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Government Performance, Identity, and Support for Further Devolution in Europe

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Bachelor of Arts with Honors in International Relations

from The College of William and Mary

by

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Abstract

Over the past three decades, Europe has witnessed a growing trend of devolution, or the transfer of power from states to their regions. Much of the previous scholarship has examined the causes of initial devolution, and found that the creation of regional institutions is linked to unique regional identities. This thesis examines whether these identities still matters to voters when making decisions about *further* devolution. Working from the premise that voters can assess the material utility of devolution after regional governments have been established, and that voters will weigh considerations of material utility more strongly than assessments of expressive utility (identity), this thesis tests whether voters' policy and affective satisfaction with regional government displaces identity as the determining factor of support for further devolution. This study uses polling data from two European case studies, Wales and Catalonia, and finds that while satisfaction does displace identity in both cases, the nature and meaning of identity affects its role in voters decision-making.

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David Melding, now ably serving as the Deputy Presiding Officer of the National Assembly for Wales, provided the inspiration for this thesis. My time spent as his intern introduced me to devolution, and our discussions about the future of Wales encouraged me to

embrace and explore my own ideas. David has been a role model to me, and his service to the Assembly and the people of Wales deserves the highest accolades.

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I. Introduction

In the days leading up to a March 2011 referendum on devolution, voters in Wales were treated to the rare sight of a flying pig. True Wales, the lead anti-devolution group, paraded a large, inflatable swine around the streets of Cardiff with the words “VOTE NO TO MORE TAXES AND POLITICIANS” prominently emblazoned on the pig’s side (and a more blunt message on the pig’s rear). “Porkie,” as the pig was affectionately known, symbolized the Welsh politicians whom anti-devolution campaigners believed had failed to live up to the promises of devolution from a decade before.¹ Their arguments, however, were very different from the nationalism-based opposition of the Just Say No campaign in the 1997 referendum that initiated devolution to Wales.²

True Wales was not alone in distancing itself from nationalist arguments about devolution. Yes for Wales, leading the charge in favor of more devolution, argued that the referendum would improve the ability of the legislature to work for the interests of Wales. First Minister Carwyn Jones, a Yes for Wales supporter, said, “We can't afford to have a government in the slow lane in Wales... if people want the Assembly to be doing more rather than talking about doing more, vote yes” (Chorley 2011). The decision by both campaigns to focus on the performance of the Welsh government suggested that identity politics had been replaced in the Welsh devolution debate. Campaigners appealed to voters’ assessments of devolved government on the economy, health care, and education to convince the Welsh people that they were better off with (or without) further devolution.

¹ No campaigner Nigel Bull said that the Assembly “hasn’t served the people of Wales well... I feel that Wales has gone backwards during those 12 years and we have not seen the benefit we all hoped for” (BBC 2011).

² Viscount Tonypanady, the head of that effort, notably said that a “Welsh assembly will fan the flames of nationalism. When I was Secretary of State for Wales, my office was blown up by extremists who opposed the installation of Charles, Prince of Wales” (Osmond 1997).

Recognizing that the discourse of electorally motivated political elites is driven by voters' attitudes, this thesis seeks to understand if policy-focused arguments are more important than identity issues for voters. It does so by examining how well the performance of regional government explains voter support for further devolution. Does successful governance at the regional level lead to greater support for further devolution? If so, do policy (e.g. economic) and/or affective (e.g. trust) measures of support explain voter preferences? This thesis will also ask whether these performance assessments have displaced identity as the core determinants of voter positions on devolution.

This thesis reflects the changing nature of devolution in Europe. Over the past thirty years, regional institutions have been established in countries such as the UK, Belgium, Italy, and Spain, and as these bodies mature, they have more opportunities to shape voter preferences. Whereas past scholarship on devolution has focused on the causes of initial devolution, this maturation of regional governments has opened opportunities to examine electoral trends as a function of regional policy. Looking at voter assessments of regional government is a far more accurate measure of the perceived benefit of devolution than region-level analysis of, for example, economic imbalances between the center and periphery. What is less certain is whether the influence of identity on these preferences has been displaced.

Using case studies of Wales and Catalonia, this thesis will examine regional polling data from the past decade to test three hypotheses.

H₁: Policy satisfaction with regional government in devolved policy areas will lead to greater voter support for further devolution.

I expect voters who are satisfied with the performance of regional government policies to want more policymaking from those institutions in the expectation of future improvements, and thus support further devolution.

H₂: Affective support for regional institutions will lead to greater voter support for further devolution.

Voters may develop positive impressions of regional government for non-policy reasons, such as a belief that regional institutions are representative, that policies are responsive to public needs, or that public officials are trustworthy. I expect voters with positive impressions of regional government to view these institutions as legitimate sources of public policy, and therefore support further devolution.

H₃: Voters' regional identity will be displaced by assessments of regional government in determining voter support for further devolution.

As regional institutions exercise their devolved powers, voters will be able to assess the real impact of devolution. This reduces voter reliance on non-consequentialist reasoning (i.e. devolution is intrinsically valuable because I am Welsh) and emphasizes the self-interest of the voter (Kay 2003). I expect voters to place more interest in the material utility of devolution, displacing identity in determining support for further devolution.

The remainder of this thesis will be organized as follows. The next section will outline the previous scholarship on devolution, focusing on the causes of devolution and the determinants of voter support for initial secessionism. I argue that although regional interest may provide supplementary justification for devolution, electoral motivations are the primary drivers of devolution in Europe. Studies that examine voter attitudes at the regional level have found that in addition to national identity, a host of other factors including government performance affect voter support for autonomy. The contribution of this thesis is to measure the impact of performance assessments on support for further devolution comparatively across regions.

In the third section, I will outline the theory of this thesis. I borrow two assumptions from the classic Downsian voter model: that voters are rational and that they will vote for the option most spatially proximate to their preferences. However, it may be difficult for voters to develop preferences for devolution because the material utility of major institutional change is unknown. Each of the hypotheses are shown to operationalize a measure of material utility which exists after regional institutions have been established. Voter decisions about further devolution should therefore operate within the Downsian framework.

The fourth and fifth sections will examine the cases of devolution in Wales and Catalonia to test the theory presented in the previous section. While the results in Wales strongly suggest that satisfaction with regional government and affective support for devolved institutions are associated with support for further devolution, these results are not replicated in Catalonia. However, both case studies find that as satisfaction with government performance increases, the explanatory power of identity decreases, which supports the third hypothesis.

I conclude in the sixth section that voters are considering material utility in developing positions on further devolution, though the impact of these considerations varies between

regions. The historical development of the regional identity has a substantial role in determining the relative importance of material and expressive utility to voters, and scholars must examine the *nature* of identity in order to fully understand voters' decisions. Despite the limitations of this study, the results do show a fundamental difference in the way voters assess initial and further devolution, and further work in this area may have important scholarly and policy implications.

II. Literature Review

The existing literature on regions focuses on two general causes of devolution: regional characteristics in which the region as a whole is the unit of analysis, and electorally-driven processes in which voters are the primary actors. This section will outline the key texts in each of these schools of thought, including the cultural, geopolitical, and economic region-level arguments and the voter-level analysis upon which this thesis is based. While region-level reasoning may provide supplementary justification for devolution, the electoral aims of political elites offers a more compelling case as the primary cause of devolution.

A unique regional identity is widely viewed as a necessary but not sufficient condition for devolution. Regional elites can use cultural and historical narratives to create a regional identity (see, for example, Syssner 2009). Some studies consider identity as an independent variable in a broader analysis (e.g. Sorens 2005), but Urwin (1982) points out that cultural factors offer only a potential for territorial mobilization, not a guarantee. Other scholars have suggested that European integration fosters regionalism. Hooghe (1996) argues that EU cohesion policy provides a forum for subnational authorities to challenge national authorities. Dardanelli (2005a, 2005b) is the most fervent advocate of this school of thought, suggesting that the positive result in the 1997 Scottish devolution referendum was “almost exclusively” the result of the Europeanization of regional politics.

Economic arguments for devolution credit both globalization and disparities between regions and states for fostering devolution. Scott (1998) argues that globalization is creating regional trade relationships that dominate international markets, and Ohmae (1995) contends that regions “are the right size and scale to be the true, natural business units” in a global economy. However, van Houten (2003) and Sorens (2004) suggest that while globalization may reinforce previous autonomy demands, there is less evidence linking globalization with an overall increase in devolution after accounting for other economic, political, and cultural factors. Economists also widely agree that disparities between regions and states can lead to secessionism (Bookman 1993; Bolton and Roland 1997), but most scholars believe that economically successful regions are more likely to secede (Treisman 1997; Dion 1996).

Although region-level analysis may offer supplementary justification for devolution, political explanations get the most traction. Keating’s (1998) seminal work argues that “new regionalism” emerged as a result of modern mass politics, which “accentuated the importance of space” and caused parties to adopt regional platforms to maximize electoral success. From the late 1980s, the creation of new political forums for regional actors and organized movements encouraged devolution. Although these factors were joined by other cultural institutional considerations, “the phenomenon is too diverse and conditioned by local circumstances” not to be driven by politics. Applying Keating’s model, Sorens (2009) argues that electoral politics are the primary drivers of devolution, and that state-level parties will support regional autonomy only when it will enhance their political power. Hopkin (2003) further finds that when national party leaders support decentralizing reforms, they do so in order to pass the buck for difficult policy problems or for electoral gain.

