are the systems that Catalans reference when they say that they are being robbed by broader Spain. It also gives another route with which the federal government can put pressure on local officials. If the federal government does not see the regional government as operating in good faith they can start to cut off funds. Even in times of relative cooperation between national and regional governments, tensions and the threat of coercive bargaining remain.

This tension is only exacerbated by Spain’s electoral system, which allows for single-party minority rule.^{44 45} Technically Spain uses a fairly standard system of proportional representation. However, there are several ways in which the details of the system skew toward favoring control of smaller, more rural districts. Smaller regions are easier to control for established parties because while there is a minimum vote percentage parties need to attain before they are considered, this only applies to districts that send more than 30 representatives to the lower house. Currently only Madrid and Barcelona meet that threshold. In the other regions, small parties can and do still run but must jockey for far fewer seats, creating a much higher practical threshold for representation. A region with only three seats would have a practical threshold of 33 percent, since any party that fails to gain more than that would not qualify for a single seat. More, votes toward parties that fail to get a seat are not redistributed and are simply

⁴⁴ Kiko Llerenas & Jordi Pérez Colomé, “La participación sube más en las comarcas menos independentistas,” *El País* Dec. 21 2017

⁴⁵ Sean Mueller, “Catalonia: The Perils of Majoritarianism.” *Journal of Democracy* 30, no. 2 (2019): 142–56. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.2019.0031>.

discounted.⁴⁶ This favors established parties with loyal voting blocks in those smaller regions, as long as they meet the minimum. In addition to being easier to control, smaller districts carry more weight: the number of representatives from a given region in their lower house is partially based on population size, but there is a minimum number of two representatives. This minimum gives greater impact to each vote in smaller regions. The impact of these smaller districts is exacerbated by the Spanish upper house. It is similar to the US senate, with all regions receiving equal representation regardless of population size. This functions as another institutional bias giving more weight to smaller districts.

As a result of all this, established parties can edge out smaller competition by dominating less populous districts with higher practical barriers to entry, which also carry disproportionate weight. No governing party has ever won a majority of public support in Spain or Catalonia, and historical average support hovers around 30 and 40 percent respectively. If a party can establish a strong base of motivated voters, even if they comprise a minority of the population, it is possible to move public policy regardless of overall popularity. The opportunity created by this system has direct bearing on the events leading up to the Catalan independence crisis. The 2011 national elections which allowed the conservative Partido Popular to implement strict economic austerity gave them an outright majority of seats in the lower house despite only receiving 44 percent of the popular vote.⁴⁷ It was this outright majority of seats that allowed Mariano Rajoy's administration to pursue their aims without compromise or consultation with the broader political field, something only possible for them because of Spain's disproportionate electoral systems.

⁴⁶ Neil Stokes, "How the Spanish General Election Works," *Catalan News* Nov. 10 2019

⁴⁷ "IFES Election Guide: Country Profile: Spain." n.d. IFES Election Guide | Country Profile: Spain. ElectionGuide. Accessed May 8, 2020. <http://www.electionguide.org/countries/id/200/>.

The incentives that this system creates can also push politics toward its ideological edges. Without the need to appeal to moderates, parties at both ends of the spectrum can focus on their high-turnout base voters through extreme and combative rhetoric. It also makes them vulnerable to even more extreme factions within their ideological group that might steal away their voters with still more extreme rhetoric, leaving them with nothing. A race to the edges is created, with the optimal policy platform being not the one with the greatest general appeal but the most extreme one that can still be tolerated by their base, motivating their voters but protecting their political flanks. Data supports this claim, with Catalan political leaders expressing exclusively Spanish or Catalan identity rather than a mix at much higher rates than the broader public⁴⁸.

We can also see this play out in the strategic actions of parties: the three-party leftist coalition in Catalonia that precipitated the independence crisis swore not to cooperate with the Spanish government in their foundational documents. The PP responded in kind. Both parties saw heightened conflict as in their interests, and perhaps even necessary should the individuals currently driving policy wish to remain at the heads of their party and not displaced by more ideologically pure confederates. This pressure from both sides is key to understanding the reasons why Puigdemont and his confederates took the actions they did during the crisis itself. Hale mentions this as one of the mechanisms through which ethnic state divisions show themselves: the ability of “political entrepreneurs to play the ‘nationality card,’ thereby promoting secessionist activity.” All of this is only exacerbated by voter turnout often as low as 65 percent. With unmotivated moderate voters less likely to show up, politicians are that much less worried about being outmaneuvered through an appeal to the center.

⁴⁸ Dowling, 107.

Another important background factor is the opposition to Catalan independence: Spanish nationalism. Groups seeking to create a unified Spanish people have been the perpetual enemies of Catalan identity politically and even militarily since the inception of the Catalan independence movement. This was most dramatic during the Riviera and Franco dictatorships, which strove to annihilate Catalan identity and integrate them into the broader Spanish nation-building project. Catalan populations have resisted this in turn by involving themselves more actively in their communities and regional politics when they feel threatened. This is the reason why Catalan independence saw such massive surges in support after the dictatorships that faded over time as the Catalan people were reassured that their collective identity was not under active threat. And while Catalonia did not see anything near those levels of repression before the 2017 independence referendum, that's not to say that the Catalan people did not feel under threat.

