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The 11th Broadyard Workshop
The Future of Scotland:
Will it Split with the UK?

September 14, 2018

INSTITUTE OF AREA STUDIES PEKING UNIVERSITY

Academic Bulletin

Moderator's introduction to the workshop

The possibility that Scotland might split with the UK seems not to have caught people's attention in today's chaotic and strife-filled world, but this is still a serious problem worth noticing. It is important for several reasons: (1) Scotland and England have been joined together as one country for more than 300 years. If their union were to "breakup," it might call into question the entire concept of "nation." (2) If Scotland were to succeed in splitting with the UK, Ireland would almost certainly follow suit; the UK as we always know it would then cease to exist. Considering its history as an established modern country, the first industrial power, and the one-time leader of the world's biggest empire, the UK's disintegration would hugely impact the entire world, just as did the collapse of the ancient Roman Empire. (3) A successful split by Scotland with the UK would likely stimulate other separatist movements in various parts of the world. The chaotic world would become more so, and many countries would run into trouble. (4) After the disintegration of the UK, England would return to its former stage in history when the Tudor dynasty first started to expand 500 years ago, which, from the perspective this modern day, would seem to be nothing less than a cruel joke!

Will Scotland split with the UK? That is the topic this workshop will focus on.

Gao Dai reviewed how the history of England and Scotland

is entangled, especially the situation after their union. He opined that their union, which has been the status quo for hundreds of years, has resulted in relatively strong mutual recognition; therefore, the possibility for Scotland to split with the UK in a short term is small. Li Liying introduced the historical background for the union in 1707. She pointed out that, at that time, Scottish politicians chose to abandon their national sovereignty for the sake of Scotland's stability and prosperity. To some degree, it shows that any political theory should serve reality, and that nationalism that helps people live a better life counts as good nationalism.

Speaking about Scotland's attempt to split with the UK and the UK's Brexit referendum, Chen Xiaolü opined that the two seemingly nonrelated issues actually reflect a common phenomenon in the Western political system: using the referendum, a seemingly democratic approach, to solve national sovereignty problems. However, this approach can only lead to disastrous results and is an example of the "abuse of democracy" by politicians. In addition, current studies of ethnic issues by many Western scholars have had the effect more of stimulating national separation than of strengthening national unity, which is a phenomenon worthy of paying attention to. Li Jishi expressed his belief that Scotland's referendum in 2014 on leaving the UK failed because most Scots assumed "staying in Europe" was a given if they "stayed in the UK." But once the UK chose for

Brexit, the premise for Scotland to stay in the UK disappeared. Therefore, the question of whether Scotland should split with the UK was raised again.

Sun Jian expressed his belief that the referendum, as a form of direct democracy, was gradually accepted by British constitutionalism after the 1970s. A major feature of British constitutionalism is that it tends to follow the convention. However, British scholars are divided on whether or not a referendum should become a customary rule. In general, the Scottish separatist movement has undergone two stages: devolution and independence referendum. After devolution, the process of the split underwent a qualitative transformation, and Scottish independence was transformed from a separatists' distant national dream into a real political process.

Li Guanjie opined that, by 2016, the peak period of the SNP had passed, and its political goal of independence could not be realized in a short term. But the result of the referendum on Brexit has brought about a new opportunity for the SNP, which may take advantage of this opportunity to seek independence from the UK again on the grounds that a majority of Scottish people voted "no" on the Brexit referendum, preferring, instead, to stay in the EU. But, with the whole of the UK narrowly voting "yes," in essence, Scotland would be "forced" to exit the EU, against the will of its people. This has become a powerful tool for supporters of Scottish independence in promoting a

second referendum.

Fu Cong evaluated the possibility for Scotland to split with the UK after the UK exits the EU. She pointed out that, at the time of the 2014 independence referendum, British pro-establishment camp members, including major parties, financial institutions, large enterprises and the media, all firmly opposed Scottish independence. But this time, after the British people voted to leave the EU, both the Scottish Labor Party and Scottish Liberal Democrats supported the SNP's directly participating in the Brexit negotiations. Some large financial institutions and multinational companies preferred to see an independent Scotland that successfully entered the EU rather than a UK that exited the EU. These factors will all become new variables on Scotland's road to independence.

Guo Xiao opined that since the establishment of the SNP, its attitude toward European integration has undergone an evolution from "pro-Europe" to "doubting Europe," and, then, back to "pro-Europe." As a political party aiming at independence, the SNP's attitude toward Europe fundamentally serves its goal. The SNP regards the UK and Europe as Scotland's two "alliances." In the process of its changing attitude toward Europe, it constantly balances and chooses between its two "alliances" and two identities. Hu Li opined that, since the rise of the Scottish national movement, from the late 19th and early 20th centuries till now, a certain degree of

autonomy has been Scotland's main appeal, and the British government has put that into practice. However, the SNP's advocating of independence destroyed the situation, and the party took advantage of Scotland's certain need for local autonomy to seize every opportunity to promote its independence plan. To some extent, "independence" is played up by the SNP. Now, the SNP has gained a firm foothold in Scotland. And under the background of Brexit, both external and internal factors are full of variables. Therefore, a split from the UK may become a possibility in the future.

Qian Chengdan

September 30, 2018

The 11th Broadyard Workshop

The Future of Scotland: Will it Split with the UK?

September 14, 2018

Since the beginning of 2018, as the UK has been continually hastening the pace of its exit from the European Union (EU), Scotland, which wants to remain in the EU, declared that it would decide whether to hold a second referendum on whether it would split with the UK based on the result of Brexit. What is Scotland's intention to "play the independence card" with the UK? How will the chain effects post-Brexit influence Scotland, the UK and the EU? On the theme "The Future of Scotland: Will it Split with the UK?" the 11th Broadyard Workshop (博雅工作坊) of Peking University's Institute of Area Studies (PKUIAS) was held on September 14. Ten experts from universities and academic organizations attended the workshop. They had discussions from the perspectives of history, politics, political parties and international relations on the topics of the Scottish separatist movement, the development of the relationship between Scotland and the UK, and whether Scotland would split with the UK via referendum.

Qian Chengdan, director of PKUIAS, welcomed the attendees in his welcoming speech. He pointed out that the establishment of PKUIAS aims to push forward the cultivation of talent and academic research in PKU's area studies. The

institute held ten Broadyard workshops since its establishment, focusing on discussions and studies on major problems in a number of countries or regions of the world. The “issue of Scotland,” which is not only a historical but also a practical problem, has existed for a long time. Qian ended up his speech by expressing his hope that the discussion would result in deeper understanding of the issue.

Prof. Gao Dai, from PKU’s Department of History, gave the first presentation, which he titled “Between History and Reality – A Historical Analysis of the Relationship between Scotland and England.” He pointed out that, considering the Scottish-English relationship, there has been the viewpoint that Scotland was one of England’s colonies, and its relationship with English was similar to India’s. Therefore, once there was an opportunity to hold a referendum, Scottish nationalism would burst forth, and quite a few media also claimed the referendum was Scotland’s attempt to seek independence from its status as a colony. In fact, according to Gao, the viewpoint is misleading: Scotland is not a colony as India was, and its relationship with England is unique.