Recognizing the electoral logic of devolution, several scholars have examined what motivates regional voter attitudes. The effect of national and regional identity has been heavily investigated. Henderson (2007) uses Scottish and Quebecois voters' identity hierarchies³ to measure the effect of national attachment on various political attitudes, such as cynicism, respect for political and civic institutions, and participation in democracy. Support for sovereignty is considered, but only in Quebec. Henderson finds that those most attached to Quebec are most likely to support sovereignty, and that only those who feel no attachment to Quebec believe that the national government best protects their interests. However, she writes that "identity groups possess dissimilar views on identity issues such as sovereignty and they may possess different views of the state, but... when we control for other factors, differences disappear." Fitjar (2010) uses four Eurobarometer surveys that ask about attachment towards the respondent's region and state to construct a "Moreno index". Using regional attachment as a measure of support for devolution,⁴ Fitjar measures the power of various cultural and economic factors to explain voters' regionalism. Although he finds that a number of factors affect regional attachment, his dependent variable precludes measuring the effect of identity on support for devolution.

Two studies have examined support for secessionism in particular. Sorens (2005) predicts vote shares for secessionist parties in regional and national elections (not limited to Europe), and concludes that while identity may have an impact on support for secession, "the prospective costs and benefits of independence, along with institutional constraints on voting for secessionist parties, make a difference." Anderson (2001) uses responses about identity, civic and religious

³ For Scotland, data is from the British Election Study, which uses a standard 5-point Moreno question. For Quebec, data is from the Canadian Election Study, which uses a 0-to-100 thermometer scale to ask respondents about their Canadian and Quebecois identities. Henderson derives a 5-point Moreno scale from these thermometer responses.

⁴ Fitjar argues that "when the people of a region regard the statewide *demos* as inappropriate for deciding over a policy area that affects the region, they will want to redefine the *demos* in order to make it congruent with the regional public."

factors, and nationalist attitudes from the 1999 Welsh Assembly Election Study and the 1999 Scottish Parliament Election Study to analyze the sources of nationalist sentiment. He finds that older generations are less likely to support independence, while working class people are more likely to do so. In addition, practicing members of the established church tend to be less supportive of independence. He concludes that although national identity has the most important influence on support for independence, other factors affect attitudes towards secession as well.

Unlike previous studies, this thesis will use evaluations of the performance of regional government to explain support for independence. Putnam's (1993) famous study, *Making Democracy Work*, measures the effectiveness of Italian regional governments based on twelve indicators such as legislative innovation, local health unit spending, and bureaucratic responsiveness. However, unlike this thesis, Putnam uses these measures as dependent rather than independent variables. Pattie and Johnston (1995) argue that there is a "regional sociotropic vote," or electoral decisions by voters based on regional economic performance. Their study also finds that region plays a statistically significant role in voting in national elections, even accounting for class, personal economic performance, and regional economic performance. This challenges Rose and McAllister (1990) and McAllister and Studlar (1992), who argue that any supposed regional effects reflect the concentrating of similar individuals in a geographic space – the so-called "neighborhood effect" (Cox 1969; Johnston 1979; Taylor and Gudgin 1979).

Studies of how voters translate their assessments of regional government into positions on devolution are limited. Bromley and Curtice (2003) find that decreasing political trust among Scottish voters was correlated with increasing "disillusion" with devolution, although they do not draw a causal link between these two measures. Bond and Rosie (2010) conduct the only comparative post-devolution study of constitutional attitudes to date, and find that national

identity is a significant predictor of support for further devolution in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland, but not in England. However, they also consider only party, linguistic status, and social class, the same variables often used in pre-devolution studies. Wyn Jones and Scully (2012) are the first to test whether assessments of regional government affect support for further devolution. Using the 2011 Welsh Referendum Study, they find that the performance of the regional government had a statistically significant impact on a respondent's vote in the referendum. They also find that identity did not reach statistical significance as a predictor of the respondent's vote.

While Wyn Jones and Scully's innovative study includes performance as an explanatory factor, their dependent variable is the respondent's vote in the referendum rather than her constitutional attitudes. Although they find a strong correlation between these measures, their dependent variable is not comparable across regions, and comparative studies of post-devolution attitudes that consider the role of government performance in constitutional preferences have not yet been conducted. This thesis applies Wyn Jones and Scully's methodology comparatively across two European regions and fills this gap in the literature.

III. Theory

For more than a decade, political commentators have recognized a growing movement of devolution in Europe, epitomized by *The Economist's* observation in 1997 that "if there is a turn-of-the-century message in Europe, it may be 'devolve or die'." Political scientists have attempted to explain these developments using both macro- and micro-level theories of the causes of devolution. This thesis hopes to add another dimension to our understanding of the devolution trend in Europe. In this section, I will outline the theory of my research, beginning with the Downsian model of voting. Next, I will discuss consequential versus deontological justifications

for devolution, which make up the core theoretical question of this thesis. I will then apply these theoretical foundations to each of the three hypotheses.

This thesis rests on the rational choice model of voting⁵, elaborated in detail by Anthony Downs (1957). Two key assumptions have been borrowed from this model: that voters are rational actors and that they will vote for the option that is most spatially proximate to their preferences (the spatial model of voting). I will address both of these assumptions in turn. The first, that voters are rational actors, has been debated in both political science and economics. George Tullock's seminal work *The Vote Motive* (1976) was one of the first defenses of the rational voter, and later work by Chong (1996), Fiorina (1997), and Edlin, et al. (2007) support his findings. Although challenged by Aldrich (1993) who suggests that in low-cost, low-benefit situations the rational choice model is not very predictive, Tversky and Kahneman (1981, 1986) who show that the framing of a decision can affect the outcome, and Hindmoor (2006) concludes "that voters are becoming more Downsian in their behavior."⁶

The second assumption from the Downsian model is that voters will select the option most spatially proximate to their preferences. Spatial voting presumes that voter preferences and electoral options can be arranged on a one-dimensional plane, in this case spanning from no autonomy to full independence, and that voters will select the electoral option which is closest to their preference. Despite the spatial model being challenged on some specific details (see Green and Shapiro 1994), Merrill and Grofman (1999) review the literature and find that voters are substantially more likely to vote for the party closest to their preferences.⁷ Although scholars do not universally accept the spatial model of voting, the assumptions used in this thesis appear to

⁵ For an excellent summary of the rational choice school in political science, see Green (2002).

⁶ Hindmoor acknowledges that the relationship between policy position and the actual vote is probabilistic rather than deterministic, mirroring the defense of rational choice theory made by Friedman (1996).

⁷ Caplan (2007) suggests that voters may have preferences which violate their rational interest.

be reasonably defended.

Downs assumes that voter preferences reflect assessments of material utility. However, when making decisions about devolution, voters may be unable to measure economic benefit. In an under-acknowledged contribution, Adrian Kay (2003) argues that the difficulties voters face in predicting the long-term effects of major institutional change render “consequentialist” reasoning, or the belief that devolution will have desirable effects, invalid. He suggests three reasons for these difficulties:

1. Regional governments share some concurrent powers with the national government,
2. Devolution may “liberate” latent desire for even more autonomy, and
3. It is difficult to attach probabilities to the success of reforms.

As a result, “there is no rationality in a public decision to initiate a massive and protracted reform of uncertain efficacy, unless that reform was perceived to be intrinsically valuable.” Kay contends that support for devolution is instead driven by “deontological” justifications, or the idea that devolution is inherently valuable. Extending Kay’s work, each of the hypotheses in this thesis attempt to uncover the “consequential” support for devolution that should exist after regional institutions have been established and voters can assess the efficacy of further reform.⁸

The first hypothesis suggests that if a voter is satisfied with the performance of devolved institutions, then they should expect further devolutionary reforms to have a high probability of success as well. The actual performance of regional institutions is immaterial – as Hetherington (2005) writes, “the perception of government performance is more important than the reality.”⁹

⁸ Popkin (1994) and Lupia and McCubbins (1998) argue that voters use information, or signals, from past events to make political decisions.

⁹ Voter perceptions of government services seem to be fairly accurate. For example, Chingos, et al. (2010) find that citizen evaluations of school performance largely reflect publicly available information about student achievement, particularly among those actively engaged with education (i.e. have children in school). See Yang and Holzer (2006) for a summary of literature on citizen perceptions of government performance.