After the end of Francoism in the late 70s / early 80s, Spanish nationalism's public image was in tatters. It was inextricably linked in the public eye to a brutal, antidemocratic regime, whose early promises of a return to economic prosperity had failed to come to fruition. Despite this setback Spanish nationalism would eventually return to the national stage a mere two decades later in the form of the Partido Popular, Spain's main conservative political party. In keeping with Spanish nationalism's history, the Partido Popular viewed any measures of Catalan autonomy with extreme skepticism. They took reclaimed control of the national government in 2000, holding the reins of power during the 2008 financial crisis and in the years after when Spain actually began to feel the effects.⁴⁹ They used this opportunity to rewrite the relationships of the national government with most of the autonomias, cutting back funding that they viewed

⁴⁹ Dowling, 71.

as wasteful and unnecessary. Under the Spanish system there is no separate income for the autonomias, and there was little the autonomias could do but accept the cutbacks.

For the Catalan populace, it seemed as though they were under siege. First the national discourse began to turn hostile toward them, questioning what they viewed as already meager gestures toward regional autonomy. Then, just as they were faced with the economic disaster of the financial crisis, the national government went for the throat with heavy austerity. As in the past when the Catalan people felt under threat by the national government, they responded actively. These trends are in no small part responsible for the ability of the reformed ERC to muscle its way onto the political landscape with secession narratives in the early 2000s. And as secessionist sentiment grew toward the events of 2017, the resurgence of Spanish nationalism ensured that it would have no trouble finding a foil on the national stage. This factor fits neatly into the model of increasing grievances, as the Catalan people noted surging hostility nationally and pushed their leaders to take action.

Precipitating Events

Background effects weren't the only factors pushing Catalonia toward a referendum. In the decade or so leading up to 2017, a variety of more immediate shifts contributed more directly to the outcome we arrived at today. These types of precipitating events are just as, if not more, significant when we look at the three main factors highlighted in social movement theory. All three were present to some degree. With respect to grievances, levels of support of the secessionist left indicated that secessionist sentiment was at an all time high, even if it wasn't above 50 percent. There had never been better odds since the start of the modern secession movement. Pressures were also increasing both internally and externally, with the conservative

Rajoy administration combined with the 2008 financial crisis pushing from outside and party hardliners pushing from within. Heightened available resources and logistics played less of a role, but the benefits of social media for organizing demonstrations and boosting support shouldn't be discounted. That said, it's clear from statements and an examination of the timeline of events that the second avenue of pressure from increased grievances is the most important here: Puigdemont and his coalition were essentially forced toward secession step by step, facing political ruin whether they backed down or went through with the referendum.

With both Spanish and Catalan nationalism on the rise going into the 2000s, it seemed inevitable that the discourse would find a flash point. It came in the form of the revised estatute, the document which outlines the responsibilities of the regional government and the national government. During the 21st century's first decade many autonomias were updating their estatutes, but Catalonia's in particular was watched with scrutiny by the nationally governing PP party. In early 2004 the Catalan government, led by a liberal secessionist coalition including the ERC, began drafting changes that would expand Catalan nationalist goals economically, politically, and socially. This work continued into 2005, but was challenged by the PP within a year. Deliberations and appeals were long, and it wasn't until 2010 that Spain's highest court, El Tribunal Constitucional, arrived at a decision. Many sections of the revision were declared unconstitutional, including some of the ones the Catalan nationalists had most valued. Establishment of Catalan as an obligatory language to be learned, heightened regional authority in the generalitat, and the identification of Catalonia as a 'nacion' (nation) in the preamble, were all cut.⁵⁰ Leaders and constituents within the nationalist movement saw this as proof that there

⁵⁰Josep Brunet & Josep Calvet, "El TC avala la mayor parte del Estatut pero recorta 14 artículos," *La Vanguardia* Jun. 28 2010

could be no reconciliation or autonomy with the governing Partido Popular, and began moving toward a referendum that would win their independence once and for all.

Rajoy had explicitly warned the Catalan parliament that any attempt to declare independence would lose them their administrative autonomy. But from the other side, secessionist hardliners were pressuring their leaders to stand firm. Hints that independence might be delayed or abandoned were met with allusions to the biblical figure Judas. For Catalan leader Carles Puigdemont and his team, it seemed the choice was between a certain defeat by letting down their followers or a probable defeat in the next election cycle. Even if they held firm, Rajoy would certainly invoke emergency powers and had promised to hold new elections within 6 months, which would be a difficult fight even with an intact base. All that is assuming they weren't immediately indicted upon declaring independence. It's useless to speculate as to the specific motivations of the leaders at this point. What's important is to acknowledge that structurally, they had no good options. We're left again with our central question: why would they take this course of action in the first place? The range of possible outcomes were known to all parties from the start. Carles Puigdemont was hoping for a "democratic tsunami", overcoming the constitutional limits in place through sheer democratic energy. But even if that had occurred, it wouldn't fundamentally change the legal dynamics at play, and would likely have attained the same end result but with more disruption to the international European Union as states were forced to take a position. The odds of that situation ever coming to pass were astronomically low, as shown by the repeated 'consultations' and snap elections that returned at best a split electorate.