Gao Dai then briefly cited some geographical and historical facts relating to Scotland. It is bounded by England to the south and surrounded by sea from three sides—the Atlantic Ocean to the west and north, and the North Sea to the east. Scotland’s southern border with England is established by Solway Firth, the

Cheviot Hills and Tweed River. Its total area is more than 77,000 square kilometers. Scotland is traditionally divided into two topographic areas: the Highlands and the Lowlands. The areas to the south of Edinburgh and Glasgow are the Lowlands while the areas to the north are the Highlands. The population of Scotland is 5.12 million. Its biggest city, Glasgow, is a major industrial hub, and has a population of more than 700,000. The second largest city, Edinburgh, has a population of more than 500,000 people and is the seat of the Scottish government as well as the political, economic and cultural center of Scotland.

The earliest inhabitants in Scotland were the Celts, who came from the European continent. When England was ruled by the Romans, Scotland was not part of the Roman Empire. England and Scotland had no clear boundary, even after the Norman Conquest. There was a “buffer zone” between them, which was generally the area bounded by the River Forth, in the north and Tweed River, in the south. In the middle of the 11th century, the zone between the rivers was controlled by the Scottish king, Malcolm II. In 1066, William I invaded England, and many Northumbrians fled to the area to seek shelter, among of them being the sister of Prince Edgar, Margaret. Margaret soon married King Malcolm III, Canmore of Scotland. Through her marriage, Margaret strengthened England’s influence on Scotland in politics and culture. In 1314, Scotland won the Battle of Bannockburn, which laid the foundations for Scottish

independence. In 1328, England signed *The Treaty of Edinburgh–Northampton* with Scotland, renouncing all pretensions to sovereignty over Scotland. But at the same time, King Edward III of England promised his six-year-old sister Joanna in marriage to the four-year-old David, son of the Scottish king, Robert Bruce. In the early 16th century, James IV of Scotland married Margaret Tudor, the daughter of Henry VII of England. Thereafter, the descendants of the House of Stuart joined the bloodline of the House of Tudor, laying the foundation for King James VI of Scotland to rule England. In 1603, James VI was crowned King of England on the death of Elizabeth I, Queen of England. England and Scotland shared a common monarch but the two countries were independently governed. In 1707, Scotland and England signed the *Acts of Union*, with the Scottish Parliament and the English Parliament uniting to form the Parliament of Great Britain, and the Kingdom of England and the Kingdom of Scotland uniting into one kingdom with the name Great Britain.

Gao Dai pointed out that many thorny problems were encountered after Scotland and England united. First, certain taxes that had only been collected in England were subsequently also collected in Scotland; therefore, occurrences of tax evasion and smuggling appeared and increased in number. Second, after the “Glorious Revolution,” those who supported the ousted King James II and his descendants to regain the throne were in large

number in Scotland. These people questioned the legality of the royalty, which posed a big challenge to the stability and continuity of the union of Scotland and England. Third, the overbearing “Englishness” of the post-union government annoyed the Scottish people. And not only was it hard for them to get used to being “English” but the English, too, were not used to treating Scotland as really being part of their country.

However, such challenges did not affect the continuation and stability of the union. That was mainly because, in a relatively long term after 1707, the British government took a series of effective measures with regard to religion, politics, and economy that were beneficial for maintaining the development of the English-Scottish relationship which led to the “union” being gradually accepted at all levels of Scottish society, and a certain degree of “British identity” also gaining acceptance. The measures included the following: in religion, the interests of the Presbyterian Church would not be affected; in economy, Scotland was integrated into the huge British imperial economic system; in government, Scotland was sensibly allowed to keep some of its ability to manage its own affairs and thereby gained the support of the Scottish elites; the transportation system was improved, communication among regions was enhanced, and the development of urbanization helped to instill the people with a shared United Kingdom mentality. At the same time, the establishment of the monarchy, the combination of the English

and Scottish armies and a joint state administration system were also three important factors that helped maintain the union of England and Scotland.

According to Gao Dai, what's worth stressing is that the Scottish Enlightenment, which occurred between 1740 and 1800 in Scotland, played a positive role in strengthening the Scottish people's sense of Britishness. Different from the enlightenment movements that took place in France and Germany, the most salient feature of the Scottish Enlightenment is that it was a "post-revolution enlightenment" that transpired after the completion of political transformation and religious reforms. After the *Acts of Union 1707* were passed and as the British Empire expanded quickly, an introspection over philosophical thought took place in Scotland, which was followed by the emergence of a large number of thinkers. It made Scotland, impoverished and remote in Western Europe, visible to the world and quickly become a great force in the European civilization. By 1750, the Scottish people were the most educated citizens in Europe, with a literacy rate as high as 75 percent. A large number of outstanding figures emerged, including the economist Adam Smith and philosopher David Hume, which had great impact on the development of the modern history of Europe and even the world. Afterward, measures like establishing a national unified postal communication system, establishing the BBC (British

Broadcasting Corporation), instituting nationalized reforms over the mining industry and railway system, and establishing national unified social welfare and security systems, all contributed to the maintenance and steadiness of the union between England and Scotland.

However, starting from the 1980s, and especially since the 21st century, the steady bond between England and Scotland that had lasted for almost 300 years started to loosen. This could be seen from the following aspects: First, the collapse of the British Empire not only directly influenced the overseas interest of many of UK's investors but also led to the loss of an important psychological base for British identity. Second, the combination of armies that had continued for hundreds of years also experienced pressure to separate. With the dissolution of the illustrious Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment), the national esteem of the Scottish people was severely hurt; Third, in 1998, the Parliament of the United Kingdom passed the Scotland Act 1998. The Act created a Scottish Parliament, which, to a great extent, demonstrated the Scottish people's independence in politics and also contributed to a national identity separate from their British identity. In 2007, the Scottish National Party (SNP), which prominently supported the idea of Scottish independence, emerged as the largest party by a narrow majority during the Scottish Parliament election. Four years later, the SNP gained the majority of seats in the parliament, with its party leader, Alex

Salmond, setting up a majority SNP government. It also began to discuss with Prime Minister David Cameron over possibly holding a referendum on Scottish independence.

Gao Dai opined that the alliance of Scotland and England has gone through a journey of ups and downs lasting 300+ years. During the process, Scotland established close ties with England in many important aspects, including political constitution, economic construction, religion, and social and cultural integration; as a result, “British identity” had a relatively firm foundation in Scotland. Although there have been cries in recent years for Scotland and England to separate, the two sides are not likely to “divorce” unless the union faces political, economic and religious conflict breaking out at the same time.

The presentation by Li Liying, an associate professor from the College of Humanities, Zhejiang Normal University, was titled, “The Union of the Kingdoms of Scotland and England in 1707.”

According to Li, England and Scotland started negotiating about a possible union in 1706, and the question of whether to unite was put to the vote in the Scottish Parliament. The parliament eventually supported the union of England and Scotland after first voting on a draft of the union, then amending the draft and holding another vote on the amended bill. On March 25, 1707, the Scottish Parliament held its last session, and with that, Scotland’s independent sovereignty ended. One of

the leaders of the Scottish Parliament, the Duke of Queensberry, said, in tears, that the union was for the interest of Scotland and its descendants.

