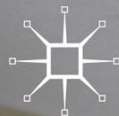


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Edited by

Godfrey Baldacchino

*Canada Research Chair (Island Studies), University of Prince Edward Island, Canada*

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# Foreword

## Island or Continent?

Philip E. Steinberg

‘Island or continent?’ This is the first utterance of the engineer Cyrus Harding in Jules Verne’s *The Mysterious Island* (1875), when he wakes up from a coma on a barren beach after the crash of his hot-air balloon.

His fellow castaways, who arrived ashore conscious and thus, by the time they found Harding, have had some time to reflect on their situation, fail to comprehend why their companion is consumed with getting an answer to this burning enquiry. At first, they are bemused by what they take to be an expression of Harding’s scientific curiosity: “‘Island or continent!’ To think of that, when at one’s last gasp! What a man!”, remarks the sailor Pencroft. Later, however, as Harding continues to obsess on this seemingly academic question, his colleagues become irritated, wishing that the engineer would devote his problem-solving faculties to what they believe to be more pressing needs. As the still enfeebled Harding leads the group up a 1,200-m mountain to ascertain whether or not the land on which they have found themselves is surrounded by water, Pencroft persistently, but unsuccessfully, tries to prod him to address questions of more practical import, such as how to start a fire.

It soon emerges, however, that Harding’s question is not simply one of idle curiosity. It is also a profoundly *social* question. Whether or not the place on which they have landed is an island will have a significant impact on the kind of society that they will be able to (or need to) establish there. Harding therefore holds that before anything else one must first answer this fundamental socio-geographic question: island or continent? As Harding explains to his companions, if the desolate beach on which they have landed is connected to the mainland, they need to concentrate only on finding a settlement, from which they can rejoin mainstream society. If, however, they are on an island, and if that island was previously uninhabited, then the five survivors have no choice but to form a new polity there, a society with all the

political institutions and social technologies that will enable survival and (hopefully) prolonged habitation.

And thus, through the character of Cyrus Harding, Verne reproduces a well-established trope wherein the morphology of the island is meta-physically linked with that of the state. Both the ideal of the island and that of the state suggest a bounded, permanent wholism among fundamentally equivalent but entirely independent units (Gillis 2004, Steinberg 2005). As a result, the island has come to represent the ideal state-form. The island is the most blatant manifestation of John Agnew's (1994) 'territorial trap', in which the boundaries define the territory and the territory (the insides of the boundaries) defines the nation, creating a situation in which the state-territory is taken as the starting point, rather than the ending point, of social analysis. When state boundaries are presented as natural (which is an exceptionally easy argument to make in the case of island states), the legitimacy of the nation as an organic, unified body is enhanced (Sahlins 1989). Moreover, the synchronisation of state boundaries with seemingly natural borders makes it impossible to comprehend domestic, cross-border or extra-territorial social dynamics as anything other than *subsequent* to the formation of national societies, identities and policies.

And yet, as Verne makes clear, this association between the state and the island which appears so straightforward and simplistic is, in fact, quite variable, in large part because there are varying degrees of both stateness and islandness. Neither the category of 'island' nor that of 'state' is absolute; nor is either of the two stable in time or space, notwithstanding ideological pretensions to the contrary. As Harding elaborates, even if he and his fellow castaways are on an island, they may not be truly separated from the rest of society, since the island may or may not be inhabited. It also may be part of an archipelago, which would impact the degree to which any society forming there would be connected with its neighbours, or it may be close to an adjacent mainland. Indeed, the castaways had already landed on one tiny islet, which they named Safety Island, from which they had made their way onto the island 'mainland' where they were now pondering their future. They also are aware that their isolation would be greatly reduced were the island proximate to global shipping lanes. And even if they could make a determination about just how isolated they were on the island, this condition would not necessarily be permanent. During the course of the book, Harding uses his civil engineering skills to construct an island on the island, so as to better protect their settlement from invaders. Thus we learn that islands can exist within islands, adding another dimension

to degrees of islandness, and that they can be manufactured. The temporal dimension of islandness is further revealed at the end of the book, when a volcanic eruption sends the entire island tumbling into the sea.