Because of these circumstances, it can seem as though whatever had occurred, we would have been left with more or less the same outcome. But it's important not to discount the possibility of radical political restructuring. We've already seen it: in less than two decades Catalan independence went from a non-issue to the defining feature of the Catalan political landscape, precipitating a constitutional crisis. During my research I spoke to two Spanish professors familiar with the topic, with differing views on whether or not Catalan independence is legitimate, and both emphasized that the possibility of Catalan secession should not be discounted. It's true that the Spanish constitution has no mechanism for secession, and in the current political climate there was no chance of the federal government letting them walk away. But legitimacy is a matter of public perception, and had the declarations of the Partido Popular and the Spanish constitutional court not been supported by the broader Spanish public we might have seen a very different story. In just two decades Catalan independence went from a fringe issue discussed only in far leftist circles to a topic that dominates the region's political landscape. A lot can change in a couple years, and the issue of Catalan independence almost certainly isn't going away.^{51 52}

So how does this timeline fit into our explanations for secessionist conflict? Recall that social movement theory offers three primary explanations for a surge in secessionist sentiment: a shift in circumstances making success more likely, an increase in pressure forcing the issue regardless of the odds of success, and an increase in the resources or logistics available to secessionist groups. Circumstances hadn't really shifted to make independence more politically viable. It was just as illegal, and although they were hoping for a 'democratic tsunami' to carry

⁵¹ Lluís Orriols Galve (professor of political science), in discussion with author November 29 2019

⁵² Alberto Veira Ramos (professor of social science and justice), in discussion with author November 6 2019

them to victory, progressively more representative polling efforts indicated that they weren't going to even get a majority in favor of independence. The third model, new resources being made available, hasn't yet been brought up. This usually refers to organizational resources: the will for and possibility of a secessionist referendum already exist, but until this point the framework hasn't been in place to allow for an organized effort. This isn't entirely inapplicable to the 2017 crisis: the use of social media to coordinate protest on a large scale was a new phenomenon of debatable impact. But Catalan nationalism had never had organizational problems before that point. There were times when Catalan nationalism was even more organized than its Spanish counterpart. Even if Catalan nationalism received a boost in organizational ability via social media or new funding allowing them to expand their bureaucracy, organizing wasn't their limiting factor.

That leaves us with the second factor: increasing grievances pushing Catalan Secessionism toward conflict regardless of whether conditions were favorable or unfavorable. It's this narrative that seems most supported by the events of the crisis. As covered earlier when we reviewed the possible outcomes of a referendum, the odds of a new Catalan state forming were vanishingly small. Puigdemont and his allies knew from the start that they would almost certainly wind up in jail or exile. Their statements and actions indicate that at almost every step they were in communication with the national government looking for a way out. The hostile PP denied them any out that might have satisfied their core constituents without a referendum. Despite the most unfavorable of conditions, the secessionist coalition was pushed into disaster by their own constituents.

Catalonia and the Broader Field of Secessionist Movements

While Catalan secessionism's youth as a movement limits the insight we can get from comparing it to previous iterations of Catalan nationalism, it's still possible to compare it to other first-world secessionist movements. One of the most useful comparisons is between Scotland's recent independence referendum and the Catalan secessionist movement.

The early history of Scotland offers a variety of parallels with Catalonia. Both Scotland and Catalonia existed well before the creation of their respective current nation-states, and had conflict with their neighbors who would eventually form those nation-states. Scotland was folded into the union between Britain and Ireland in the early 1700s. They lost much of their regional control, with their former government being subsumed into the UK parliament. Interestingly their legal system remained distinct and their judicial power local, a long-desired goal of Catalan separatists that they attempted to partially achieve in the estatute modifications that kicked off the 2014 rulers. From the start, Scotland was given more autonomy by their national government than their Catalan counterparts. The deposed former rulers of Scotland, the Jacobites, gave two major attempts in 1715 and 1745 to reassert the previous Scottish aristocracy before they were put down militarily at the battle of Culloden.

Like Catalonia, Scotland possessed a distinct culture with a separate line of succession at the time of its inclusion. Going into the colonial era, Scotland was also an economic powerhouse within its state. The industrial revolution had the same centralizing and concentrating effect in the United Kingdom as in Spain, vaulting Scotland to a central position economically and intellectually.⁵³⁵⁴ An interesting difference can be seen between Scotland of this period and the

⁵³ Hirsch, Abraham, and Michael Fry. "Adam Smith's Legacy: His Place in the Development of Modern Economics." *Southern Economic Journal* 61, no. 3 (1995): 883. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1061012>.

equivalent period for Catalonia. While Catalan elites did have designs for the larger Spain, demographic changes and a surge in trade union influence forced their attention inward before they could be realized. The Lliga's dreams of wider influence would be thwarted by a succession of dictatorships, putting Catalonia in perpetual conflict with the national government. In contrast, after Scotland's two Jacobite uprisings the region seemed to settle into their place within the UK and in fact became a major contributing force to all aspects of the growing British Empire. This was met, in turn, with a greater presence in Parliament and an expanded enfranchisement through the Scottish Reform Act of 1832. While Catalonia found conflict with their new system, Scotland seemed to find opportunity. Scottish production and exports only grew as the 1800s drew to a close.