Ever since William I invaded England in the middle of the 11th century, the possibility of an invasion from England became a perpetual worry of Scotland, and fighting battles against English was a major draw on the national purse. Although Scotland was able to preserve its independence, the livelihood of its people suffered. The Scottish Highlands has little sunshine and much wind and rainfall. In the era of the dominance of agriculture, Scotland was deemed a barren region. Given that the state had to expend its limited resources on perpetual defense, the Scottish people led a very difficult life.

Li Liying opined that, at the beginning of the 18th century, Scotland actually could have chosen to end its union with England and return to its previous independent state. However, it would then have faced economic sanctions and military threats from England. This is why Scotland chose to ally itself with France, which dramatically impacted the war between England and France. England was separated from France by the English Channel, but since Scotland had allied itself with France, the French army, theoretically, could strike the lands of England anytime it wanted, which made England feel rather anxious. It can be said that, after experiencing the Hundred Years' War and the alliance between England and France, the England's goal in

striving to move northward shifted from purely expanding its territory to severing the tie between Scotland and France. However, neither Henry VII's marrying of his daughter to the King of Scotland nor Henry VIII's burning of Edinburgh achieved England's desired goal.

Following England's Reformation, Scotland also instituted religious reforms. Taking advantage of the reformation, Queen Elizabeth I finally achieved the aspirations of both her father, Henry VIII, and grandfather, Henry VII—which had been to transform the English-Scottish relationship from inimical to amicable—by presiding over the Union of the Crowns, in 1603. England was highly satisfied with this arrangement as, on the one hand, by sharing one king, England basically controlled the domestic and foreign affairs of Scotland and would no longer have to worry about Scotland's allying itself with France against it; on the other, England didn't have to share its riches with relatively poor Scotland on the excuse that England and Scotland were still two independent kingdoms. However, the situation changed between 1703 and 1704, when the parliament gained a bigger say than the shared king in Scotland's power system. This meant that England could no longer control Scotland by sharing one crown. At that time, England was involved in war with France over the Spanish succession. In order to prevent Scotland's uniting with France again against England, as Scotland did during the Hundred Years' War,

England decided to eliminate the possibility for Scotland's independence by integrating the Scottish Parliament. Different from its previously negative attitude toward its union with Scotland, England not only proactively asked for union with Scotland, but also made use of economic and military actions to threaten Scotland if it refused.

If Scotland had chosen at that time to be independent, that would have brought on a war that stood to severely harm the livelihood of the Scottish people. Therefore, the Scottish Parliament decided that the people's happiness and prosperity weighed more than the country's independence and sovereignty, and it agreed to unite with England. The question of religion was then still quite sensitive, and so, to eliminate the doubts of the Scottish Presbyterian church, the independence of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland and the Episcopal Church of England in the United Kingdom was explicitly endorsed in the *Acts of Union*, which also stipulated that neither the king or queen of the United Kingdom nor the parliament had the power to make any changes to the Scottish religion—indeed, the king or queen had to swear to this when being crowned. Both England and Scotland's efforts in solving their religious differences during their union were praiseworthy, given the two countries' social background at the time.

Li Liying opined that the Scottish politicians finally decided to give up the country's sovereignty for the sake of

Scotland's prosperity and stability. To some extent, it showed that any theories or -isms should serve reality; that nationalism is deemed good as long as it can help people lead a better life while not infringing on other national interests; and that the ultimate goal of nationalism should be people's happiness. At that time, it was the Scottish Parliament which decided to unite with England, and the members of parliament to some degree represented the upper class society and their will. Although, currently, it is the Scottish people who will decide whether Scotland will split with England, the Scottish upper class elites still have the responsibility and obligation to make the right choice in terms of the country's national interest.

The presentation made by Prof. Chen Xiaoli, from the School of History, Nanjing University, focused on Scottish independence and Brexit. He explained that he chose to discuss the two seemingly unrelated topics because, on one hand, they both have relevance to the future of the current UK; on the other, the factors that triggered the two issues and their consequences have many similarities.

Scotland and England share the same island, their people speak the same language, and their union has lasted for more than 300 years. Because of this, they both gained a great dividend for their political, economical and social development. Their people have no obstacles to their interacting, and the two countries to some extent are completely integrated. The British

government, intentionally or not, effectively encouraged Scotland to maintain its traditions and customs to increase cultural diversity. Their union, based on democratic constitutionalism, is widely acknowledged in academic circles as being the most stable of its kind, and a classic example of successful integration. Yet, incomprehensibly, we are now seeing the rise of the Scottish independence campaign, the momentum of whose prestige and power is ever increasing, and ever closer to attaining its goal!

Similar to the referendum on Scottish independence, the referendum on Brexit was thought to be a farce; nobody expected it to succeed. Many academics have since analyzed the reasons for its success from political, economic and cultural angles. But that begs the question: why had they no inkling of this before it happened? Chen explained that he decided to consider both issues for analysis in aiming to answer following questions: What is the significance and effect of those two referendums? What are the limits of power of politicians and how do they manipulate those limits? What is the ultimate goal of ethnic studies? What is the boundary between a country's legal rationality and its politics?

Prof. Chen pointed out that, first, as the questions of whether the UK should exit the EU and whether Scotland should declare its independence were both decided by referendum, it is necessary to analyze the qualitative limitations of this seemingly

procedurally correct, fully legal and high-end procedure. In his opinion, a referendum is a “brainless” political stunt, a classic device used by politicians attempting to shirk their responsibilities, as well as deceive the public. It is not just some other type of democratic election. Maybe, in its original intent, the referendum was modeled on direct democracy in ancient Greece. But it is ridiculous to blindly imitate Athenian direct democracy in a modern society that features diversity, complex economic changes and a far greater number of voters. In terms of actual effects, such referendums have almost always wasted a huge amount of public wealth and led to the public’s being psychologically traumatized. Therefore, keeping a cool head about this matter is the precondition for clarifying many complex questions.

The next question concerns the limits of power of elected politicians. There are clear stipulations in the British constitution regarding elected politicians’ power as well as all kind of administrative regulations. If they acted in disregard of the people’s opinions, they would be impeached. However, there is no clear stipulation regarding the misuse of “democracy” by elected politicians. This is a new problem. Although the power of politicians can be restricted, it is still hard to preemptively restrict politicians’ power to misuse democracy. The recent catastrophic referendum in the UK was a disastrous consequence of David Cameron’s misuse of democratic power.

Such a phenomenon is not exclusive to Western political systems. Many politicians from other countries, such as those in third world countries, often fulfill their personal aims by manipulating public opinion through all kinds of ways. Of course, due to flaws in the system itself, politicians' limits of power are ambiguous, and, although this is a very meaningful topic, few people pay attention to or study phenomena like this. The UK is widely acknowledged by scholars as having a mature constitutional government, one whose democratic system has gone through a very long period of history, but, even so, such a self-defeating measure was taken in the name of "democracy." Therefore, within the democratic system, the question of how to restrict politicians' "democratic" power in order to prevent the division or disintegration of the country should become a hot new topic in academe.