The degree of statehood sought by the islanders (once they determine that they are, in fact, islanders) is not straightforward either. Alternately devoting their talents towards improving the place where they have found themselves and towards returning to the land that they had left, the castaways' love/hate relationship with the island that they have made into their home produces an increasing tension throughout the book. In the end, they choose neither to remain permanently on the island nor to leave it. Rather, the castaways – Northern soldiers and sympathisers who had fled in a stolen hot-air balloon from a Confederate prison camp during the US Civil War – plan to deliver the newly settled land to the United States of America.

Thus, they construct an island that is both isolated and connected, stable and ephemeral, a space of escape but also reintegration. The culmination of the island's settlement and its construction as a distinct, inhabited place – a permanent community – is not to be isolation but rather cession into a broader world. In other words, even as the castaways (who prefer to call themselves 'colonists') seek to extend a nationalist narrative that constructs states according to the model of the idealised island – unified, indivisible and stable in time and space while being developed and made into territory by individuals who are naturally connected with the land – they contribute to the construction of an entity that defies this ideal: the expansionist, rootless empire. Although not commented on by Verne, the island's very potential existence as a far-flung dependency of the United States, settled by an immigrant population, echoes the origin myth of the United States. In both cases, the polity affirms the general principle of the territorial nation-state while disassembling the romantic – and insular – ideal in which the state form naturally arises amidst self-evident borders wherein blood and soil are intrinsically connected.

\* \* \*

'Islands', writes John Gillis (2004), are 'good to think with.' They have also been good to *work* with. And much of the work that has been performed on islands has involved state-building. But, as the chapters in this volume show – and as is also illustrated in *The Mysterious Island* – the states that are created on islands are not simply realisations of (or models for) the unified, bounded territories of nationalist fantasy. One

can indeed draw a through-line from the representations of islands in Renaissance-era isolarios and portolan charts to the idealised states of 19th- and 20th-century nation-builders (Steinberg 2005). However, the connections between island *life* and state *practice* (and national *identity*) are more complicated (e.g. Clifford 2001, Fog Olwig 1993). For if, to quote Gillis again, ‘no island is an island’, then it is also the case that no state is a state (see, for instance, Abrams 1988, Biersteker and Weber 1996, Der Derian and Shapiro 1989, Krasner 1993, Mitchell 1999, Painter 2006, Ruggie 1993). The state-ideal, like the island-ideal, is invariably complicated by real divisions and connections, *between* and *within* territories. Thus, just as the island exemplifies the properties that we expect in the insular state, it also presents all of the problems inherent in the realisation of this ideal: boundaries are not natural, individuals are not self-evidently and timelessly associated with specific points in space, the organisation of space is not unchanging and timeless, and the existence of states does not predate their interaction (and re-constitution) within a global political (and, more broadly, socio-economic) system. From offshore banking havens to corporate-managed island tourism resorts (or detention centres), islands simultaneously reproduce the power dynamics of the state system while challenging the socio-spatial imaginary of absolute, equivalent spaces with sharply defined insides and outsides that underpins the legitimacy of its constitutive states. By reproducing, in an extreme form, the wholistic, independent foundation of the modern territorial state, island states reinforce that ideal. However, because they invariably end up straying from that ideal, island states also lead one to question the ideal’s correspondence with reality.

In this context, islands that are divided into multiple states are revealing counter-examples. Divided islands are sites at which accepted associations and definitions are explicitly and, when mapped, graphically questioned. They thereby challenge us to question the ideal of insularity (in all senses of the term) that lies behind the modern notion of territorial statehood. A divided island is not just an affront to the map; it is an affront to the naturalisation of the territorially delimited nation state.