The late 1800s and early 1900s saw a period referred to as the 'Scottish Enlightenment,' in which Scotland's industrialization, increasing American market exports, and school system allowed it to surge forward in economic power and cultural prestige. Unlike Catalonia, Scotland was not dominant going into its new union and never pulled ahead of Britain, but it managed to close some of the economic gap, no small feat considering the latter's power at the time. Scotland had actually had twice as many universities going into the union as Britain. As American markets shifted, the tobacco trade boosted their economy as well.⁵⁵ Contact with Britain helped to spark academic reforms, investing further in higher learning with more

⁵⁴ R. H. Campbell, "The Anglo-Scottish Union of 1707. II. The Economic Consequences." *The Economic History Review* 16, no. 3 (1964): 468. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2592849>.

⁵⁵ Campbell, 468.

universities and better facilities. These investments were accompanied by a desire to increase equality, opening up access to universities and encouraging literacy across the board.⁵⁶

The significance of all of this is to show the further parallels, and significant differences, between the histories of Scotland and Catalonia. Both had a period of economic boom. In Catalonia the period was both longer and more extreme. For the vast majority of Catalonia's history, it has sat atop the economic hierarchy of the Iberian peninsula. Scotland, on the other hand, had a shorter period of economic boom and never surpassed Britain. The difference in economic history translates into their broader relationship with their respective unions: while Catalonia has always seen intense conflict and suspicion with broader Spain, Scotland's relationship with the broader UK has been less consistently negative and less extreme. The Scottish Enlightenment occurred during the time the British empire was near its peak. Britain was never seriously threatened by Scotland, since even though Scotland closed some of the gap between the two economically there was never a real risk that it would overtake it. In contrast, the uneasy consumer/producer relationship between Catalonia and the other Spanish autonomias, along with the significant economic gap between them, has always bred resentment. There was a time when Scots filled out many of the essential positions within the British empire, driving it forward. The relationship between Catalonia and broader Spain has always been one of competition. In the end, the Lliga's dream of a cooperative union between Spanish and Catalan leadership never came to pass. Scotland, in contrast, has seen a much more collaborative relationship as seen by their integration into the British empire and a steadily increasing

⁵⁶ Matthew Daniel Eddy, "The Child Writer: Graphic Literacy and the Scottish Educational System, 1700–1820." *History of Education* 45, no. 6 (2016): 695–718. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0046760x.2016.1197971>.

devolution of powers back to regional government. Scotland's modern independence movement has seen the same smoother relations with the United Kingdom's national government.

Scotland's first modern decentralization attempt occurred in the late 1970s, spurred on by the discovery of oil off the Scottish coast and a narrow labor majority. While 'devolution' of powers won the referendum 52 percent to 48 percent, turnout was low enough that they didn't garner the 40 percent support needed for a successful breakaway. Labour protested the nullification as undemocratic, and eventually forced elections that lost them their hold on power. Decades later, in 1997, a second referendum was held hoping to establish a regional parliament for Scottish affairs. The election was approved by the UK parliament and the proposal was approved with higher proportional support and overall turnout, with 45 percent of the population voting in support. Some, however, viewed the regional parliament as just a prelude to true independence.

In the mid-2000s momentum began building once more for a referendum on full independence. In the 2007 regional elections, the dominant Scottish National Party made holding another referendum part of their platform. They would not attain the parliamentary majority needed to do so until 2011, after which they began moving forward with the referendum. By January of 2012 the national government had assented and entered into negotiations with the Scottish regional government, which lasted into October of that year. The agreement between the two was called the Edinburgh Agreement, and went on to be approved by the devolved Scottish parliament the following year.^{57 58}

⁵⁷ "Scotland's Referendum 2014," Scotreferendum.com/information, Scottish Government, May 1 2020, <https://www.webarchive.org.uk/wayback/archive/20150119120546/https://www.scotreferendum.com/information/>

⁵⁸ BBC News, "Timeline: Scottish Independence Referendum," *BBC News* Oct. 15 2012 <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-19907675>

The agreement gave essentially all oversight to the Scottish government, laying out only four points regarding a referendum on independence: that it should “have a clear legal base, be legislated for by the Scottish Parliament, be conducted so as to command the confidence of parliaments, governments and people, and deliver a fair test and a decisive expression of the views of people in Scotland and a result that everyone will respect.”⁵⁹ Left to the discretion of the Scottish parliament were the date, wording, franchise, finance rules, and even a generic catch-all “other rules for conduct of the referendum.” This shows a striking difference between the immediate reaction of the UK government and the immediate reaction of the Spanish government to learning of a nascent referendum. Far from giving full legal endorsement, Mariano Rajoy’s PP administration immediately declared any referendum unconstitutional, sought court orders to back up the decision, and began police operations to disrupt the organizing by force. Later on, Puigdemont would publicly lament the Spanish government’s total unwillingness to negotiate. The legislative work was completed on the Scottish end by June 2013, and was given secondary approval from the national government within two months. The Scottish government would release their roadmap and argument in favor of independence a month after, in a paper hundreds of pages long entitled ‘Scotland’s Future.’ The paper outlined a variety of the party’s goals, such as childcare, housing reform, and nuclear weapons nonproliferation. It also served to reassure the public of the ease of transition by clarifying the continuation of government health care and the use of the pound as currency.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Scottish Government, “Agreement between the United Kingdom Government and the Scottish Government on a referendum on independence for Scotland,” gov.scot, May 1 2020 <https://www.webarchive.org.uk/wayback/archive/20170701045319/http://www.gov.scot/About/Governments/concordats/Referendum-on-independence>