The third question touches upon the essential goal of ethnic studies. As a common consequence of ethnic studies research in foreign countries, new instances of inter-ethnic strife have been triggered, and some countries have even disintegrated. Many scholars who specialize in Scottish studies have had intensive and exhaustive discussions over the relationship between Scotland and England. Ever since the Scottish Parliament was dissolved in 1707 and its members united with the English Parliament to form the Parliament of Great Britain based in London, England and Scotland cooperated well and shared the

extra dividend in development gained after to the dramatic changes of the Industrial Revolution. But, due to many reasons, the Scottish Parliament, which had been dissolved about 300 years ago, reconvened in Edinburgh in 1999. Some English academics termed it a milestone in Scotland's development. But some people may ask: What kind of a milestone was this? What is The Scottish Question anyway? Is the union of England and Scotland a historical advance or regression? If it is a historical advance, why the current "split"? If it is a historical regression, some questions merit investigation by academics, namely, what has been the influence on actual events of the contributions of academics in Scottish studies? The assessment of the influence of academic research is complicated, and it is also difficult for certain ethnic studies academics to be completely fair or detached with regard to the object of their studies; they cannot help getting entangled with the object of their study and end up becoming one of the important drivers of ethnic conflict. When ethnic studies scholarship on certain issues resonates with certain social sentiments, the consequences will be more unpredictable. In this regard, the publication of papers and monographs in Scottish studies has been stimulating discussion in society of Scotland's historical issues, Scotland's special path of development, and the value of its special ethnic identity to its development.

Being part of the UK and suffering constraints by England,

Scotland didn't have a place of its own to independently develop. The discovery of oil resources in the North Sea further made some Scots feel cheated. Meanwhile, the election mechanism was wide open to manipulation by politicians, thereby opening old wounds. With this, Scottish independence, aided by deliberate provocation, appeared to be almost a reality. Although the quest for independence encountered some obstacles, this trend, once established, will be very difficult to be reversed.

The last question is the boundary between a country's legal rationality and its politics. It seems that this should not be a problem; however, for most of the time, the existence of a country is dependent on factors beyond its legal rationality. Even for the US, a modern superpower, the development of its national identity, territory and even its system, has come from the fierce internal conflicts and external competition it has experienced. In fact, the increase in number of countries after World War II can be attributed to some extent to the disintegration of then-existing countries. As a result, although existing countries all oppose it, the trend for countries to disintegrate and the overall number of countries to increase in number seems unstoppable. Among the many reasons for this, it's worth emphasizing, is the principle of national self-determination. The principle played an active role in decolonization after World War II, but, with the world's changing circumstances, its negative effects have become more

and more obvious. Looking back at history, it is not difficult to see that national self-determination has experienced a long process of evolution: from the national self-determination that developed out of the original desire for freedom of the French people during the French Revolution, to the principle of self-determination laid out in US president Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points after the World War I, to relevant ideas proposed in the Atlantic Charter, and, last, to The Right of Peoples and Nations to Self-determination, which was passed by the UN General Assembly in 1952 and required all the UN's member states to "uphold the principle of self-determination of all peoples and nations." However, the principle of self-determination has always had a hidden paradox, which is that self-determination will inevitably lead to the disintegration of the existing country or ruling system. If a colonized country seeks its independence, that's admittedly a good thing, but if an ethnic group seeks to separate from the framework of an existing country, it becomes a thorny problem. Therefore, to what extent a country can suffer disintegration or be split, and which person(s) have the right to define a movement as being as self determination or the sowing of division, is both a theoretical and a practical problem that has never been well solved.

The UK is a country without a written constitution, which makes it less able to withstand potential disintegration. Yet, even if it had a written constitution, it would still be hard for the UK

to effectively respond to calls for self-determination. The scale of expansion and contraction over centuries as England developed into the British Empire and then retreated once again to the British Isles left the world, and even the British themselves, unsure of where Britain's frontiers ultimately lay. How to solve this conundrum is something that the academic world should pay attention to. It is a problem on both a theoretical and a practical level, one that has both roots in history and implications for the future. Even though there has not yet been any breakthrough on the theoretical level, we should at least arm ourselves with common sense: when someone repeatedly stresses the principle of self-determination, we should consider the possibility that he or she wants again to stir up chaos.

Li Jishi, associate professor from the Politics and Public Management School of Shandong University, gave a presentation titled, "The UK's choice of 'soft Brexit' under the threat of a second referendum on Scottish independence." Li opined that 2014's referendum on Scottish independence had a complex and far-reaching cause and effect. Many Scots' choice to "stay" in the UK was based on the assumption that the UK would stay in the EU. The result of the 2016 vote on Brexit caused the topic of Scottish independence to reemerge and thereby get entangled with the Brexit process. The changes brought by Brexit and how the UK will fare after leaving the EU

will both strongly affect the Scottish Question.

American scholar Michael Hechter, in his book *Containing Nationalism*, points out that in culturally heterogeneous states, direct rule and cultural assimilation results in “State-building nationalism” as well as a corresponding peripheral nationalism. Not all direct rule leads to nationalism. Only when direct rule is unable to assimilate ethnic groups within the country can peripheral nationalism appear. Applying the theory that direct rule and cultural assimilation leads to peripheral nationalism helps to shed light on the internal motives of the Scottish independence movement.

In regard to the relation between the crisis of the UK’s national mode of governance and Scotland’s independence referendum, first, the British parliament regulates local governments and their operation through all kinds of legislation, which makes the UK a country that is highly centralized. Its central government has super powers over local governments, and, with the passage of a law in London, can even abolish or merge them. Even if Scotland were to be granted some degree of autonomy and the Scottish parliament and government were established, its major policies would still be reliant on the British government for its backing, which is resented by many Scottish people. Second, in terms of cultural assimilation, the British government has never actively promoted that Scottish culture be assimilated; as a result, Scottish traditions and culture

have long kept their uniqueness. Although Scotland has been integrated into the UK for more than 300 years, it also has a 500-year history of being separated from and engaging in war with England. After World War II, the recognition of the Scots of their unique identity gradually strengthened, which provided a cultural and psychological foundation for the Scottish independence movement. Third, conflicts in resource distribution and party politics became a catalyst for separation. When, in the 1960s, oil resources were discovered in the North Sea, many Scottish people lost no time in asserting Scotland's claim to the oil. This was inseparable from the phenomenon of the rise of the SNP.

As for the lessons drawn from the referendum on Scottish independence, Li Jishi pointed out that there were very complex reasons and a special circumstance behind the Cameron government's authorizing Scotland to organize the referendum. First, under the democratic discourse system, referendums are absolutely legal. Second, Cameron did so not because he was in favor of Scottish independence, but in order to contain the SNP's separatist direction. Although the SNP won broad support during the 2012 election, public opinion polls showed only a very low 20 percent support rate for Scottish independence. Therefore, Cameron hoped that a referendum on the simple question of a yes or no vote on independence would be held as soon as possible, and, given the circumstances at the time,

expected that the choice for independence would be overwhelmingly rejected. At that point, SNP would not have any reason to advocate independence in the face of public opposition to it, and would have to settle for limited autonomy. Although the result of the independence referendum made clear how risky Cameron's decision was, his hand was forced by circumstances. Third, Cameron hoped to avoid a repeat of the circumstances that led to Northern Ireland's hundred years of bloodshed. In English history, from the independence of the North American Colonies to the Irish War of Independence, and to the Northern Ireland civil conflict, problems relating to ethnic groups have always been points of trauma in the development of the British nation. Ever since its union with England in 1707, the wave of Scottish nationalism has overall been relatively subdued; however, it has seen a surge since the late 20th century. If coercive measures are taken to suppress the wave, it may be hard to avoid triggering a violent resistance.