\* \* \*

To explore the power of the divided island as a destabilising counter-example, this book presents 11 revealing case studies. But, before leaving the reader to peruse these, I want to return to *The Mysterious Island*.

As the colonists find their way around their new home, they set about naming its landmarks, a 'ceremony of possession' frequently practised by conquering forces (Seed 1995):

The island was spread out under [the colonists'] eyes like a map, and [the colonists] had only to give names to all its angles and points. Gideon Spilett would write them down, and the geographical nomenclature of the island would be definitely adopted.

In the fashion of colonial conquerors, they name most features after the heroes of the country for whom they claim their island home: Washington Bay, Mount Franklin, Lake Grant and, of course, Lincoln Island.

In *The Mysterious Island*, however, the colonists slowly realise that they do not have complete dominion over their territory; the island of their refuge, it turns out, is also a divided space, notwithstanding the castaways' attempts to name and thereby unify it as a singular, indivisible, socio-natural organism. Unlike the divided islands considered in the subsequent chapters of this book, however, the division of *this* island is more vertical than horizontal. While the American colonists control the surface, the island's subterranean (and submarine) space is controlled by the mysterious Captain Nemo. As is revealed in *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea* (Verne 1870), as well as *The Mysterious Island*, Captain Nemo has his own complex relationship with the ideals, and spaces, of statehood. Through his adventures, Nemo challenges the ideal of territorial statehood as he seeks to create an international republic of the seas. All the while, he obsesses on the concept of national identity and, seemingly in contradiction with his internationalist goals, he plunders shipwrecks to aid national liberation struggles (for further discussion of Captain Nemo's, and Verne's, politics, see Chesneaux 1972, Steinberg 2001).

Nemo's complex (but very American) political ideology that fuses national pride with distrust of territorial absolutism aligns well with the colonists' goal of using the island's apparent unity to facilitate ceremonies of possession that culminate with an act of cession to a distant nation to which the colonists claim an even deeper allegiance. And indeed, Nemo endorses the colonists' plan. This redirecting of island territorial nationalism towards a 'higher' goal, however, is unusual. In most cases, island nationalists not only remain close to the ideals of territorial nationalism wherein borders define the limits (as well as the idealised homogeneity and naturalism) of the nation, but the stark and

apparently self-evident dividing line between land and sea is used to emphasise the concordance between nation, territory and state. In such instances, divided islands become problematic.

And yet, as this book makes clear, they persist. In so doing, they challenge national leaders and the islands' inhabitants to question the ideal of the state as natural and absolute with primal boundaries between inside and outside. They also challenge islanders to find new modes of accommodation amidst the community of nations. These, it turns out, are precisely the challenges that Captain Nemo, with his complex blend of pacifism, anarchism, nationalism and cosmopolitanism, brings to those he encounters as he roams beneath the seas. While it is unlikely that the leaders of any of the divided islands profiled in this book view themselves as following in the footsteps (or the wake) of Captain Nemo, they face a similar challenge: how to reproduce the legitimacy of statehood and the moral imperative of nationhood while defying what would appear to be the paradigmatic example of its central representation – the naturally bounded, insular territory?

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# Preface and Acknowledgements

To even think about editing a book on such a quirky and specialised topic as this one requires some insight, and some steely nerves. I owe much of the inspiration for the project to my colleague and friend Stephen A. Royle, professor of island geography at Queen's University Belfast, Northern Ireland. It was his few paragraphs and a suggestive map in his excellent 2001 book *A Geography of Islands* that introduced me to the world's divided islands as a potential conceptual category for the first time, and planted a little seed in my mind. Dr Royle is himself from a divided island, and he honours us with his fine chapter on the island of Ireland in this book. His guided tour of the different Republican/Catholic and Protestant/Unionist strongholds in his city of Belfast was the highlight of my visit there in 2009.