A potential criticism of this hypothesis is that regional parties which oppose further devolution may hamstring government services to discourage voters from expecting future reform success. However, Eve Hepburn (2008, 2009) suggests the opposite - as “stateless nationalist and regional parties (SNRPs)” gain political power, regional branches of national parties have been forced to adopt stronger constitutional claims.¹⁰ Regional branch parties will attempt to prevent SNRPs from “owning” center-periphery issues, and the electoral motivations of political parties result in more pro-devolutionary positions. Indeed, Anwen (2009) notes:

One of the great successes of nationalist mobilization in Wales and Galicia is that they have succeeded in changing the parameters of debate within regional political arenas. In particular, nationalist and regionalist parties have... pushed state-wide political parties into committing themselves to grant more authority to national territories within the state. (553)

The importance of Anwen’s argument to this thesis is that regional branch parties, which are rarely able to appeal to deontological justifications for devolution as effectively as SNRPs, will instead appeal to voters’ consequentialist logic in defending their pro-devolution positions.

The second hypothesis contends that affective support for regional institutions will lead to greater support for further devolution. This thesis examines two measures of affective support: trust in regional government and the belief that regional government is representative. We will begin with the first measure, trust. David Easton (1965), in his seminal work *A Systems Analysis of Political Life*, argues that trust is derived from both support for specific political actors and support for political institutions or types of governance.¹¹ This thesis is primarily concerned with the latter, and work by Scholz and Lubbell (1998) and Scholz and Pinney (1995) find that

¹⁰ Deterbeck and Hepburn (2010) find that this effect is particularly strong among center-left parties.

¹¹ I am indebted to fellow honors student Devin Braun for his assistance with this section.

experiences with government agencies and services, especially negative interactions (Kampen, et al. 2006), can impact a citizen's trust in government. Yang and Holzer (2006) further suggest that “evaluations of government are affected by many other factors, such as partisanship, media, postmodern culture, and irrationality,” though they argue that perceptions of government performance play a primary role in determining trust in government.

We must address the link between government performance and trust proposed by Yang and Holzer as well as others (for a summary, see Bouckaert, et al. 2002). If trust is linked to evaluations of government performance, then measures of trust are merely a proxy for performance rather than an independent factor which a voter could consider in forming devolution preferences. However, there is evidence to suggest that the link between performance and trust may not be absolute. Van de Walle and Bouckaert (2003) challenge the causal relationship between performance and trust, since other factors (i.e. citizen-citizen interactions) may have an effect. Huseby (2000) finds that individuals react to the same level of performance in different ways, and Yang and Holzer note that perceptions of performance are subject to political discourse and framing. Bouckaert and Van de Walle (2003) argue that these perceptions also reflect a citizen's sympathy with the mission of a government service, and Van de Walle, et al. (2005) posit that the relationship between trust and satisfaction may be the result of general attitudes towards government. Clearly, trust is related to factors other than performance, even if performance is a consideration.

Having established that we *can* operationalize trust as an independent determinant of voter decisions, we must now examine *whether* trust has an effect on support for further devolution. Several studies conducted in the American context have found that devolution is correlated with a decline in trust with higher levels of government. For example, Jennings (1998)

argues that higher relative trust in the local level compared to the federal level is the driving force behind devolution, and that in practice, this reflects absolute reductions in federal government trust. In addition, Hetherington and Nugent (2001) state that “decreasing trust in the dominant level of government does lead to increased confidence in others,” and that local government capacity has little influence on demands for devolution compared to symbolic factors such as trust. The proposition of H₂, that trust will have a positive effect on support for further devolution, seems reasonable.

To understand the second measure of affective support, we must look to the public administration literature, which has explored representativeness at length. The theory of representative bureaucracy¹² suggests that organizations will be more responsive to the public if they reflect the demographic make-up of the populations they serve (Mosher 1982). Thielmann and Stewart (1996), by examining government services accessed by AIDS patients, argue that citizens value demographic representativeness in public agencies, which contributes to governmental legitimacy. As a result, Andrews, et al. (2005) argue that “public perceptions of government performance will improve as bureaucracies become more representative,” and Meier, et al. (2001) and Meier, Wrinkle, and Polinard (1999) propose that representative bureaucracies may deliver better objective performance. Like trust, there appears to be a link between representativeness and government performance.

However, once again there are mediating factors in this relationship. The New Public Management school promotes the importance of management on organization performance, culture, and managerial quality (see Andrews, et al. 2005). In a study of nine federal agencies, Hennessey (1998) concludes that leadership has an impact on organizational performance, and Ingraham, Joyce, and Donahue (2003) argue that effective management is the most important

¹² See Meier (1993) for an extensive review of representative bureaucracy theory and research.

determinant of government performance. Cox and Blake (1991) find that organizations must leverage their cultural and ethnic diversity to obtain benefits such as increased creativity and problem solving, and Keiser, et al. (2002) argue that public agencies must turn “passive” representation of women into “active” policy influence to realize the benefits of diversity.

Clearly, factors other than demographic representation affect government performance, which allows us to operationalize representativeness as an independent variable in our analysis even if it plays a part in performance. Moreover, the causal relationship of H₂, that representativeness will have a positive relationship with support for further devolution, finds support in the literature. Aarts and Thomassen (2006) use data from the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems in 28 cases to assess the relationship between representativeness and satisfaction with democracy. They find that perceived representativeness of the legislature has a positive relationship with satisfaction with democracy, which when applied to the signaling theory proposed by Popkin (1994) and Lupia and McCubbins (1998), suggests that as voters perceive regional governments to be more representative, they will be more likely to support further devolution.

The third hypothesis speaks to the conflict introduced by Kay (2003) between low information and assessments of material utility inherent to voter decisions about devolution. H₃ suggests that after regional institutions have been established and voters have assessed the impact on their own material well being, these assessments will displace identity as the determinants of voter preferences on devolution. The literature on expressive voting offers support for this hypothesis.¹³ Horowitz (1985) argues that given low information about the consequences of an electoral outcome, voters will use ethnic identity as a proxy to assess which

¹³ The literature on expressive voting explores both why citizens choose to vote and whom they choose to vote for. This section draws almost exclusively on literature that focuses on the latter. For an excellent summary of expressive voting, see Hamlin and Jennings (2011).

candidate will offer better access to public resources. Horowitz applies this type of expressive voting primarily to developing African countries, where ethnic patronage by elected officials can affect the distribution of public goods, but his model can be used whenever information on material utility is low.

Brennan and Hamlin (1998) consider whether expressive voting is mutually exclusive from instrumental, or economic, considerations. They argue that “an individual citizen’s expressive concerns might mesh perfectly with her instrumental interests,” and when citizens vote on expressive grounds, they are still within the spatial model of voting by selecting the candidate with whom they most closely identify. Hillman (2010) formally develops this model, which can be simplified to the equation $Total\ Utility = Material\ Utility + Expressive\ Utility$. In Hillman’s model, when a voter is unable to assess material utility, then expressive utility becomes the only consideration. However, Hillman’s simplified model¹⁴ does not consider the relative weight of material and expressive utility in a voter’s total utility calculation.

Fortunately, studies of expressive voting offer some clues to the relative weight of material and expressive utility when both are present. Gutierrez-Romero (2010) examines survey data from the 2007 Kenyan elections and finds that certain economic factors weaken the salience of ethnic identity for voters, but that this effect is small. Bassi, Morton and Williams (2011) conduct an experiment in which participants were assigned a group identity and then given a financial incentive to vote against their group. They find that without these incentives, participants are more likely to vote with their group, suggesting that even “minimally assigned group identities” affect voter decision making in the absence of information about material utility. However, when financial incentives to vote against the group exist, the role of identity in voting decisions (and thus the relative importance of expressive utility) falls dramatically. This

¹⁴ Hillman does present a more complex formal model that accounts for some of the nuances of voting.

mirrors the relationship proposed by H₃, that when voters are able to assess the material utility of further devolution, the importance of identity will decrease.

IV. Case Study – Wales

Wales provides perhaps the best natural experiment for this thesis. When devolution occurred in 1999, the National Assembly for Wales had very limited powers compared to its Scottish counterpart, the result of a compromise in the Labour party that left substantial room for more regional powers. Indeed, Ron Davies'¹⁵ famous remark that “devolution is a process, not an event” has frequently been used by pro-devolution activists. In addition, the National Assembly has seen a steady increase in its policy “competencies”, or areas of primary authority. In 2011, voters in Wales decided on a referendum to significantly increase the powers of the National Assembly while still stopping well short of full autonomy. The public debate surrounding this referendum should also have sharpened voters’ opinions on further devolution.

This section will be divided into four parts. First, I will briefly outline the history of devolution in Wales and frame the context of the data. Second, I will describe the data being used for this case study, and in the third part, I will provide the results of the analyses conducted for the Welsh case. Fourth, I will analyze the data in light of the hypotheses of this thesis.

Devolution in Wales traces its antecedents to the establishment of the Welsh Office in 1965, which was responsible for economic planning, housing, local government, and cultural issues. Over the next three decades, the responsibilities of the Welsh Office expanded to include other policy areas. However, the Welsh Office had no primary policymaking powers, and was responsible only for executing decisions handed down from London. In 1979, Jim Callaghan’s Labour government pushed forward on an election commitment to hold a referendum to establish

¹⁵ Ron Davies was Secretary of State for Wales from 1997-1998 and is considered by many to be the chief architect of devolution in Wales.

a Welsh Assembly. However, the referendum received support from only 12% of Welsh voters. The defeat halted any talks of an elected Welsh government until the Labour Party won the 1997 UK general election. One week after a successful Scottish referendum on devolution, and with a well-organized “Yes for Wales” campaign supporting the referendum, a referendum to initiate devolution in Wales passed with 50.3% of the vote.