As for Brexit's influence on question of Scottish independence, Li Jishi opined that, since over 60 percent of Scottish people hoped to stay in the EU, the result of the Brexit referendum greatly dissatisfied those Scots in the pro-EU camp, leading to the Scottish public's support for independence to rise as high as 45 percent. But, paradoxically, with the support for Scottish independence increasing, support for the SNP declined. After the release of the result of the referendum on Brexit, the

SNP, on one hand, threatened to hold a second referendum; on the other, it attempted to influence the British government to go for a “soft Brexit” that would, at a minimum, allow Scotland to remain in the European Single Market and Customs Union. Frustrated by the setbacks suffered during the 2017 general election, Scotland’s First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, had previously decided to shelve the plan to hold a referendum; however, during the Brexit process afterward, she again frequently brandished the “magic weapon” of holding an independence referendum. Although the final plan from the Theresa May government was deemed a “soft Brexit” and could to some extent help mollify the discontent of the Scottish people, it is still hard to predict Brexit’s influence on Scottish public opinion over whether or not the country should split from the UK.

In light of the Scottish independence referendum in 2014, which almost led to the disintegration of the country, the UK government would never agree to allow Scotland to hold a second referendum. As for Scotland, although pro-independence voters are large in number, increasing their percentage has proven difficult. Even if a second referendum could be held, the possibility for failure is great. Therefore, the SNP is cautious about putting forward a new plan for holding an independence referendum. Scottish independence still faces uncertainty, especially considering the unclear post-Brexit future’s

unpredictable influence on Scottish public opinion.

During the discussion session, Hu Li, a PhD candidate from PKU's Department of History, raised a question: Prof. Gao Dai has said that Scotland and England are not likely to “divorce” unless the union faces political, economic and religious conflict breaking out at the same time. So, what is the status of the current antagonism between the two sides?

Gao Dai: The relationship between England and Scotland now is probably more stable than in 2014 because, in the current union, Scotland has gained the rights it deserves. While North Sea oil revenues are in contention, nevertheless, the price of oil is declining; therefore, in terms of economic development, the Scottish people recognize that independence for its own sake is not worth it. I also have a question for Li Jishi. If you think England has not succeeded in culturally assimilating Scotland, what would successful assimilation look like? And how do you regard the influence of the Scottish Enlightenment?

Li Jishi: Scotland maintained its religion, education and judicial systems after 1707, which made Scottish people feel that, except for currency and the military, they could have their own systems in some aspects. Seen from this angle, the British government did not achieve a unified social culture system.

Gao Dai: There were several important reasons that helped push forward the union between England and Scotland. One was the establishment of the BBC, which laid the foundations for the

entire UK to use English; the other was the establishment of a nationally-unified postal system and railway system, which contributed to the further integration of England and Scotland.

Qian Chengdan: As for public opinion polls, people from the political, economic and social science fields are keen to use polling data to make social research more scientific. But having done so, research that introduces the human factor tends to encounter many problems. Even if the topic of the poll is objective, its result can be influenced by multiple factors. For instance, people who oppose Cameron may not necessarily oppose him on Brexit, but only oppose some of his policies. Therefore, simply associating polling results with the split with the UK or Brexit is problematic. As for the recognition of Scottish identity, Qian said he agrees with Prof. Chen Xiaolü, saying that the social sentiment reflected by media or polls can be possibly hyped up and manipulated by politicians. Therefore, the Scottish people's sentiment of splitting with the UK could have been created by politicians.

Chen Xiaolü: The British ruling elites did not treat seriously the goal after England and Scotland united of integrating their peoples and making the country into a unified nation-state. If the elites had such a plan, they would have gradually guided the country in a unified direction via textbooks and propaganda, instead of emphasizing free development and natural selection, and that would have allowed it to avoid the

current situation in Scotland.

Qian Chengdan: In the presentation by Li Liying, she pointed out that the decision of the Scottish upper class to unite with England in 1707 was also the decision of Scottish society at that time. Could she go into that matter in a little more depth?

Li Liying: My presentation focused on three points. First, nationalism should have as its goal the best interests of the ethnic group. Second, theory should serve reality. Implementation of a theory should be for the sake of a better reality; reality should not be asked to conform with theory. Third, in the course of development in many nation-states, the direction of major issues is determined by the upper classes. The union in 1707 was decided by the Scottish Parliament. The parliament mainly represents the interests of the upper class of society. The starting point for their consideration was the overall interests of the Scottish people and their future development. And, subsequently, the union did bring about prosperity to Scotland and happiness to its people.

The second segment of presentations was started by Sun Jian, a lecturer at the School of History and Civilization, Shaanxi Normal University. The title of her presentation was “Analysis of the Scottish Separatist Movement from the Perspective of the Referendum.”

Regarding the promulgation and influence of the Scottish independence referendum, Sun Jian said that before the 1990s,

the SNP had no exact concept of the path of Scottish independence. After Alex Salmond took over the SNP, he gradually promoted that the way to decide the constitutional future of Scotland should be through multiple referendums, and constructed “independence” as a credible constitutional option. At that time, the SNP’s general understanding of the path to independence was, by holding the majority of Scottish seats in the British Parliament, it would have the authority to hold a public opinion poll on independence, followed by negotiations with the British government on “separation,” and then, after holding a successful referendum, a final independence could be achieved. This path is what Jo Murkens called the “majority-negotiation-referendum” model. Previously, given the minority status of the SNP in Scottish politics, it was almost impossible to get a majority of seats, so this model was weak in real practice. However, after the establishment of the Scottish Parliament in 1999, the situation changed dramatically. The SNP’s chances of gaining power through the Scottish parliamentary elections greatly increased. They decided to give up their traditional goal of obtaining a majority of votes, which would have been equivalent to obtaining independent authorization, and switched tactics to seeking to hold power in Scotland first, promote a referendum during their rule, and then conduct independence negotiations after the referendum. In this way, the three stages of the independence process were

transformed into a “majority-referendum-negotiation” model.

In 2011, after the SNP came to power as the majority, the referendum issue was once again pushed to the forefront. The British government could no longer ignore the development of tide toward Scottish independence. Many British believed that the SNP’s obtaining of more than half of the seats in the Scottish Parliament proved that they had obtained the authorization of most people, and even if there were no legislative authority to hold a referendum, at least they had the right to do it on the moral level. For the SNP government, they gradually realized that due to the limitations of the Scottish Parliament’s legislative power, the formulation of the referendum legislation and the holding of the referendum would be restricted. In order to prevent the referendum bill from being vetoed by the Supreme Court, the Scottish government had to work with the British government to find a solution for the lack of legal support for the independence referendum.