Then there were my visits to the island of Cyprus. One coordinated by my colleague Dr Klitos Symeonides, a Greek Cypriot who lived in Kythrea before he had to escape south in the face of advancing Turkish troops in 1974: a portrait of his house in what he now calls 'occupied Cyprus' hangs in his living room. Another visit following an invitation to an international conference organised by the Eastern Mediterranean University in Gazimağusa/Famagusta, and which included a dinner meeting with long-time Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktaş, a divisive figure. There were my own attempts to make sense of 'the Cyprus question' and to offer some suggestions for a possible way forward. Certainly from the Greek Cypriot perspective, the island was/is not meant to be divided.

There was also the interesting methodology used to good effect by Jared Diamond, where he referred to the divided island of Hispaniola to argue for the manner in which environmental governance and public policy decisions can and do lead to completely different resource management cultures, physical landscapes and economic development trajectories. The difference between Haiti and the Dominican Republic is so clear as to be visible in photographs taken from orbiting satellites. I dabbled in a similar methodology – where so many aspects can be assumed to be constant between the two polities other than that they belong to, or comprise, different states – in profiling, with Léo Paul Dana, the contrasting tenor of entrepreneurship in Dutch Sint Maarten versus French Saint-Martin.



I kept the idea on the proverbial backburner, but would habitually bring this up in various dialogues and presentations; those cynical about the seriousness of taking islands as a rigorous conceptual category would struggle in trying to explain why, in spite of there being literally thousands of inhabited islands in the world, there are so very few of them that are divided. It was a conversation piece that lent itself to a quiz question: so, how many of the world's inhabited islands that are divided between more than one country can you name? (No one has as yet been able to name them all to me.) But the subject matter had the potential to lend itself to something much more sustained. And so, on 20 February 2011, the morning after a public lecture at the University of Tasmania, Hobart, Australia – I was at that time a visiting professor to its School of Geography and Environmental Studies while on sabbatical from my employer, the University of Prince Edward Island, Canada – and after the matter of divided islands had yet again turned up on one of my slides, I matter-of-factly told Anna, my wife: I am going to (have to) start a new book.

I was full of optimism in embarking on this enterprise, comforted by the knowledge that I had a fairly extensive international network of island studies scholars. What I had not bargained for was the difficulty in finding suitable chapter contributors who could critically and sympathetically represent two different points of view (or even three). And then, even if they could be identified, they had to be willing, they had to be available and they had to be able to write, and write well, in English. No wonder that a book on the world's divided islands had not yet been written.

Finding a publisher proved almost uneventful, since I targeted Palgrave Macmillan and its cutting-edge series on International Political Economy from the outset as my publisher of choice. I had already had the privilege of contributing a chapter to another book that has appeared in this series, and I very much enjoyed the experience and the quality of the end product. I owe the proverbial mountain of gratitude to Tim Shaw, series commissioning editor with Palgrave Macmillan, for seeing both merit and a goodness of fit in my proposal; from then on, I was in safe hands, shepherded by my editor Christina Brian, her administrative support, Amanda McGrath, and project manager Chérline Daniel.

The sequence of the book chapters presented another challenge: in what order to lay out the chapters? By island size? By island population? By the amount of time each has spent divided? Even a simple alphabetical order was fraught with controversy, particularly because

some islands have more than one name, and having to choose one over another might easily offend. I eventually decided to go by geographical cluster: first, the three cases that involve Indonesia (New Guinea, Borneo with Sebatik, Timor); then, the three cases drawn from Europe (Ireland, Cyprus, Usedom/Uznam); and third, the three cases from the American continent (Hispaniola, St. Martin/Sint Maarten, Tierra del Fuego); keeping for last the very latest (and barely inhabited) island to be divided, and the only such example from the set that is a river island (Bolshoi Ussuriiski/Teixihazi). The last case is also particular in the rich details it provides on the process of partition and ensuing developments to construct a viable borderscape. I thank Professor Akihiro Iwashita, the author of this chapter, for the permission to reproduce the map in his chapter, on page 222. Finally, considering that the division of islands is a work in progress, I have added a 'what if?' taste to the collection by throwing in for good measure a contribution about what could be the world's 11th inhabited divided island after 2014: none less than Great Britain, courtesy of Ray Burnett.