The new National Assembly for Wales was a weak institution that only had powers over secondary legislation,¹⁶ and the “need to revisit legislative procedure was clearly signaled from the outset of the Assembly” (Rawlings 2005). Following the report of the government-sanctioned Richard Commission and a Labour election promise to enhance the legislative powers of the Assembly, the Government of Wales Act of 2006 was passed and primary lawmaking authority was devolved to the Assembly in specific “matters” of 20 “fields” – for example, measures could be passed on energy, but not “transmitting, distributing, or supplying electricity.” The Assembly could, through a clumsy process known as a Legislative Competency Order (LCO), negotiate the transfer of additional powers from Westminster. In March 2011, a referendum was held to fully devolve policymaking in all 20 fields¹⁷ to the Assembly, which 63.5% of voters approved.

This case study will use data from the 2011 Welsh Pre-Referendum Study (WRS), conducted ahead of the March referendum.¹⁸ The 2011 WRS was conducted of a representative sample of 3029 members of the Welsh electorate using an internet survey. This study was selected over the post-referendum, pre-election, and post-election studies because the positive outcome of the 2011 referendum significantly changed the nature of devolution in Wales, but

¹⁶ In the United Kingdom, primary legislation is that which creates or modifies a policy. Secondary legislation establishes the specific statutes and regulations that govern the implementation of primary legislation.

¹⁷ A list of the devolved subject areas can be found on the National Assembly’s website at http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-third-assembly/bus-legislation-third-assembly/bus-legislation-guidance-third-assembly/bus-legislation-guidance-documents-third-assembly/legislation_fields/schedule-7.htm.

¹⁸ Special thanks to Dr. Roger Scully at Aberystwyth University and Dr. Richard Wyn Jones at Cardiff University for supplying the 2011 Welsh Pre-Referendum Study data ahead of its public release.

there was not enough time for the Assembly's increased powers to affect policymaking.

Therefore, for the purposes of this thesis, the inability of voters to assess regional government in the context of its new powers makes those studies less valuable.

The most important question asked by the 2011 WRS is a measure of the respondent's support for further devolution.¹⁹ Although voters' opinions on the *extent* of further devolution (i.e. tax-varying powers vs. outright independence) may differ, I treat support for further devolution, known as SUPDEV, as a binary variable.²⁰

Satisfaction with the performance of regional government, known as SATIS, is a factor analysis of three questions relating to policy outputs from the Welsh Assembly. Factor analysis identifies the underlying characteristics of two or more variables to create a relative measure of how much respondents reflect each characteristic. Respondents were asked to assess the National Health Service, education standards, and living standards since the formation of the National Assembly for Wales.²¹ After conducting the factor analysis, I divided the respondents into four quartiles of satisfaction. I expect that satisfaction will have a positive relationship with support for further devolution.

Affective measures of support for regional government were also included. The first of these variables, TRUST, measures respondents' relative level of trust of Welsh Assembly Government (the executive body of the National Assembly for Wales) and the UK government. I expect that as voters' relative trust of the Welsh government increases, they will be more likely

¹⁹ Full question texts from the 2011 WRS can be found in Appendix B.

²⁰ The grouping of positions in this way does not appear to have impacted the results. An OLS regression using an ordinal scale of status quo, more devolution, and independence (ordered logit was not possible due to the nature of the data) is presented in Appendix A, and shows no substantive difference from the binary measure. Also, respondents preferring either no devolution or less devolution made up less than 20% of the sample (including just 3.4% for less devolution), and the decision to group them with respondents selecting the status quo reflects the political discourse in Wales, in which less devolution is rarely discussed as a possibility compared to maintaining the status quo.

²¹ A principle-components factor analysis (varimax rotation) loaded on one factor, and the factor loadings were .872 for HEALTH, .851 for EDUC, and .868 for LIVING.

to support further devolution. The second variable, REPRN, measures how representative the voter believes the National Assembly for Wales to be. As with TRUST, I expect that as voters believe that the National Assembly for Wales is more representative of ordinary people, they will be more likely to support further devolution.

A measure of identity, IDENT, uses respondents' answers to a standard five-point Moreno question on Welsh and British identity.²² I expect that as respondents' identification with Wales increases, they will be more likely to support further devolution. However, in line with H₃, I also expect the effect of identity to be less predictive than measures of policy and affective satisfaction with regional government.

Several control variables were used, including support for the governing coalition (PARTY)²³, age (AGE), gender (GENDER), and annual gross household income (INCOME). A summary of the variables and their expected relationship to SUPDEV is as follows below.

²² My colleague Alena Stern rightly identified the possibility of an endogeneity effect between satisfaction and identity. When an individual is satisfied with regional government, they may claim the regional identity more strongly as a result. Although not addressing the endogeneity question directly, a Pearson's correlation test found weak correlations between the satisfaction indicators and identity. The correlation coefficient between IDENT and SATIS was .251; and TRUST was .304; and REPRN was .237 (all statistically significant to the $p < .01$ level).

²³ Respondents were asked to rate each of the six major parties (Conservative, Labour, Liberal Democrat, Plaid Cymru, UKIP, and BNP) on a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being "strongly dislike" and 10 being "strongly like." If a respondent rated one or both governing parties (Labour and Plaid Cymru) higher than all others, that party was considered to be their party affiliation. If a non-governing party shared the highest rating, that respondent was removed from the data set.

Table 4.1: Summary of Variables and Expected Signs

Variable	Variable Name	Expected Sign
Satisfaction with regional government performance (by quartile)	SATIS	+
Relative trust of Welsh Government	TRUST	+
Representativeness of National Assembly	REPRN	+
Identity (Moreno scale)	IDENT	+
Control	Variable Name	
Support for governing coalition	PARTY	
Age	AGE	
Gender	SEX	
Income	INCOME	

We can begin our analysis by looking at the relationship between satisfaction with regional government and support for further devolution. H_1 predicts a positive correlation between these two variables, and Table 4.2 below suggests such a relationship.

Table 4.2: Relationship between Support for Further Devolution and Satisfaction

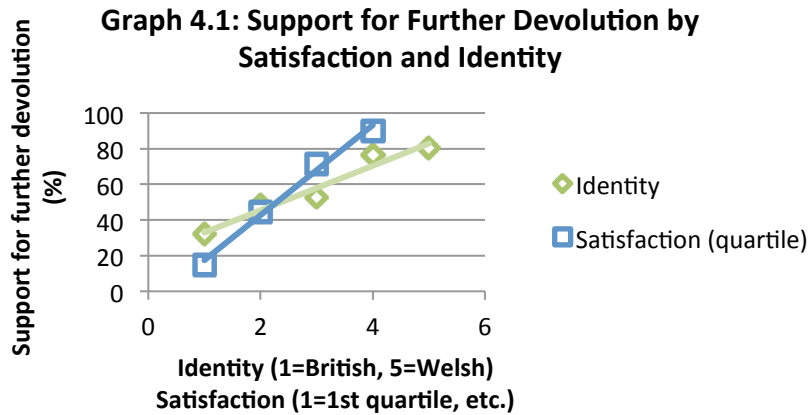
Support for further devolution (%)	Satisfaction with regional government				Total
	1 st Quartile	2 nd Quartile	3 rd Quartile	4 th Quartile	
N	14.8	44.8	71.8	90.0	2241
	520	719	433	569	

It is clear that a positive correlation exists between satisfaction and support for devolution. We can conduct a similar analysis with identity and support for further devolution. The results of Table 4.3 offer a different picture than the one predicted by H_3 , with identity positively correlated with support for devolution.

Table 4.3: Relationship between Support for Further Devolution and Identity

Support for further devolution (%)	Identity					Total
	British not Welsh	More British than Welsh	Equally Welsh and British	More Welsh than British	Welsh not British	
	32.0	48.2	52.7	76.4	80.3	
N	525	274	789	471	427	2486

Indeed, the trend in Table 4.3 largely mirrors the one found in Table 4.2, where a strong and positive correlation was found.



The results of Table 4.3 and Graph 4.1 challenge the prediction of H₃ by suggesting that the relationship between identity and support for further devolution is both positive and strong, but further analysis is required to accurately assess the impact.

To measure the explanatory power of the independent variables, we can run a binary logistic regression on support for devolution. The results of this regression are below.

Table 4.4: Binary Logistic Regression, all cases

Variable	B
SATIS	.581 (.083)***
TRUST	.869 (.084)***
REPRN	1.465 (.146)***
IDENT	.420 (.058)***
Control	
PARTY	.109 (.152)
AGE	-.053 (.043)
GENDER	.200 (.147)
INCOME	.007 (.065)
Constant	-6.537 (.500)***
Nagelkerke R ²	.610
N	1605

Standard error in parentheses.

