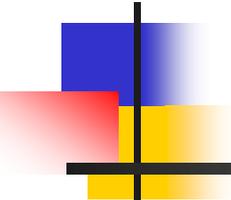


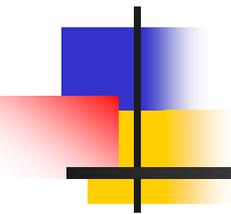
International Conference
Scottish and Welsh Devolution, 1966-1999
Université de Rouen, 19-20 January 2007



Paolo Dardanelli
University of Kent

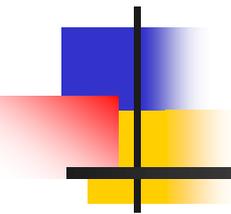
UK Devolution and Europe

19 January 2007



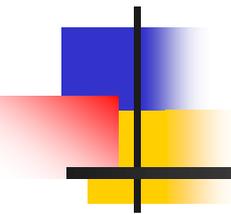
Overview

- Introduction
- Scottish and Welsh attitudes to the EU in the 1970s
- EU and devolution in the 1970s
- The 1980s turnaround
- Scottish and Welsh attitudes to the EU in the 1990s
- EU and devolution in the 1990s
- Assessing the impact of the EU on devolution
- Looking into the future
- Conclusions



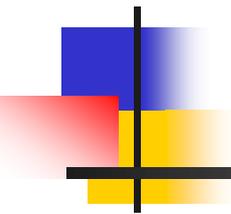
1 Introduction

- Explore the connection between European integration and the politics of devolution in the UK
- Context: broader debate about European integration and demands for regional self-government
- Attitudes to the EU and impact of EU on politics of devolution
- Comparison between 1970s and 1990s – focus on referendums - and a look to the future
- Main focus on Scotland and reference to Wales when latter's experience different



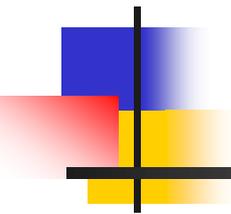
2 Attitudes to the EU in the 1970s

- UK joined EU in 1973 but hostility still widespread; eg 1975 referendum
- Elite positions: Liberals, Conservatives, business in favour; Labour, Nationalists, trade unions hostile
- Hostility deeper in Scotland and Wales than in England; eg patterns of voting in the referendum
- Why?
 - Labour dominance and strong trade unions
 - Nationalists' view of integration
 - Specific policies; eg agriculture, fishing
- EU seen as 'negative extension' of the UK by Nationalists
- Elite opinion largely matched by mass opinion



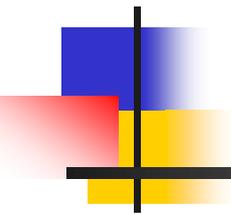
3 EU and devolution in the 1970s

- Support for devolution associated with hostility to the EU; former perceived as running counter to the latter
- The pro-devolution camp did not exploit the European dimension in their strategies
- Interaction effect:
 - SNP committed to withdrawal from the EU
 - Devolution seen as paving the way to secession
 - Elite and mass opinion very hostile to independence
- Taking into account non voters, result truly a rejection in 1979, despite 60% support as 40% of supps voted No
- No Europeanisation led to defeat of devolution
- No interaction effect in Wales but some patterns replicated



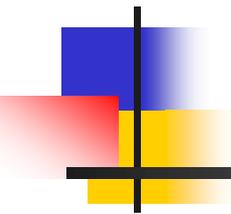
4 The 1980s turnaround

- Centre-left opinion, dominant in Scotland, turned positive on economic integration based on market liberalisation
- EU developed policies - such as social policy, the structural funds and subsidiarity - closer to the preferences of the median Scottish voter while the UK abandoned them
- The SNP adopted the policy of 'independence in Europe'
- 'Europe of the Regions' discourse
- Support for minority languages by Council of Europe
- 1988 the key year
 - Single market programme got going
 - Social dimension added; structural funds doubled
 - Thatcher's Bruges speech



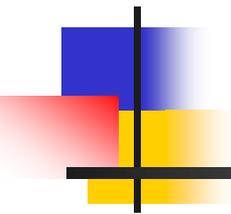
5 Attitudes to the EU in the 1990s

- Dramatic reversal compared to 1970s but divisions lingering on
- Elite positions: Liberals, Labour, Nationalists, trade unions in favour
- Conservatives, business divided: pro single market but against social dimension and heavy regulation
- Scotland and Wales now more pro-EU than England
 - Labour and trade unions change
 - Nationalist change
- EU seen as 'positive alternative' to the UK by Nationalists
- Elite opinion largely matched by mass opinion



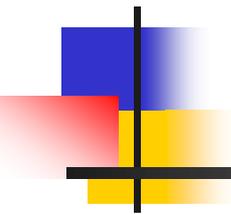
6 EU and devolution in the 1990s

- Support for devolution associated with pro-EU position; former perceived as going hand in hand with the latter
- The pro-devolution camp exploited the European dimension in their strategies; SNP made it central
- No interaction effect:
 - SNP committed to 'Independence in Europe'
 - Devolution still seen as linked to secession
 - Elite, mass opinion much less hostile to independence
 - Independence within the EU preferred to status quo
- Only 7% of supporters of self-government voted No
- Europeanisation neutralised 'interaction effect' and led to endorsement of devolution
- 'Europe of the Regions' discourse also influential in Wales



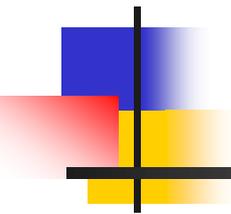
7 Assessing the impact of the EU

- No impact in the 1970s but a powerful one in the 1990s
- Many variables remained almost constant between 1979 and 1997; devolution down but independence up
- Direct impact on support for devolution
 - More EU powers reduced costs of access to UK centre
 - Subsidiarity gave normative justification
 - Need for representation in Brussels
 - 'Europe of the Regions' discourse
- Indirect impact on support for independence
 - Guarantee of markets and regulation
 - Political continuity lowered costs of separation
 - EU framework made 'state' better than 'region'



8 Looking into the future

- EU framework continues to be important to the 'devolved' UK
- But devolution has not brought about that sea change in European affairs that some hoped for
- 'Europe of the Regions' discourse has lost a lot of its shine and regions have not increased their power since Maastricht
- But EU dimension still central to SNP discourse > recent polls point to rise in support for independence
- Legal question of EU membership for an independent Scotland still unclear; some believe it will need to apply



9 Conclusions

- European integration did not create the demand for devolution but it was a facilitator
- What changed between the 1970s and 1990s was not so much the deepening of integration as the change of attitudes and perceptions
- Indirect impact stronger in Scotland, direct impact stronger in Wales
- Impact is greatest if there is a perceived 'misfit' between EU and a state; EU seen as a positive alternative
- Generalisations: some patterns of UK devolution replicated elsewhere but many unique features