⁶⁰ Andrew Black, “Scottish Independence: Referendum White Paper Revealed,” *BBC News* Nov. 23 2013

More than just giving legal assent, the UK government was willing to engage ideologically with the idea of Scottish independence. Public debates were arranged between the regional and national government. More than just allowing the UK government to get their message out, the debates showed a willingness to legitimize independence in the public eye. The Spanish government was careful to avoid even the appearance of this. Messaging from Spanish national officials employed careful language, entirely disregarding the possibility that there could be a legally or politically legitimate independence referendum. The debates would go on to be significant events in the minds of voters, with one of the debates being the most influential event of the entire campaign according to an analysis of polls and political gambling markets by Wall, Costello, & Lindsay 2017.

On the morning of a debate, leaders from the national government released a statement promising to further devolve powers to Scotland should they vote to remain in the UK. They hoped to split their opposition, drawing back to their side those who wanted greater autonomy but who didn't share the goal of total independence. It could also be argued that they saw the polling numbers going into the referendum, received the message, and acted to ensure that Scottish voices would be heard regardless of results. The promise was signed by leaders from the conservative party, labour party, and liberal party. The degree and breadth of willingness to engage with secessionism hints at a more fundamental shift.

Unlike the Spanish Government, the UK national leadership saw independence as an issue of collaboration rather than conflict. The referendum ultimately failed, with 85 percent voter turnout and 55 percent opposition to secession. The recent Brexit proceedings have reignited talk of secession, since Scottish counties universally voted to remain in the European

Union. But the national government, now under the control of a more conservative administration, has signaled that they would be less inclined to approve another referendum. This shift is interesting, and a parallel can be drawn between the stance of the federal government and what political wing has power. The difference between the UK government in 2014 under David Cameron and the UK government in 2019 under Boris Johnson would certainly support that causation. Despite Scotland's pro-independence labour party winning an overwhelming majority in 2019 elections and once again requesting a referendum, Boris Johnson and his conservative allies claim that the 2014 referendum was a once in a generation event.⁶¹ As of writing, Scotland remains in the UK. Whether it will stay that way remains to be seen.⁶²

Scotland's independence movement bears some striking similarities to Catalonia's. To start with, both regions are examples of Hale's conflict-prone regional ethnofederalism, housing regional government and concentrated ethnic minorities within their borders. Both have also served as economic powerhouses within their states, although the presence of Britain meant that Scotland was never entirely dominant. Both acquired a measure of decentralization in the recent past, with their national government allowing them regional parliaments. The modern iteration of both movements employed cultural narratives of a distinct history but were spurred toward a referendum due to economic changes. The histories of each nation contain economic grievances as well: Scotland's independence movement surged in the 70s when oil was discovered off the Scottish coast and the slogan, 'It's Scotland's Oil!' was rolled out. Their respective independence movements gained further control following the 2008 financial crisis, culminating

⁶¹ Philip Sim, "Indyref2: What Does 'Once in a Generation' Mean?" *BBC Scotland* Jan. 16 2020

⁶² Oliver Thorn, *Brexit: What is Democracy?* Directed/Performed by Oliver Thorn (Mar. 7 2019), Video <https://youtu.be/Vr-ZeTol4R8?t=833>

in independence referendums within three years of each other. Both ultimately failed to achieve an overall majority in those referendums.

But there are key differences, all of which contribute to one critical factor: the degree to which grievance exists between the region and the broader state. The Scottish economy hasn't dominated those of the other regions in their state as Catalonia's has. As such they haven't dealt with being a net-loss contributor to the same degree, and the suspicions that come with it. They have never received the same level of modern oppression as Catalonia did from the Franco and Riviera regimes, with the bulk to Britain's military action taking place before or immediately after Scotland was folded into their union. These differences were reflected through a key metric: the stance of the federal government during and leading up to the independence referendum.

This is perhaps the most significant factor when it comes to the degree of political conflict and physical violence that characterized the Catalan referendum. In contrast to the Rajoy administration's obstructionism, the national government of the UK legitimized the referendum and offered concessions should Scotland remain.

More than just engaging with the most recent referendum, a look at the history of Britain and Scotland reveals a string of political devolutions and decentralizations following the origins of the UK and the development of a home rule movement in Scotland. If the Scottish people had felt entirely satisfied with the UK, they wouldn't have organized a referendum or voted it down so narrowly. But it is clear they didn't feel the same level of resentment and hostility in the UK as in Spain. This is borne out by the data.