In January 2012, an advisory document on the Scottish independence referendum, *Scotland’s Constitutional Future*, was published, expressing the British government’s legal position on the Scottish independence referendum. Soon after, the Scottish government also published relevant advisory documents. On October 15, 2012, British Prime Minister David Cameron and First Minister of Scotland Alex Salmond signed the “Edinburgh Agreement” on the Scottish independence referendum. The

Scottish Parliament was thereby given the temporary power to hold a referendum. The referendum option only set two issues, and the time was scheduled to be by the end of 2014.

After a fierce competition between the pro-independence and anti-independence camps, the Scottish independence referendum in 2014 fully mobilized the enthusiasm and participation of voters. The data shows that 84.6% of the voters voted in the referendum. As for the answer to the question “Should Scotland become an independent country,” 55.3% of the voters chose No, and 44.7% of the voters chose Yes. The result of the referendum was endorsed by both the Scottish and the British governments, and the issue of Scottish independence should have then been terminated. However, with the increasing strength of the SNP after the referendum, plus their strong performance in the parliamentary election, the issue of holding an independence referendum gradually resurfaced. In its campaign guiding principles for the Scottish Parliament in 2016, the SNP proposed to have another independence referendum.

Sun Jian opined that the referendum, as a form of direct democracy, was gradually accepted by British constitutionalism after the 1970s and became a powerful complement to representative democracy. A major feature of British constitutionalism is that it tends to follow the convention. However, British scholars are divided on whether a referendum should become a customary rule. In general, the Scottish

separatist movement has undergone two stages: devolution and independence referendum. After the devolution, the process of the split underwent a qualitative transformation, and Scottish independence was transformed from a separatists' distant national dream into a real political process. The holding of the Scottish independence referendum had an important impact on both the Scottish separatist movement and the development of similar ethnic groups in the West.

Li Guanjie, an assistant research fellow at the Centre for British Studies at Shanghai International Studies University, presented on “The SNP and Political Changes in Contemporary Scotland.”

According to Li Guanjie, the SNP was established in 1934. Thanks to the opening of the devolution process in the UK in 1997, the SNP has become increasingly stronger and has changed from trying to adapt to the devolution framework to insisting on independence, and thus has become the leading force in Scottish political development. In general, the SNP has experienced three stages of development: the lost period (1999–2004), the rising period (2004–2014), and the achievement-keeping period (2014–present). In the Scottish parliamentary elections in 2016, the SNP won 63 seats, but that was fewer than half. Although it still remains the largest party, its peak period is past and its political goal of independence could not be realized in a short term. The SNP needs to find a

new goal and direction.

Li Guanjie opined that although SNP has been in power for 11 years and has accumulated a wealth of ruling experience, the party still faces many difficulties in politics. First, adhering to the road of independence is its political goal. However, subject to the factors of legal principles and the British government, Scotland cannot hold a second independence referendum in the short term. How to balance the goal of independence and other policies is the main difficulty they face. Second, Scotland has adopted a mixed electoral system based on a simple majority system and a proportional representation system. Usually, this kind of electoral system will create a coalition government or a minority government, which to a great extent limits the development potential of the SNP. In future administrations, the SNP will encounter the boycott of the unionism political party on the road of independence. What measures to take to ensure its long-term governance is an institutional problem facing the SNP. Third, Scotland is neither a British colony nor suffering national oppression, and has, in fact, benefited greatly from the process of European integration. But in the current complex political environment, it is a key issue for the SNP to think carefully whether it is in the interest of Scotland to adhere to the path of independence.

Li Guanjie said that Brexit will be a key variable affecting Scottish political development. In terms of the time frame,

Britain's official exit from the EU will be in March 2019, the end of the transition period will be at the end of 2020, the new Scottish Parliamentary election will take place in 2021, and the SNP government will experience the whole process of Brexit. The main issue encountered by the Sturgeon government is how to properly handle Scotland's relationship with the UK and the EU. Seen from the current position of the Scottish government, Scotland needs to hold a second independence referendum on the grounds that the political environment of the Scottish independence referendum in 2014 has changed since Brexit. The Scottish people chose to stay in the EU during the Brexit referendum. The Brexit went against the wishes of the Scottish people, so it is necessary to give the Scottish people another opportunity to vote. From the standpoint of the current British government, the most pressing matter of the moment is how to successfully leave the EU while still safeguarding the British national interests. If Scotland holds an independence referendum, it must wait until Brexit has completed. Overall, the opportunity seems to be on the SNP side. On the one hand, Brexit provided the SNP with a reason to promote independence and, in the short term, rekindled the SNP's hope for national independence. On the other hand, to cope with the decline in the number of seats it holds, the SNP must rely on Brexit to fully create new momentum. Therefore, Brexit still will be a key variable affecting Scottish political development in the next few years.

Fu Cong, an associate research fellow at the Institute of European Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, gave a presentation titled “The Scottish Independence Movement in the Context of Brexit.”

Fu pointed out that the separatist movements that aim for national independence usually build people’s support from the three aspects of culture, economy and politics. Culturally speaking, Scottish national identity has been building since the Middle Ages, and it has been maintained even after the country’s union with England. Through common religious beliefs and political and social structures, as well as the national legacy left from the independence wars, the Scottish people shaped their nation-state. Economic factors are also important variables that have affected the outcome of the referendum. First, Thatcher’s de-industrialization policy became a catalyst for the push for Scottish independence to reach its climax; second, the austerity policy promoted by the conservatives since 2010 also made left-wing party supporters in Scotland dissatisfied; third, the Scottish government and the British government have always had conflicts over the distribution of profits from the North Sea oil fields. Politically speaking, the demands for promoting an independence referendum still apply. The demands from the Scottish independence supporters in 2014 mainly included comprehensive economic, social, political, diplomatic and military autonomy, solving the problem of democratic deficit,

and becoming an independent nation-state and a member of the EU. In addition, a new important variable is Scotland's forced exit from the EU in 2016. The Brexit referendum once again highlighted Scotland's democratic deficit and also ruined Scotland's "EU dream." For the Scottish nationalists, Brexit once again proved that, as long as Scotland is still part of the UK, it will always be at risk of having its democratic will rejected. Being forced to leave the EU became Scottish independence supporters' powerful weapon to promote a second referendum.

Fu Cong said that the economic and social governance and party politics in the UK in the post-Brexit era were all variables that should be examined when observing the Scottish independence movement. First of all, in regard of the historical development of the Scottish independence movement, there are two basic motivations that influence Scottish people's support for independence or unity. One is the national identity of Scotland and the other is economic expectations if Scotland were to become independent. The national identity of Scotland has lasted for a thousand years, while its identification with Britain has only continued since the signing of the *Treaty of Union*. Compared with abstract factors such as cultural recognition, economic and social development can be realistically felt and rationally predicted. At present, the UK is in the period of withdrawing from the EU and re-engineering its

development strategy; the economic and social governance performance of both the British government and the Scottish government will have a huge impact on the future direction of Scottish independence. Second, devolution not only is British constitutionalism's response to the evolution of Scottish national ideology but also poses a challenge to UK's future political life. In response to the Scottish separatist movement, the starting point of the constitutional reform with devolution as its core is to adapt to and calm the nationalism of Scotland; however, its constant feedback loop contains within it the potential risks of national disintegration. Third, party politics is an important factor in the development of the Scottish separatist movement. In the Scottish Parliament, the SNP replaced the status of Labor Party, and in the National Assembly, the SNP began to surpass the Labor Party in influence. Generally speaking, the momentum of Scottish nationalism is relatively strong when the conservative party is in power, and tends to be smooth if the Labor Party is in power. The SNP, the Labor Party, and the Conservative Party, as the three most influential parties in Scotland, will form a strong check and balance on Scotland's road to independence.