I also wish to thank Ronald J. May and Stephen A. Royle for critically commenting on an earlier draft of the editorial introduction to this text, Tozun Bahcheli for reviewing the Cyprus chapter, and JoDee Samuelson for lending me her *Popeye* comic strip publication. Of course, the usual disclaimers apply.

The map of the world, showing the general location of each case and its basic geographical details, has been kindly prepared by Maura Pringle, formerly at the School of Geography, Archaeology and Palaeoecology, Queen's University Belfast, Northern Ireland, United Kingdom.

# Acronyms

AD	Anno Domini
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ANGAU	Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit
APODETI	<i>Associação Popular Democrática Timorense</i>
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BDA	Border Development Authority
BdV	<i>Bund der Vertriebenen</i>
CARIFORUM	The Caribbean Forum
CBA	<i>Criminaliteitsbeeldanalyse</i>
CESFRONT	<i>Cuerpo Especializado de Seguridad Fronteriza Terrestre</i>
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
COM	<i>Collectivité d'outre-mer</i>
DAP	<i>Dewan Adat Papua</i>
DR	Dominican Republic
DR-CAFTA	Dominican Republic-Central America United States Free Trade Agreement
EC	European Commission
EOKA	<i>Ethniki Organosis Kyprion Agoniston</i>
EU	European Union
FLNKS	<i>Front de Libération Nationale Kanak et Socialiste</i>
FoE	Future of England
FRETILIN	<i>Frente Revolucionária do Timor-Leste Independente</i>
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
FTF	Frequent Traveller Facility
GB	Great Britain
GC	<i>Groupe de travail sur la Compétitivité</i>
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GDR	German Democratic Republic
GNP	Gross National Product
HMS	His/Her Majesty's Ship
HNP	Haitian National Police
IADB	Inter-American Development Bank
ICG	International Crisis Group

IFJ	International Federation of Journalists
IHSI	<i>Institut Haïtien de Statistique et d'Informatique</i>
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INTERREG	Innovation and Environment: Regions of Europe Sharing Solutions
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
IPE	International Political Economy
IPPR	Institute for Public Policy Research
IRA	Irish Republican Army
LME	Liberal Market Economy
LNG	Liquefied Natural Gas
LPG	Liquefied Petroleum Gas
MINUSTAH	United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti
MP	Member of Parliament
MRP	<i>Majelis Rakyat Papua</i>
MSG	Melanesian Spearhead Group
NAQIA	National Agriculture Quarantine and Inspection Authority
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPD	<i>Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands</i>
OAS	Organization of American States
OLIPPAC	Organic Law on the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates
OPM	<i>Organisasi Papua Merdeka</i>
OTSUS	<i>Otonomi Khusus</i>
PHARE	Poland and Hungary: Assistance for Restructuring their Economies
PICTA	Pacific Island Countries Trade Agreement
PLB	<i>Pas Lintas Batas</i>
PMV	Private Motor Vehicle
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PNGDF	Papua New Guinea Defence Force
PRC	People's Republic of China
RDTL	<i>República Democrática de Timor-Leste</i>
RoC	Republic of Cyprus
SABL	Special Agriculture and Business Lease
SBA	Sovereign Base Area
SCIS	Scottish Centre for Island Studies
SNP	Scottish National Party
TKI	<i>Tenaga Kerja Indonesia</i>

TMT	<i>Türk Mukavement Teşkilatı</i>
TNI	<i>Tendrasa Nasional Indonesia</i>
TRNC	Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus
UBB	<i>Usedomer Bäderbahn</i>
UDI	Unilateral Declaration of Independence
UDT	<i>União Democrática Timorense</i>
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN-ECLA	United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNFICYP	United Nations Force in Cyprus
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNSG	UN Secretary-General
UNTEA	United Nations Temporary Executive Authority
UP4B	<i>Unit Percepatan Pembangunan Papua dan Papua Barat</i>
US	United States
USA	United States of America
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
UVF	Ulster Volunteer Force
VOC	<i>Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie</i>
VoC	Varieties of Capitalism
WHO	World Health Organisation
WSP	West Sepik Province

# Contributors

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(2010), based on her PhD research on these islands that are divided by a political border.