If we look at the World Values Survey in 2009, Catalonia has the fourth lowest number of respondents saying they are 'Very Proud' of their nationality, with over 52 percent opting for

the second answer of ‘Quite Proud.’ Among regions with similarly large sample sizes, Southern Andalusia and central Madrid, Catalonia scores far lower. Those two regions had 32 percent and 43 percent higher ‘Very Proud’ response rates respectively, with 1.5 and 1.3 percent ‘Not Very Proud’ compared with Catalonia’s 10 percent. These numbers stayed fairly stable into the next round in 2014, although notably the number of people responding ‘Not at all proud’ doubled in Catalonia, from three to six percent. It’s worth considering that the wording of the question might be causing some confusion: it’s entirely possible that a Catalan nationalist could see their nationality as Catalan and be very proud of that.

2009 ⁶³	Very Proud	Quite Proud	Not Very Proud	Not At All Proud
Catalonia	33.6%	52.2%	10.1%	3.1%
Madrid	75.4%	20.9%	1.3%	-
Andalusia	65.1%	31.1%	1.5%	0.5%

2014 ⁶⁴	Very Proud	Quite Proud	Not Very Proud	Not At All Proud
Catalonia	31.6%	47.3%	8.3%	6.7%
Madrid	69.0%	23.0%	1.3%	0.6%
Andalusia	-	-	-	-

Compare that to the responses from Scotland.

2009 ⁶⁵	Very Proud	Quite Proud	Not Very Proud	Not At All Proud
Scotland	49.3%	35.2%	4.7%	3.7%
London	35.7%	40.2%	6.7%	1.2%

⁶³ Appendix A for full table

⁶⁴ Appendix B for full table

⁶⁵ Appendix C for full table

GB: Southeast	47.8%	35.8%	3.8%	1.3%
GB: Northwest	57.6%	31.9%	7.5%	-

Scotland and Catalonia actually have fairly similar numbers. Unfortunately the data for the UK in 2014 aren't available, but in 2019 their numbers of respondents saying they were 'Very Proud' or 'Quite Proud' were both within 15 to 20 percent of each other. The numbers appear more even across the board in the United Kingdom. The main exceptions here are in fact the other autonomias in Spain. The highest number of 'Very Proud' responses with a high sample size in the UK was the Northwest, with 57.6 percent. Compare that to Madrid's response rate of 75.4 percent. While that's not that much more of a difference than between Scotland and Catalonia, what is telling is the consistency shown in Spain's responses. If we look at the average 'Very Proud' rate of the four autonomias with a sample size equal or larger than that of the Northwest UK, it's 63.85 percent. Even with Catalonia dragging the number down their average is still higher than the UK's highest.

This supports the conclusion that grievances between the national and regional populations, which influence the stance the national government takes toward regional actions, were much more pronounced in Spain than the UK. Spanish nationalist parties had been resurgent in the years before the Catalan referendum, and it's not hard to see why. Voters who are that much prouder of their nationality will be that much more sympathetic to politicians who reflect that pride. Those same politicians are unlikely to look favorably on a bid for regional secession, and will be aware that their voters back home expect them to take a strong position against any referendum.

The relationship between federal and regional governments in the UK was radically different. The UK government went as far as to specifically grant Scotland's regional parliament, the parliament they had devolved control to just two decades earlier, the authority to organize an independence referendum. They met with the secessionists to hash out the Edinburgh Agreement. The national government engaged both politically and ideologically with their rivals, organizing a series of public debates that proved to be some of the key events influencing public opinion in the leadup to the referendum.⁶⁶ The statement signed by representatives of both political sides of the national government promised Scotland further autonomy should they remain undoubtedly played a key role in a referendum that came down to a difference of only ten percent.

While the regional and national governments obviously disagreed, the Scottish referendum appeared more a collaboration between them than anything else. The Rajoy administration, in contrast, maintained from the start that any Catalan referendum would be unconstitutional and refused all attempts by Puigdemont to come to an understanding, pinning Catalan secessionists between their own base and impending arrest. Rajoy knew that Puigdemont couldn't back down without concessions and saw the Catalan referendum as an opportunity to rile up his base, dispose of some of his rivals, and rein in a region he saw as too antagonistic and distinct from the Spanish whole. Local opposition in the two regions showed the same difference: the Scottish referendum garnered more legitimacy because local opposition participated in it rather than organizing a boycott, as occurred in Catalonia. Unless they are forced to participate, such as when the secessionists came together to form one party and make

⁶⁶ Matthew Wall, Rory Costello, and Stephen Lindsay. "The Miracle of the Markets: Identifying Key Campaign Events in the Scottish Independence Referendum Using Betting Odds." *Electoral Studies* 46 (2017): 39–47. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2017.01.003>.

regional elections hinge on a single issue, Catalan unionists took the same stance as the national government. With an entirely non-compliant opposition, the referendum had little chance of gaining the legitimacy it would need in order to have any real-world success.

All these factors came together to give us the drastically different referendum results that we see today. Keep in mind that actual public support for secession is similar in Catalonia and Scotland. Had Catalonia's vote proceeded with the endorsement of the national government and participation of the entire voting public, it likely would have failed just as Scotland's did. Instead, the opposition was able to use it as an opportunity to further motivate their base and consolidate administrative power over the region.