Finally, the resurgence of Scottish nationalism against the backdrop of Brexit has seen the increase of new supporters in the independence camp, compared to the numbers during the 2014 referendum. At the time of the 2014 independence

referendum, all the British pro-establishment camp members, including major parties, financial institutions, large enterprises and the media, firmly opposed Scottish independence. But this time, after the British decided to leave the EU, both the Scottish Labor Party and Scottish Liberal Democrats supported Sturgeon's directly participating in the Brexit negotiations in order for Scotland to design its own future strategy. In addition, some large financial institutions and multinational companies preferred to see an independent Scotland that successfully entered the EU rather than a UK that exited the EU. Although all these supporters have their own motivations and demands, it is undeniable that they are new variables on Scotland's road to independence and will gain new significance.

Dr. Guo Xiao from the Institute of World Economics and Politics, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, who is also editor of China Social Sciences Press, gave a presentation titled "Two 'Alliances' and the SNP's Choice." He opined that since the establishment of the SNP, its attitude toward European integration has undergone an evolution from "pro-Europe" to "doubting Europe," and then, back to "pro-Europe." As a political party aiming at independence, the SNP's attitude toward Europe fundamentally serves its goal. The SNP regards the UK and Europe as Scotland's two "alliances." In the process of its changing attitude toward Europe, it constantly balances and chooses between its two "alliances" and two identities.

The SNP's standpoint toward Europe has experienced primarily three significant changes. The first change occurred between the establishment of the SNP and the middle 1970s. At the beginning of its establishment, the SNP was the main representative of the anti-European factions within the UK and Scotland. In the 1960s, SNP switched its pro-Europe attitude to hostility and began to question the value of the European integration process. This change led to the SNP casting an opposing vote during the 1975 referendum on whether the UK should remain a member of the European Communities, and attempting to push forward this goal during the 1979 Scottish Devolution Referendum, which resulted in double failures in both the referendum and the election.

The second change occurred during the 1980s till Scotland achieved devolution and the SNP returned to its previous pro-Europe position. In the 1990s, the SNP's attitude toward European integration was basically completed. The guideline of "independence in Europe" was officially established during its campaign in 1992. As for Scottish society, people also began to believe that, if Scotland could become an independent member of the European Community, its interests would be more fully represented; therefore, from this point on, the SNP's "pro-Europe" image was basically set.

The third change occurred after Scottish devolution. The SNP obtained its ruling status, and its position on Europe

changed from being passionately pro-Europe to being more pragmatic. It also basically completed the formulation of its policy framework toward Europe. As the devolution process continued, the SNP underwent a transition from an opposition party to the ruling party. On one hand, this change led it to focus on the governance of Scottish internal affairs; on the other, it prepared Scotland to have mature policy toward Europe. After two referendums, its position toward Europe was further consolidated.

Guo Xiao pointed out that the main factors affecting the three changes were SNP's policy orientation, the development of the UK's domestic politics and the development of European integration. The position and orientation of the SNP in Scottish politics laid the foundation for the choice of its standpoint toward Europe. And the development of domestic politics in the UK and European integration's development caused the SNP to have different understandings over its position and orientation in Scottish politics, which resulted in differences in the SNP's attitudes and positions in different periods. Europe is a strategic tool for SNP to achieve its independence goal.

With the establishment of the "independence in Europe" route, the SNP chose to enhance Scotland's European identity and thus open up a gap with its British identity. For this reason, it chose policies such as being open to immigrants, promoting social inclusion and multiculturalism, thus moving closer to the

EU's value system. During the Scottish independence referendum in 2014, those who supported staying in the UK won the final victory. SNP's first attempt to promote Scottish independence through the referendum ended in failure, but then it won almost all seats in the Scottish Parliament during the 2015 British election, becoming the third largest political party in the UK. In 2016, the Brexit referendum ended with the victory of its supporters. This result constituted a huge threat to the SNP's "independence in Europe" policy. After the referendum, the SNP sought solutions that could help Scotland remain in the EU framework, and the Sturgeon government had to launch another referendum as a bargaining chip to protect Scotland's interests in the Brexit process.

Guo Xiao said that the phenomenon of "anti-globalization" that has frequently appeared in global politics in recent years is actually not a complete veto of globalization, but represents demands for corresponding adjustments from countries toward the problems coming out of regional economic integration and globalization. Some hidden problems and internal paradoxes have gradually emerged: Why does the process of globalization and integration promote the development of regionalism? Why is the process of European supranational integration unable to contain national separatist forces in Europe? Why do separatist parties such as the SNP tend to be pro-Europe, and, to some extent, are even more enthusiastic about European integration

than the countries they are in? He opined that, first of all, the supranational nature of integration and the process of sovereignty transfer pose challenges to traditional national sovereignty; second, the integration process reduces the cost of regionalism; third, the lag in European identity construction in the process of integration provides more discourse space for separatism.

The paradox between integration and separatism will plague the process of European integration for a long time. Particularly, shadowed by populism, the separatists who take a pro-Europe position and accept a European identity on the discourse level have become a force against populism. This subtle situation also has caused the EU to be more cautious in dealing with related issues.

Guo Xiao said that regionalism parties' stronger enthusiasm for European integration and their embrace of values advocated by the EU in practice is undoubtedly valuable for Europe, which is deeply troubled by uncertainty and populism. However, the EU cannot respond effectively to this situation. Intergovernmentalism still seems to be the realistic direction of the EU's progress. Whether it is for the SNP and Scotland, or for the EU and Europe, this is an unavoidable issue and will determine the future of Scotland.

Hu Li, a PhD student in the Department of History at PKU, made the final presentation at the workshop, which she titled

“The SNP’s Plan of ‘Leaving the UK.’” She states that she believes the UK does not want Scotland to leave, and most of the public in Scotland is not willing to “leave the UK.” The biggest cause for the existence of the Scottish independence issue is the SNP itself.

Hu Li said that, in the 300-plus years since the union of England and Scotland in 1707, Scotland has always recognized that it is part of the UK. From this perspective, the problem between Scotland and the UK lies in the relationship between the local and the central government, and, in this case, the local is special, that is, it has a unique recognition of Scottish national identity. In fact, since the rise of the Scottish national movement, from the late 19th and early 20th centuries till now, a certain degree of autonomy has been Scotland’s main appeal, and the British government has put that into practice. In the 1990s, the Blair government once again introduced a devolution policy, the Scottish Parliament was successfully established, and the relationship between Scotland and the UK became relatively moderate. However, the SNP’s advocating of independence destroyed the situation, and the party took advantage of Scotland’s certain need for local autonomy to seize every opportunity to promote its independence plan.