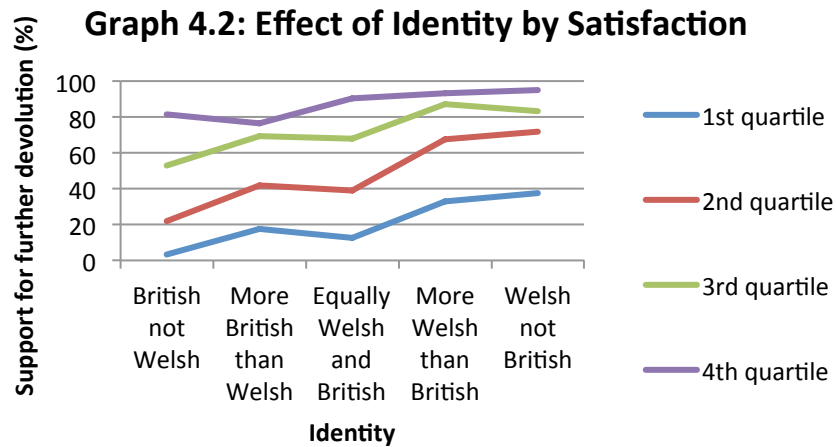
Statistically significant at the 90% level. **Statistically significant at the 95% level. *Statistically significant at the 99% level.*

The regression analysis indicates that both policy and affective satisfaction with regional government have a positive and statistically significant impact on a respondent's support for further devolution. This supports both H₁ and H₂. Identity also has a positive effect, as expected, but its high statistical significance suggests that identity still matters when determining voter support for further devolution, in contrast to H₃. As an additional test of H₃, we can look at whether identity matters to all respondents or just a subset of respondents.

Table 4.5: Support for Further Devolution (%) by Identity and Satisfaction

		Identity					Total
		British not Welsh	More British than Welsh	Equally Welsh and British	More Welsh than British	Welsh not British	
Satisfaction with regional government	1 st quartile	3.3	17.7	12.4	32.8	37.5	
	2 nd quartile	21.9	41.8	39.0	67.5	71.7	
	3 rd quartile	52.9	69.2	67.8	87.2	83.3	
	4 th quartile	81.3	76.3	90.3	93.2	94.9	
	N	431	223	682	390	362	2088

Table 4.5 attempts to isolate an interaction effect between satisfaction and identity, or that the effect of one variable is impacted by the level of the other variable. There is reason to believe that the effect of identity will diminish as the level of satisfaction increases, since the voter can use satisfaction as a reason to support further devolution rather than relying on non-consequentialist reasoning such as identity. This would partly support H₃ by suggesting that satisfaction does displace identity as a determinant of support for further devolution, but only at higher levels of satisfaction. However, as evidenced in Table 4.5 and also in Graph 4.2 below, it appears that identity has a similar effect on support for devolution at all levels of satisfaction.



It is noteworthy in Graph 4.2 that the line is higher at each increasing level of satisfaction. Although the *effect* of identity may be constant, the *power* of identity may change. We will return to this in a moment. In the meantime, a regression analysis confirms the initial findings that an interaction effect between satisfaction and identity does not exist.

Table 4.6: Binary Logistic Regression, all cases

Variable	B
SATIS	.639 (.185)***
TRUST	.867 (.084)***
REPRN	1.464 (.146)***
IDENT	.469 (.150)***
SATIS*IDENT	-.020 (.056)
Control	
PARTY	.110 (.152)
AGE	-.052 (.043)
GENDER	.199 (.147)
INCOME	.007 (.065)
Constant	-6.681 (.647)***
Nagelkerke R ²	.610
N	1605

Standard error in parentheses.

Statistically significant at the 90% level. **Statistically significant at the 95% level. *Statistically significant at the 99% level.*

As previously noted, Graph 4.2 suggests that the *power* (coefficient) of identity decreases as satisfaction increases. If identity was the only determining factor of support for devolution, each of these lines would be identical, and voters of the same identity would show no difference despite variations in satisfaction. On the contrary, we see that at the same level of identity, greater satisfaction with regional government performance increases the likelihood that a voter will support further devolution. Put simply, the more satisfied a voter is, the more that voter considers satisfaction at the expense of identity.

We can test these findings empirically by examining the explanatory power of identity at each quartile of satisfaction. In Table 4.7 below, I regress support for further devolution on IDENT at each quartile of satisfaction.

Table 4.7: Results of Support for Further Devolution Regressed on Identity, by Satisfaction

	Satisfaction with regional government			
	1 st quartile	2 nd quartile	3 rd quartile	4 th quartile
Coefficient	.632	.567	.432	.407
Nagelkerke R²	.133	.152	.082	.058

There are clear downward trends in both the coefficient, which represents the power of identity, and in the r-squared, which indicates the percentage of variation in support for devolution explained by identity. This suggests that as a voter’s satisfaction with regional government increases, the power of identity decreases and it is displaced by satisfaction. Identity still matters, but substantially less as satisfaction increases.

We can now examine the Welsh case in light of the hypotheses of this thesis. The most unambiguous result is that both relative trust and perceived representativeness of the regional government affect support for further devolution. In the first regression, both of these variables had statistically significant positive coefficients, indicating that as affective support for the Welsh government increases, so does support for further devolution, which supports H₂. The coefficient for policy satisfaction was also positive and statistically significant in support of H₁, but the implications of this were more nuanced. Although satisfaction was a determinant of voter support for devolution, the effect of identity was largely uniform at each quartile of satisfaction. This challenged H₃ by suggesting that identity was not displaced by satisfaction, but more rigorous analysis revealed that as satisfaction increases, the *power* of identity as a determining factor does decrease. These results imply that H₃ should be revised, such that the power of identity should decrease as satisfaction increases and voters are able to justify their support for further devolution on material utility. While this could still be considered the displacement of identity by satisfaction, the results suggest that identity still matters in voter decision-making at all levels of satisfaction.

V. Case Study - Catalonia

Located in the northeast corner of Spain, Catalonia offers many of the same advantages as Wales as the second case study in this thesis. For more than a century, Catalan nationalists have struggled with the central government for regional autonomy, resulting in an uneven process of devolution that has stopped well short of independence. Moreover, the major nationalist parties have historically focused on achieving federalism, not independence, and recent conflicts between the Catalan government and the Spanish Parliament likely intensified public awareness of devolution issues. Indeed, the former First Minister of Wales, Rhodri Morgan, has suggested that Wales could learn from the experience of Catalonia (Morgan 2010). However, Catalonia also provides a more robust challenge to the hypotheses due to the powerful role of identity in Catalan politics. Due to the historical importance of Catalan identity, confirmation of the hypotheses in this case study should offer compelling support for the declining role of identity in voter decision-making about further devolution.

This section will be divided into four parts. First, I will briefly discuss the history of devolution in Catalonia and the role of identity in that process. Second, I will describe the data used in this case study, and third, I will use the data to test the hypotheses in this paper. Finally, I will discuss the results and their implications for this thesis.

Modern Catalan nationalism began around 1898, after Spain lost Cuba and the Philippines during the Spanish-American War. Catalan economic and intellectual elites lost confidence in the Spanish state and started developing a political identity to supplement Catalan cultural and linguistic identity (Wright 1999). After large-scale protests against the Spanish government in Barcelona, the head of Barcelona's provincial council negotiated the creation of the *Mancomunitat* system. From 1913-23, the regional government was able to promote Catalan

history and language, including the establishment of a private school system with Catalan as the medium of instruction. In 1923, a *coup d'état* by fervent Spanish nationalist General Miguel Primo de Rivera led to the suppression of regional autonomy, including the banning of the Catalan language in public. The regime lasted only seven years, however, and on the day that the Second Republic was established in 1931, Catalan nationalists declared an independent Catalan Republic. This independent state was never realized, and subsequent negotiations with the Spanish government resulted in Catalonia's first Statute of Autonomy.

At this time, "regionalism underwent a clear shift to the left" in response to the conservative dictatorship of Primo de Rivera (Schrijver 2006). This proved to be a liability for nationalists when the Second Republic fell to the dictatorship of General Francisco Franco in 1939. The association of regionalism with socialism, along with Franco's own fervent Spanish nationalism, led to a determined effort to eliminate regional identities in Spain. In Catalonia, regional leaders were killed and the public use of Catalan was prohibited. Instead of eradicating Catalan nationalism, however, these efforts strengthened regionalists' desire for autonomy. As Keating (1998) writes, "The regime's insistence on identifying Spanish national unity with itself only succeeded in delegitimizing both the state and the nation... all this was to help unite the anti-Franco resistance." During the final days of the Franco regime, regionalist groups were among the primary forces of resistance (Schrijver 2006).

After the death of Franco in 1975, a new Constitution acknowledged the rights of national minorities in Spain; Article 2 "recognizes and guarantees the right to autonomy of all the nationalities and regions." The Constitution established a process for decentralization known as *café para todos* (coffee for all), in which regions were invited to draft their own Statutes of Autonomy subject to Parliamentary approval. Three routes were established for decentralization.