Conclusions

So what does this mean for the Catalan independence movement and its causes? The study of the emergence of secessionist narratives, and especially the transition from mere Catalan nationalism to modern Catalan secessionism, shows that Catalan secessionism is a distinct social movement from its progenitor. It's possible that a referendum on independence was inevitable given the political circumstances. Even so, we're left with one main question: if the only possible outcomes to a referendum were disastrous, why did it still take place? Why not find an alternative, why not delay for more favorable conditions?

The answer lies both in a rising tide of Catalan grievance and the unique incentives of the Spanish political system. Rising grievances got them into the situation; political incentives made sure they had no way out. As covered in the section on Catalonia's recent history, the emergence of the reformed ERC and its secessionist rhetoric onto the regional stage coincided with a time of increased friction with the national government. The conservative national government was already hostile to Catalan autonomy. A disputed estatute revision was compounded by the crushing 2008 financial crisis, which the PP used to enforce austerity. Increasingly it appeared there was little to no common ground between liberal Catalonia and the conservative, Spanish nationalist Partido Popular. The secessionists began testing the waters. The new ERC had been eyeing secession from the start, a holdover from its roots in radical leftist circles. If they were going to make their move, they would be hard pressed to find a better time than after the financial crisis.

Unfortunately, that's not the same thing as it being a good time. Recall that there is no mechanism for secession in the Spanish constitution. Their own most accurate count placed

Catalan secessionist support at less than half of the voting population. Worse yet, Spanish nationalism seemed to have recovered from the body blow of Francoism. The Partido Popular's grip on power seemed strong, and there was no telling how long they would retain control or if the secessionists would still be in power when they fell. There was no chance of Mariano Rajoy's administration giving an inch of ground when it came to Spanish secessionism. Not only did Spanish nationalists oppose it on ideological grounds, but they stood only to profit electorally from obstructionism.

The actions of the 2017 independence referendum cannot be understood without accounting for the incentives put in place by Spain's electoral system and political landscape. Both Spain and Catalonia had long traditions of low voter turnout, disproportionate representation, and minority rule, and the parties in power on both sides of the table at the time of the referendum were no different. Tolerance of minority rule meant that there was little need to appeal to a larger section of voters. Spanish political parties could rely on their most loyal voters, doubling down on even broadly unpopular measures as long as their base stayed energized. Rajoy could benefit massively from moves that provoked secessionist outcry in Catalonia, which his base would see as an active enemy to be combatted. From this standpoint, a secession referendum is a dream come true. He can declare it illegal, send in police to break it up, and watch as his ideological and political opponents tear themselves apart.

The same forces were at play within the Catalan administration. They had promised their base a referendum, and unless they delivered they would be doomed. Reliance on a smaller voting base is a double edged sword: it also makes you vulnerable to attacks from the flank. If Puigdemont didn't follow through, he could be usurped not only by another party but by a more

extreme element from within his own coalition. As time went on and the referendum came ever closer to fruition, Puigdemont could only hope for a ‘democratic tsunami’ or de-escalation talks and concessions from the national government. Either would have been nothing short of miraculous. The Spanish nationalists could simply watch events play out and reap the rewards. They had no reason to cooperate and no will to give ground like we saw the UK do with Scotland.

With the national government entirely unwilling to compromise and party hardliners applying pressure from the side, Puigdemont and his administration watched as option after option was closed off from them. The Catalan people were split down the middle, the referendum only making the divisions more severe. His own supporters would accept nothing short of the referendum they had been promised. The courts awaited him if he delivered. Faced with a straight path to a cliff and a crowd at his back, what choice did he have but to leap?

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Appendix A

	TOTAL	Region where the interview was conducted					
		ES- ES61 Andalucía	ES- ES24 Aragón	ES- ES11 Principado de Asturias	ES- ES53 Islas Baleares	ES- ES70 Canarias	
Very proud	58.3%	65.1%	64.7%	73.0%	57.0%	31.0%	
Quite proud	33.7%	31.1%	32.1%	27.0%	35.3%	55.2%	
Not very proud	3.8%	1.5%	-	-	4.1%	5.7%	
Not at all proud	1.5%	0.5%	3.2%	-	3.7%	4.3%	
Don't know	0.9%	-	-	-	-	2.0%	
No answer	0.9%	0.4%	-	-	-	-	
Not applicable	0.7%	0.9%	-	-	-	1.8%	
Missing; Not available	0.1%	0.5%	-	-	-	-	
(N)	(1,200)	(209)	(32)	(33)	(25)	(51)	
		Region where the interview was conducted					
		ES- ES11 Cantabria	ES- ES42 Castilla-La Mancha	ES- ES41 Castilla y León	ES- ES51 Cataluña	ES- ES52 Comunidad Valenciana	ES- ES43 Extremadura
Very proud	50.0%	91.8%	61.4%	33.6%	81.3%	74.7%	
Quite proud	32.2%	8.2%	34.9%	52.2%	15.3%	17.9%	
Not very proud	12.2%	-	1.2%	10.1%	2.6%	-	
Not at all proud	-	-	1.2%	3.1%	0.8%	-	
Don't know	5.7%	-	-	0.6%	-	-	
No answer	-	-	-	-	-	3.3%	
Not applicable	-	-	1.3%	0.5%	-	4.1%	
Missing; Not available	-	-	-	-	-	-	
(N)	(16)	(49)	(75)	(193)	(124)	(27)	
		Region where the interview was conducted					
		ES- ES11 Galicia	ES- ES30 Comunidad de Madrid	ES- ES62 Región de Murcia	ES- ES22 Comunidad Foral de Navarra	ES- ES21 País Vasco	ES- ES23 La Rioja
Very proud	31.7%	75.4%	82.9%	61.2%	23.1%	75.5%	
Quite proud	63.3%	20.9%	14.2%	38.8%	39.6%	-	
Not very proud	-	1.3%	-	-	15.7%	11.0%	
Not at all proud	1.2%	-	2.9%	-	4.2%	-	
Don't know	3.8%	-	-	-	6.4%	-	
No answer	-	1.2%	-	-	9.4%	13.5%	
Not applicable	-	1.3%	-	-	1.6%	-	
Missing; Not available	-	-	-	-	-	-	
(N)	(84)	(157)	(35)	(15)	(68)	(8)	

