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Secessionist aspirations in Europe. Examples of Catalonia and Scotland

SUMMARY

This dissertation focuses on the ongoing and growing decentralizing tendencies from the beginning of the 21st century observed in some of the European regions, manifesting in direct actions aimed at fulfilling the right of self-determination through secession.

Based on the political philosophy of libertarianism, supported by the methodology of the Austrian School of Economics, at the same time criticizing alternative approaches, two examples portraying theoretical reflections of the issue in question, i.e. secessionist processes in Europe, have been analyzed: Catalonia and Scotland.

The main goal of this study is to show that self-determination is an individual right and, as such, should be granted to various groups of individuals, and should not be limited only to groups called nations. Furthermore, one of the main claims of this dissertation is that historic-cultural conditions, current activity of the Catalan and Scottish political parties, combined with growing decentralizing and secessionist tendencies will eventually result in the creation of new entities on the political map of Europe: Catalonia and Scotland.

In addition, four hypotheses have been verified: 1) we can distinguish primary and secondary conditions determining secessionist tendencies and attitudes in Catalonia and Scotland; 2) The support for the establishment of the Catalan independent Republic, despite short term fluctuations, in the long term will be around 50 per cent among the people of Catalonia; 3) Because of the decision made by the citizens of the United Kingdom to leave the European Union (Brexit), despite the failure of the Scottish independence referendum held on 18th of September 2014, pro-independence attitudes among the people of Scotland will stay strong, being one of the reasons to make the case for the second independence referendum; 4) There is a cause and effect relationship between the economic situation in Catalonia and Scotland and both level and magnitude of Catalan and Scottish demands for secession.

The author tries to answer several pertinent questions in this context, such as: What is the significance of historical, cultural, economic or internal political factors for Catalan and Scottish secessionist tendencies? Do any of them have profound significance? What is the Catalan and Scottish societies' opinion on the future of their countries and which are the preferred models of a future State according to their opinion? What kind of activities aimed at implementing the secessionist scenario are undertaken by the Catalan and Scottish public and

Keywords: secession, self-determination, autonomy, Catalonia, Scotland, libertarianism, enclavization

Wrocław, 15th of May 2018

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kulig', is positioned below the date. The signature is fluid and cursive.