The first route applied to the “historic nationalities” of Catalonia, Galacia, and the Basque Country, and required only a popular referendum. A second, expedited route was established for regions such as Andalusia that were not historic nationalities but had overwhelming support among both local governments and the population. A third process allowed local governments to consolidate into a region, with a Statute of Autonomy taking effect five years after a popular referendum. Through *café para todos*, every region of Spain was given the opportunity to seek autonomy, and all did so by 1983.

The devolved regions, known as Autonomous Communities, are granted substantial policymaking authority. The *Generalitat de Catalunya* (Government of Catalonia) makes laws concerning education, health, culture, housing, transportation, law enforcement, and agriculture. Except for the Basque Country and Navarre, which levy and collect their own taxes, regions receive payments from a special fund administered by the Spanish government that is intended to equalize resources among the regions. The Convergence and Union Party (CiU), the main nationalist party, “defines Catalonia as a ‘nation’ in its own right but does not challenge the overarching idea of Spanish unity” (Guibernau 2000). As a result, federalization rather than independence has been the primary goal of Catalan regionalists. In 2006, Catalonia revised its Statute of Autonomy to call itself a “nation,” which was opposed by the Spanish Parliament and found by the Spanish constitutional court to have no legal authority. More recently, the CiU President of the *Generalitat*, Artur Mas, has called for fiscal autonomy for Catalonia, including the devolution of taxation authority.

Although polls of Catalan residents have been conducted around regional elections, the most comprehensive assessment of center-periphery attitudes in Spain is the Barómetro Autonómico (II) conducted in 2010 by the Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, a Spanish

government agency that regularly polls citizens on a variety of issues. The study included 903 residents of Catalonia. Surveys were done by interviews in the home, and asked respondents about regional and national governance, devolution, identity, and political views.

Respondents were asked to state their preferred level of devolution, which was recoded into a binary variable named SUPDEV representing whether the voter supports further devolution.²⁴ Unlike the Welsh case, outright independence was not presented as an option; instead, voters were able to select “A State which recognizes to the Autonomous Communities the possibility of becoming independent states.”²⁵

Respondents were asked to describe the overall performance of the Catalan government since the previous election, a variable known as PERFORM. I expect that voters’ assessments of regional government performance will have a positive relationship with their support for further devolution. Respondents were also asked whether the Catalan government has demonstrated “knowledge of the problems of Catalonia,” a binary variable known as REPRN which measures the regional government’s perceived representativeness. I expect voters who believe the government is representative to be more likely to support further devolution. Although respondents were not asked about trust in government, they did rate the level of corruption in the Catalan government. Calling this variable TRUST, I expect that as perceived corruption decreases, a voter will be more likely to support further devolution.²⁶

Identity was measured using a standard five-point Moreno scale, known as IDENT in the

²⁴ Similar to the Welsh case, an OLS regression using an ordinal scale of status quo, more devolution, and independence (ordered logit was again not possible) is presented in Appendix A. The only difference is that party becomes statistically significant. Respondents preferring either no devolution or less devolution made up around 15% of the sample (including just 4.8% for less devolution), and like Wales, the decision to group them in this way corresponds with the political discourse in Catalonia.

²⁵ Full question texts from the Barómetro Autonómico (II) can be found in Appendix C.

²⁶ Because higher values of the variable represent less corruption, I expect the coefficient to be positive.

analysis.²⁷ I expect that as respondents more strongly identify as Catalan, they will be more likely to support further devolution, but for this effect to be less predictive than measures of government performance, representativeness, and trust in line with H₃.

Control variables include support for the governing coalition (PARTY)²⁸, gender (GENDER), age (AGE), and socioeconomic status (CLASS). A summary of the variables and their expected relationship to SUPDEV is as follows below:

Table 5.1: Summary of Variables and Expected Signs

Variable	Variable Name	Expected Sign
Satisfaction with regional government performance	PERFORM	+
Level of corruption in regional government	TRUST	+
Regional government “knowledge of the problems of Catalonia”	REPRN	+
Identity (Moreno scale)	IDENT	+
Control	Variable Name	
Support for governing coalition	PARTY	
Gender	GENDER	
Age	AGE	
Socioeconomic Status	CLASS	

We can again look to some descriptive statistics as a preliminary test of the hypotheses. Satisfaction with regional government performance does not appear to be strongly correlated with support for further devolution. Table 5.2 presents the relationship between regional government performance and the dependent variable.

²⁷ The same possibility of endogeneity between satisfaction and identity exists as in the Welsh case. However, the Pearson’s correlation coefficients were once again very small (.023 for PERFORM, .031 for REPRN, and .025 for TRUST; none reached levels of statistical significance).

²⁸ Respondents were asked which party they voted for in the previous regional elections, which was considered their party affiliation.

Table 5.2: Relationship between Support for Further Devolution and Performance

		Regional Government Performance					
		Very Bad	Bad	Regular	Good	Very Good	
Support for further devolution (%)		56.8	56.3	55.8	56.6	50.0	Total
	N	44	176	471	143	2	836

No clear trend between satisfaction with government performance and support for further devolution is present. This calls into question H_1 , but further analysis will be required. A similar test can be run for the relationship between identity and support for further devolution, and a much clearer trend appears:

Table 5.3: Relationship between Support for Further Devolution and Identity

		Identity					
		Spanish not Catalan	More Spanish than Catalan	Equally Spanish and Catalan	More Catalan than Spanish	Catalan not Spanish	
Support for further devolution (%)		13.4	16.9	41.6	83.3	95.8	Total
	N	67	77	353	222	119	2486

A positive correlation clearly exists between stronger Catalan identity and support for further devolution, which indicates that H_3 may not hold in the Catalan case study. A binary logistic regression largely confirms these findings, and also casts doubt on H_2 due to the low explanatory power of the variables measuring affective support for regional government.

Table 5.4: Binary Logistic Regression, all cases

Variable	B
PERFORM	-.076 (.136)
TRUST	.036 (.091)
REPRN	-.011 (.212)
IDENT	1.433 (.133)***
<hr/>	
Control	
PARTY	.091 (.206)
GENDER	.035 (.195)
AGE	.017 (.065)
CLASS	-.106 (.071)
<hr/>	
Constant	-4.001 (.666)***
Nagelkerke R ²	.398
N	631

Standard error in parentheses.

Statistically significant at the 90% level. **Statistically significant at the 95% level. *Statistically significant at the 99% level.*

The regression analysis shows that both policy and affective satisfaction with regional government have no statistically significant relationship with support for further devolution. Moreover, both satisfaction with government performance and representativeness of the Catalan government have negative coefficients, indicating that as satisfaction in those areas increases, support for further devolution actually *decreases*. More importantly, the only statistically significant variable is identity, which has the expected positive relationship with the dependent variable. These results suggest that all three of the hypotheses are incorrect.

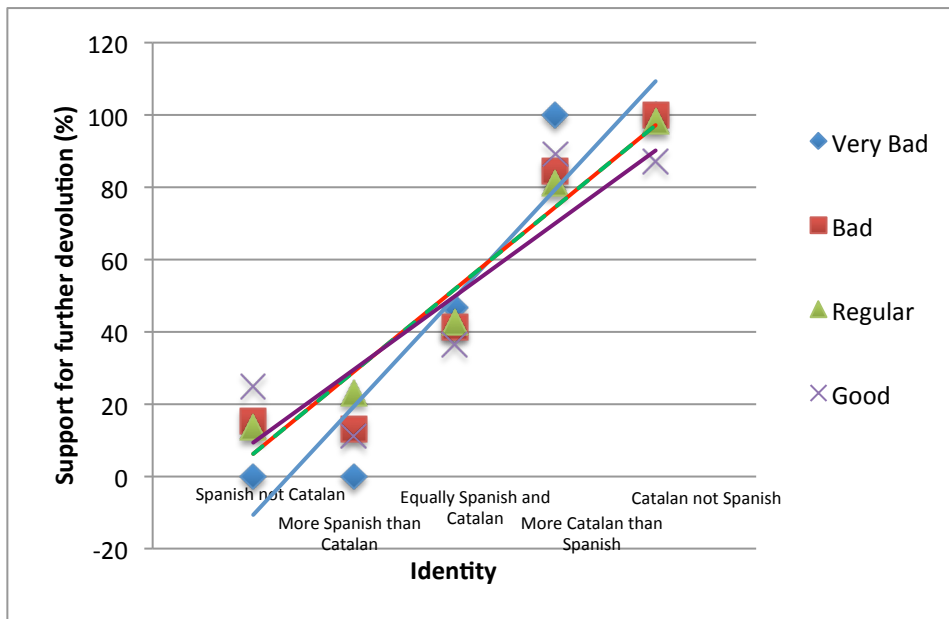
Although unlikely due to the lack of statistical significance of PERFORM, an additional test of H₃ may be performed by seeing if an interaction effect exists between PERFORM and IDENT. The “very good” response to the PERFORM variable has been removed from this analysis due to the small number of respondents who selected this option.