Selected samples: Spain 2007

Appendix B

	Region (2) where the interview was conducted					
	ES: Barcelona	ES: Cáceres	ES: Cádiz	ES: Ciudad Real	ES: Coruña (La)	ES: Gerona
Very proud	31.6%	100.0%	60.9%	59.1%	28.5%	38.0%
Quite proud	47.3%	-	28.0%	23.6%	50.9%	26.5%
Not very proud	8.3%	-	8.3%	5.7%	5.3%	24.1%
Not at all proud	6.7%	-	2.8%	-	-	11.3%
I am not [nationality]	1.8%	-	-	-	-	-
Don't know	1.8%	-	-	5.5%	-	-
No answer	2.5%	-	-	6.1%	15.2%	-
(N)	(164)	(8)	(33)	(17)	(35)	(16)
	Region (2) where the interview was conducted					
	ES: Granada	ES: Guadalajara	ES: San Sebastián	ES: Jaén	ES: León	ES: Logroño
Very proud	27.2%	100.0%	12.1%	71.9%	68.6%	89.8%
Quite proud	61.7%	-	54.1%	21.8%	25.7%	-
Not very proud	5.1%	-	11.6%	-	-	10.2%
Not at all proud	3.4%	-	16.5%	2.9%	-	-
I am not [nationality]	-	-	-	-	-	-
Don't know	2.6%	-	5.6%	-	5.7%	-
No answer	-	-	-	3.5%	-	-
(N)	(36)	(9)	(17)	(33)	(16)	(9)
	Region (2) where the interview was conducted					
	ES: Madrid	ES: Málaga	ES: Murcia	ES: Navarra	ES: Oviedo	ES: Palencia
Very proud	69.0%	63.9%	74.4%	31.6%	46.0%	75.5%
Quite proud	23.0%	34.2%	22.9%	62.6%	36.4%	11.8%
Not very proud	1.3%	-	-	-	10.2%	-
Not at all proud	0.6%	1.9%	-	-	2.3%	-
I am not [nationality]	-	-	-	-	2.3%	-
Don't know	1.2%	-	-	-	-	12.7%
No answer	5.0%	-	2.7%	5.7%	2.8%	-
(N)	(159)	(48)	(35)	(16)	(40)	(8)

Appendix C

	TOTAL	Region where the interview was conducted				
		GB: North West	GB: Yorks & Humberside	GB: East Midlands	GB: West Midlands	GB: Eastern
Very proud	49.9%	57.6%	61.7%	54.1%	44.4%	43.3%
Quite proud	34.8%	31.9%	29.5%	37.3%	37.0%	39.8%
Not very proud	6.3%	7.5%	-	2.6%	10.2%	6.9%
Not at all proud	1.4%	-	1.3%	1.1%	2.5%	-
Don't know	0.4%	-	-	1.4%	-	-
No answer	1.1%	-	4.3%	-	-	-
Not applicable	5.9%	3.0%	1.9%	3.5%	5.9%	10.1%
Missing; Not available	0.3%	-	1.4%	-	-	-
(N)	(1,041)	(113)	(89)	(72)	(101)	(35)
	TOTAL	Region where the interview was conducted				
		GB: London	GB: South East	GB: South West	GB:Wales	GB: Scotland
Very proud	35.7%	47.8%	48.1%	52.8%	49.3%	60.4%
Quite proud	40.2%	35.8%	30.3%	36.7%	35.2%	27.7%
Not very proud	6.7%	3.8%	13.2%	8.8%	4.7%	8.6%
Not at all proud	1.2%	1.3%	1.7%	-	3.7%	0.8%
Don't know	-	0.4%	1.7%	-	0.8%	-
No answer	3.3%	1.7%	0.5%	-	-	-
Not applicable	11.6%	9.1%	3.8%	1.7%	6.3%	2.6%
Missing; Not available	1.2%	-	0.8%	-	-	-
(N)	(119)	(190)	(83)	(65)	(113)	(59)

Selected samples: Great Britain 2005