When the SNP was established in 1934, its development goal was changed from the original “independence” to “realizing Scotland’s autonomy so that Scotland can enjoy the

same status as England in the UK, fully exert its advantages and push forward its national development.” However, due to the bleak economic development shortly thereafter, the SNP changed its goal back to “independence” and wrote it into its constitution. Since the 1960s, the SNP has promoted independence by taking advantage of the changing external environment, such as the sluggish development of the British economy, the discovery of oil fields in the North Sea, and changes in social classes. At that time, the SNP’s independence plan was to provoke Scottish national sentiment through deliberate propaganda, so that Scottish national identity would impact on British national identity and thus be used for the SNP’s independence goal. Although it lacked real foundation and rationality, after the hype, the SNP saw huge gains, and the idea of “independence” became known to the public. In the 1980s, the SNP continued to promote independence by taking advantage of the changing external environment.

In addition, after the failure of the Devolution Referendum in 1979, the SNP realized that its independence plan was unlikely to be achieved in Scotland, so that they took a new tack. For example, the SNP refused to participate in the Scottish autonomy movement during this period. But with the Labor Party once again putting devolution on the agenda, SNP changed its stance. On the one hand, it promoted the slogan “from devolution to independence”; on the other, it stood on the side of

the Labor Party during the referendum on establishing the Scottish Parliament in 1997. The SNP's propaganda during this period had the effect of triggering Scottish people's recognition of their national identity, which continued to have impact on their recognition of their British national identity.

In the 21st century, the SNP, based in the Scottish Parliament, intensified its promotion of "splitting with the UK." After the establishment of the Scottish Parliament, the relationship between Scotland and the UK could be understood from two aspects. On the one hand, the parliament partially satisfied Scotland's need for local autonomy. In the ten years, there was no indication that devolution would lead to independence. Instead, there was sign that devolution was constraining the separatist impulse. The poll data also showed that the Scottish people showed no more support for further devolution or independence. On the other, the SNP took every opportunity to take Scotland in the direction of independence. For instance, during the 2007 Scottish parliamentary election, the ruling goals were separated from the independence goal. The SNP alleged that the promotion of independence would only be done through holding referendums, and, if voters voted for the SNP, they would have a government that would best represent Scotland's needs and wishes.

As a result, in 2007, the SNP defeated the Labor Party and formed a minority government. Although the voters did not

choose the SNP because they supported independence, the public kept hearing about the plan of leaving the UK due to the SNP's coming to power. In 2011, the SNP won an absolute majority during the Scottish parliamentary election and regained power, and was determined to launch a "referendum with multiple options." However, the Cameron government realized that most of the Scottish people did not support independence; therefore, approved the launch of an "independence referendum." The SNP further demanded that young people aged 16-17 (70% of the group that supports independence) be given the right to vote, and, thereupon, a referendum was presented to all the people that advocated independence and mobilized the entire Scotland to "leave the UK."

It is worth emphasizing that the result of the 2014 referendum showed, first, that most Scottish people were unwilling to leave the UK, and that independence has always been the ambition of the SNP. From the beginning of the 20th century to the present, no matter how the SNP hyped up independence, that goal lacked a real foundation or rationality; second, the SNP's plan for Scotland's split from the UK has been disguised as a "plan for everyone" with a "legal coating." People seem to have forgotten that a split from the UK is only the plan of the SNP but not the choice of the Scottish people. After Brexit, the SNP asked for a second independence referendum, considering most Scottish people were against

Brexit. But the poll showed that most people did not need or support a second referendum on independence, and the British government also said that it was “not the time.” However, the SNP has already got a firm foothold in Scotland with its party members exceeding 100,000 and possessing abundant funds. In addition, the percentages of pro-independence and anti-independence votes are very close, and the external environment, such as the prospects for Brexit and the development of the UK economy, is full of variables. Under these circumstances, a split from the UK may become a possible choice in the future.

In the discussion session, Chen Xiaolü said that there is a great possibility that Scotland will leave the UK. From the perspective of emotions, although a new referendum was not held, emotional cracks have appeared between the two sides. From the perspective of rationality, the current situation of a possible split is very grim, because the threats Scotland previously faced no longer exist and British people have also begun to feel it doesn't matter whether Scotland leaves or not. Third, there would be large number of job openings after Scottish independence, which could be a factor encouraging a split. Currently, it seems that whether or not British politicians have a strong willingness to pull Scotland back is the key to solving this problem.

Qian Chengdan: I don't think independence is inevitable,

but it is possible that “what was proposed in jest will be fulfilled in earnest.” From an institutional point of view, there are many uncertainties for any referendum on whether or not to leave the UK. For example, some people may not vote for “leaving or not,” but rather for supporting or opposing the people who initiated the referendum; as another example, if the two camps are very close in their rates of support, some objective factors, such as the weather on the day of the vote, may affect the final result. So at present, Scotland’s split from the UK is possible.

Sun Jian: I want to talk about who is taking the initiative in the relationship between England and Scotland. Ever since Scotland and England started to share a common monarch with the Union of the Crowns, in 1603, the initiative for the possible split was taken by England. At that time, England was not willing to unite with Scotland; in 1707, England urgently desired the union both for political stability and for military considerations, and the initiative was also in the hands of England. At present, the initiative of a split or not is still in the hands of the UK. But the UK does not seem to have the will to maintain national unity. I have no idea how the UK will prevent Scotland from leaving in the future.

Gao Dai: Sun Jian opined that the initiative is held by the UK. This is true. However, the fact that the English House of Stuart in 1603 originated from Scotland should be taken into account, and we cannot simply say that England has always

possessed the initiative. Regarding the Scottish Parliament power to hold a referendum, there is a fact that after the 2014 referendum, Westminster has held that there will be no more referendums for the next 10 years, which means that the Scottish Parliament, despite ostensibly possessing various powers, is still subject to Westminster on major issues. Therefore, in the long run, we should consider all possible factors when predicting whether Scotland will leave the UK.

Qian Chengdan: Two of today's speakers used the term “权力下放” (decentralization) when analyzing the relationship between Scotland and the UK. Is this a Chinese item used in the field of political science? Should it be replaced by “分权” (devolution) in Chinese?

Li Guanjie: I think “权力下放” is the more appropriate term because, at that time, the UK and Scotland also discussed whether “decentralization” was a specific thing or a process. Finally, everyone agreed it was a process, and then the British government decentralized some power to the Scottish Parliament.

Qian Chengdan: This is a problem of translation from English into Chinese. The English is “devolution.” This word did not appear in early British history, but only in the phase related to Scotland. It actually refers to a specific phenomenon, which is, Westminster began to pass power to two parts, Scotland and Wales. “Devolution” is only for Scotland and

Wales, and it is not correct to regard devolution as being the same as decentralization.

After the discussion session, Prof. Qian Chengdan, in his summary comments, praised the workshop's excellent presentations and wide-ranging discussions. However, there were still some issues that hadn't yet been mentioned, he said, such as the relationship between the British political parties, politicians, government and the Scottish issue. The Scottish issue is very important. If the UK falls apart, it will bring about a major impact on world structures, which many people haven't yet even begun to consider. Qian said he looked forward in the future to organizing related academic activities to analyze and discuss these topics.