Table 5.5: Support for Further Devolution (%) by Identity and Performance

		Identity					
		Spanish not Catalan	More Spanish than Catalan	Equally Spanish and Catalan	More Catalan than Spanish	Catalan not Spanish	
Satisfaction with regional government	Very Bad	0	0	46.7	100	100	Total
	Bad	15.4	13.0	41.3	84.4	100	
	Regular	13.5	23.1	42.6	81.1	98.2	
	Good	25.0	11.1	36.5	89.2	87.0	
	N	64	76	343	218	116	

Table 5.5 suggests that an interaction effect may exist between PERFORM and IDENT at some levels of identity. Among those claiming sole Spanish identity, as satisfaction increases, support for regional government increases as well. However, among those claiming equal Spanish and Catalan identity and sole Catalan identity, the trend is *negative* as satisfaction increases. This indicates that at stronger Catalan identity, increasing satisfaction actually reduces support for further devolution. Graph 5.1 uses trend lines to assess these findings.

Graph 5.1: Effect of Identity by Performance



The trend lines for each level of satisfaction are similar but not parallel, potentially indicating a weak interaction effect with identity. Another binary logistic regression confirms

this possibility, finding that a statistically significant interaction effect exists, but at the highest allowable level of error.

Table 5.6: Binary Logistic Regression, all cases

Variable	B
PERFORM	.903 (.564)
TRUST	.046 (.091)
REPRN	-.008 (.213)
IDENT	2.326 (.537)***
PERFORM*IDENT	-.306 (.172)*
Control	
PARTY	.101 (.207)
GENDER	.061 (.196)
AGE	.019 (.066)
CLASS	-.107 (.071)
Constant	-6.893 (1.807)***
Nagelkerke R ²	.402
N	631

Standard error in parentheses.

Statistically significant at the 90% level. **Statistically significant at the 95% level. *Statistically significant at the 99% level.*

A simple empirical test to confirm the interaction effect can be found in Table 5.7, in which I regress support for further devolution on identity at each level of satisfaction (again excluding “very good”).

Table 5.7: Results of Support for Further Devolution Regressed on Identity, by Performance

	Satisfaction with regional government			
	Very Bad	Bad	Regular	Good
Coefficient	19.814	1.688	1.399	1.351
Nagelkerke R²	.794	.481	.356	.333

As expected, both the explanatory power (coefficient) and the r-squared of identity decrease as satisfaction with regional government increases. Table 5.7 is a resounding statement in support of H₃, particularly when combined with the statistically significant finding of an interaction effect in the regression.

These results are somewhat mystifying. The initial analysis strongly challenged both H₁ and H₂ by suggesting that measures of support for regional government are not significant predictors of support for further devolution and that the effects of performance and representativeness are *negative*, the opposite direction proposed by the hypotheses. A possible explanation may be that the main nationalist party in Catalonia, the Convergence and Union Party, has not publicly promoted further devolution in areas outside of fiscal matters.²⁹ Therefore, while voters may approve of the performance of the regional government, the public discourse has not encouraged voters to make the link between satisfaction and further devolution, which suggests that devolution politics may be actually driven from the top-down.

Although performance was not statistically significant on its own, the analysis did uncover an interaction effect between satisfaction with regional government and identity. As satisfaction increases, the explanatory power of identity declines, in line with the third hypothesis. This result must be assessed cautiously, however. Even at the highest level of satisfaction, the coefficient for identity remains very high and explains more than 33% of the variation in support for further devolution. This contrasts with Wales, where identity was significantly mitigated at the highest levels of satisfaction. This limited effect of performance, which was not picked up in the aggregate regression analysis, suggests that identity in Catalonia operates similar to Gutierrez-Romero's (2010) findings in the 2007 Kenyan elections, in which economic factors weaken the role of identity but only minimally.

²⁹ Another possibility is that the least satisfied respondents hold their identity more strongly than those with other levels of satisfaction, causing a bias in the data. However, a binary logistic regression presented in Appendix A, in which those responding "very bad" or "very good" on government performance were removed, still found that identity was the only statistically significant predictor of voter positions.

VI. Conclusion

Previous research on devolution has largely focused on the causes of initial devolution. Far less attention has been paid to the causes of further devolution, even though it may rival the former in importance. The incremental steps taken towards greater autonomy both legitimize the initial devolution decision and add permanency to the new state structure. Devolution is a dynamic process, and its political context can change dramatically following the initial vote for autonomy. Studies that examine further devolution must take these changes into account when searching for its underlying mechanisms, which this thesis seeks to do by examining one particular aspect of devolution: how voters decide whether to support further devolution.

The decision to support initial devolution differs fundamentally from the decision to support further devolution. Initial devolution is an experiment; the consequences are largely unknown, and voters must rely on the few factors that are available (such as identity) to make a decision on polling day. However, the value of these factors, or their expressive utility, will not reduce unemployment or improve education standards. Practical considerations are paramount in voters' minds, and when voters can assess the material utility of major institutional change, they will do so. It seems reasonable, therefore, to ask whether voters engage in cost-benefit evaluations of further devolution. Put more simply, this thesis asks whether voter decisions about further devolution are the same as any other decision a voter would make, like choosing a candidate who promises the most benefits to her constituents.

The measures selected to represent the material utility of further devolution were of both a policy and affective nature. There was no reason to expect that these measures would operate differently in the model. Rather, this diverse set of measures maximized the number of possible factors uncovered in the analysis, and it was not necessary for each measure to be significant to

support the core argument of this paper. As long as *one* of the measures explained voter positions on further devolution, then the shifting context of devolution would be shown to affect center-periphery politics. The results in the Wales case study provided strong support for this position. Both the policy and affective measures were shown to affect voter decisions, and material utility was clearly a consideration for voters in Wales. More importantly, however, the role of identity in Wales is changing. Rigorous analysis revealed that as a voter is more satisfied with the performance of the regional government – as their expected material utility from devolution increases – the less powerful identity becomes in voter decision-making. Indeed, among the most satisfied voters, identity explains a mere six percent of the variation in positions on further devolution. Scholars of devolution have held up identity as the premier explanatory factor of devolution for more than two decades, but in Wales, identity appears to be taking a backseat to material utility for voters.

The results in Catalonia were more mixed. The analysis supported only the identity displacement hypothesis, and even this evidence was weak. Among the most satisfied individuals, identity still explained more than a third of the variation in positions on devolution; in Catalonia, it seems, identity still reigns supreme. Naturally, this begs the question of what could explain the different results in Catalonia and Wales. The most compelling explanation seems to be the deeply divergent histories of the two regions – and the recognition that history affects the meaning of identity. If identities are imagined (Anderson 1991), then how events which develop and shape the community are perceived by its members will affect the symbolic meaning of that identity. For Catalans, the repression of regional identity under Franco increases the psychological value of expressing that identity, both publicly and in the voting booth. Displays of Catalan identity shield it from destruction and obsolescence, and the desire to protect

Catalan identity may outweigh even economic considerations. For Catalans, identity *is* politics, and has been since the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera in the 1920s. Given these conditions, it is less surprising that material utility has not yet displaced identity to any notable degree. Contrast this with Wales, where the development of Welsh identity has largely been stunted. Since the mid-1800s, when the industrial revolution caused massive demographic shifts in the region, Welsh identity has slowly lost its defining characteristics. The history, language, and culture of someone living in the Welsh-speaking, Welsh-identified north can differ significantly from someone living in the English-speaking, British-identified south (Balsom 1985). Wales lacks the well-developed national press that can create the “imagined community” envisioned by Benedict Anderson.³⁰ Indeed, not until Saunders Lewis’ famous 1962 radio address *The Fate of the Language* did the notion of a threat to Welsh identity gain traction. When the expressive value of identity is low, material utility easily take precedence for voters.

That identity has varied meanings in different regions has important implications for this study. The results cannot be applied uniformly to other cases without considering the development of identity in that region. Scholars must understand what identity actually means to people, and only then can they assess its role in voter decision-making. Other limitations exist as well. This thesis looks at a fixed point in each of the case studies, while our previous discussion indicates that the meaning of identity changes over time. Examining the role of identity over time could offer insights into the how much the *nature* of identity affects its importance to voters. Future studies must also consider the accuracy of performance measures. Although the utmost effort was given to selecting data that reflected a true assessment of regional government performance, it is impossible to know whether those measures were as pure as hoped. Even controlling for potential biases, these measures may be picking up attitudes and beliefs that have

³⁰ See Williams (2011) for a discussion of the problems facing Welsh media.

little to do with material utility. At the same time, these biasing factors may have a significant independent role as well, and the opportunity exists to include other variables (such as economic disparities between region and state or Europeanization) identified as drivers of initial devolution in analyses of further devolution.

And yet, despite the limitations of this study, the analyses of both Catalonia and Wales found support for H₃. This suggests that voters do assess decisions on initial and further devolution differently. In order to develop a comprehensive theory about further devolution, further work on this topic is required. The most obvious avenue for this research is to apply the analysis to other cases in Europe – a particularly attractive option given the forthcoming referendum on independence in Scotland, in which voters may fall back on expressive voting given the uncertain consequences of secession. More advanced research designs would include the development of panel data on identity and government performance, so that scholars can measure the mutual effects that identity and performance assessments have on each other.

It is imperative that scholars look more closely at further devolution. Changes in state structure should not be seen as singular events, but rather as iterative processes in which voters repeatedly assess their desire for devolution on an evolving set of standards. There is much to be learned from studies in this field, and as the political landscape of Europe becomes more regionalized, the academic and policy benefits of this research are wide reaching. This study is hopefully one piece towards realizing these possibilities.

Appendix A

Table A.1: OLS Regression, scaled devolution preferences (Wales)

Variable	B
SATIS	.091 (.015)***
TRUST	.153 (.013)***
REPRN	.222 (.026)***
IDENT	.109 (.010)***
Control	
PARTY	.022 (.027)
AGE	-.015 (.007)**
GENDER	-.017 (.025)
INCOME	-.013 (.011)
Constant	-.467 (.078)***
N	1605

Standard error in parentheses.

Statistically significant at the 90% level. **Statistically significant at the 95% level. *Statistically significant at the 99% level.*

Table A.2: OLS Regression, scaled devolution preferences (Catalonia)

Variable	B
PERFORM	-.043 (.158)
TRUST	.009 (.024)
REPRN	-.026 (.057)
IDENT	.445 (.025)***
Control	
PARTY	.127 (.054)**
GENDER	-.030 (.052)
AGE	.006 (.017)
CLASS	-.023 (.019)
Constant	-.516 (.158)***
N	903

Standard error in parentheses.

Statistically significant at the 90% level. **Statistically significant at the 95% level. *Statistically significant at the 99% level.*

Table A.3: Binary Logistic Regression, extreme satisfaction responses removed (Catalonia)

Variable	B
PERFORM	-.141 (.166)
TRUST	.084 (.094)
REPRN	.061 (.216)
IDENT	1.372 (.134)***
<hr/>	
Control	
PARTY	.113 (.209)
GENDER	.097 (.198)
AGE	.000 (.067)
CLASS	-.098 (.073)
Constant	-3.918 (.636)***
N	903

Standard error in parentheses.

Statistically significant at the 90% level. **Statistically significant at the 95% level. *Statistically significant at the 99% level.*

Appendix B

The following table lists the variables used in the Welsh case study and the 2011 Welsh Referendum Study question from which they were derived. All options are listed according to their recoded values, not as originally presented in the survey, unless otherwise noted.

Variable		2011 WRS Question
SUPDEV <i>Support for further devolution</i>		Which of these statements (about devolution) comes closest to your view? (1) There should be no devolved government in Wales (2) The National Assembly for Wales should have fewer powers (3) We should leave things as they are now (4) The National Assembly for Wales should have more powers (5) Wales should become independent, separate from the UK Options 1-3 were coded as 0, and options 4-5 were coded as 1.
SATIS <i>Factor analysis of HEALTH, EDUC, and LIVING</i>	HEALTH <i>Assessment of NHS</i>	Do you think having a National Assembly for Wales has (1) Led to a decline in NHS standards in Wales (2) Neither – it has made no difference (3) Led to an improvement in NHS standards in Wales
	EDUC <i>Assessment of education</i>	Do you think having a National Assembly for Wales has (1) Led to a decline in education standards in Wales (2) Neither – it has made no difference (3) Led to an improvement in education standards in Wales
	LIVING <i>Assessment of living standards</i>	Do you think having a National Assembly for Wales has (1) Led to a decline in living standards in Wales (2) Neither – it has made no difference (3) Led to an improvement in living standards in Wales
TRUST <i>Relative measure of trust [WALES_TRUST – UK_TRUST]</i>	UK_TRUST <i>Trust of UK politicians</i>	How much do you trust [the UK government/the Welsh Assembly Government] to work in Wales best interests? (1) Almost never (2) Only some of the time (3) Most of the time (4) Just about always
	WALES_TRUST <i>Trust of Welsh politicians</i>	
REPRN <i>Representativeness of National Assembly for Wales</i>		Do you think having a National Assembly for Wales has (1) Given ordinary people less say in how Wales is governed (2) Neither – it has made no difference (3) Given ordinary people more say in how Wales is governed
IDENT <i>Moreno scale of Welsh/British identification</i>		Which, if any, of the following best describes how you see yourself? (1) British not Welsh

	(2) More British than Welsh (3) Equally British and Welsh (4) More Welsh than British (5) Welsh not British
PARTY <i>Support for Labour/Plaid Cymru coalition government</i>	(0) Does not support governing coalition (supports other party) (1) Supports governing coalition
AGE	(1) 26 and below (2) 27-35 (3) 36-44 (4) 45-53 (5) 54-62 (6) 63-71 (7) 72 and above
INCOME (£)	(1) 14,999 and below (2) 15,000 – 29,999 (3) 30,000 – 44,999 (4) 45,000 – 69,999 (5) 70,000 and above
GENDER	(0) Male (1) Female

Appendix C

The following table lists the variables used in the Catalan case study and the Barómetro Autonómico (II) question from which they were derived. All options are listed according to their recoded values, not as originally presented in the survey, unless otherwise noted.

Variable	Barómetro Autonómico (II) Question
<p>SUPDEV <i>Support for further devolution</i></p>	<p>Le voy a presentar ahora algunas fórmulas alternativas de organización territorial del Estado en España. Dígame, por favor, ¿con cuál está Ud. más de acuerdo? <i>I am going to present to you now some alternative forms of territorial organization of the State in Spain. Tell me, please, with which of these do you most agree?</i></p> <p>(1) Un Estado con un único Gobierno Central sin autonomías <i>A State with a Central Government without autonomias</i></p> <p>(2) Un Estado en el que las Comunidades Autónomas tengan menor autonomía que en la actualidad <i>A State in which the Autonomous Communities have more autonomy than in the present</i></p> <p>(3) Un Estado con Comunidades Autónomas como en la actualidad <i>A State with Autonomous Communities like in the present</i></p> <p>(4) Un Estado en el que las Comunidades Autónomas tenga mayor autonomía que en la actualidad <i>A State in which the Autonomous Communities have more autonomy than in the present</i></p> <p>(5) Un Estado en que se reconociese a las Comunidades Autónomas la posibilidad de convertirse en estados independientes <i>A State which recognizes to the Autonomous Communities the possibility of becoming independent states</i></p> <p>Options 1-3 were coded as 0, and options 4-5 were coded as 1.</p>
<p>PERFORM <i>Performance of regional government</i></p>	<p>En términos generales, ¿cómo calificaría Ud. la gestión que ha realizado la Generalitat de Cataluña desde las últimas elecciones: muy buena, buena, regular, mala o muy mala? <i>In general, how would you describe the administration that the Generalitat of Catalonia has conducted from the last elections?</i></p> <p>(1) Muy malo (<i>Very bad</i>) (2) Malo (<i>Bad</i>) (3) Regular (4) Bueno (<i>Good</i>) (5) Muy bueno (<i>Very good</i>)</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">REPRN <i>Representativeness of regional government</i></p>	<p>Ahora me gustaría que Ud. me dijera si, a su juicio, la actual Generalitat de Cataluña ha demostrado conocimiento de los problemas de Cataluña <i>Now I would like you to tell me if, in your judgment, the actual Generalitat of Catalonia has demonstrated knowledge of the problems of Catalonia.</i></p> <p>(1) Sí (<i>Yes</i>) (2) No</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">TRUST <i>Level of corruption in Catalan politics</i></p>	<p>¿Hasta qué punto cree Ud. que está extendida la corrupción en la política autonómica? <i>Up to what point do you believe corruption extends in autonomous politics?</i></p> <p>(1) Muy extendida (<i>Very widespread</i>) (2) Bastante extendida (<i>Rather widespread</i>) (3) Algo extendida (<i>Somewhat widespread</i>)* (4) Poco extendida (<i>A little widespread</i>) (5) Nada extendida (<i>Not widespread</i>)</p> <p>* Not read to respondent</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">IDENT <i>Moreno scale of Catalan/Spanish identification</i></p>	<p>¿Con cuál de las siguientes frases se identifica Ud. en mayor medida? <i>With which of the following statements do you identify most?</i></p> <p>(1) Me siento únicamente español/a (<i>I feel only Spanish</i>) (2) Me siento más español/a que catalán/a (<i>I feel more Spanish than Catalan</i>) (3) Me siento tan español/a como catalán/a (<i>I feel equally Spanish as Catalan</i>) (4) Me siento más catalán/a que español/a (<i>I feel more Catalan than Spanish</i>) (5) Me siento únicamente catalán/a (<i>I feel only Catalan</i>)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">PARTY <i>Support for coalition government</i></p>	<p>(0) Does not support governing coalition (supports other party) (1) Supports governing coalition</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">AGE</p>	<p>(1) 28 and below (2) 29-39 (3) 40-50 (4) 51-61 (5) 62-72 (6) 73-84 (7) 85 and above</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">CLASS <i>Socioeconomic status</i></p>	<p>(1) Clase alta/media-alta (<i>upper/middle-upper class</i>) (2) Nuevas clases medias (<i>new middle class</i>) (3) Viejas clases medias (<i>old middle class</i>) (4) Obreros cualificados (<i>qualified workers</i>) (5) Obreros no cualificados (<i>unqualified workers</i>)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">GENDER</p>	<p>(0) Male (1) Female</p>

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