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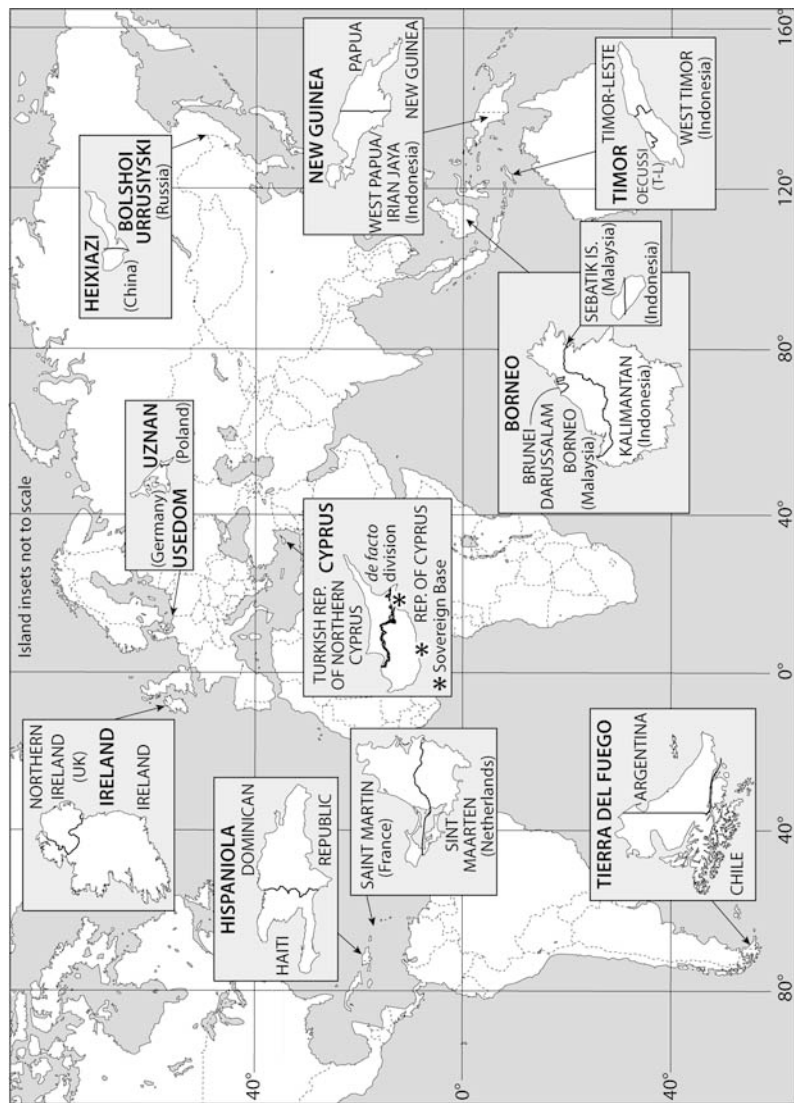
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Map P.1 The World's Only Inhabited Divided Islands: Names and Locations

# 1

## Only Ten: Islands as Uncomfortable Fragmented Polities

*Godfrey Baldacchino*

### The setting

The existence of multiple jurisdictions on distinct continental spaces raises no eyebrows. There are 54 countries in Africa, 50 countries in Europe, 44 in Asia, 23 in North and Central America and 12 in South America. Nor do we habitually consider Africa, North America or South America (let alone Eurasia) as islands, even though – since the carving of the Suez and Panama canals – they would each qualify as pieces of land surrounded by water. Perhaps that is because a continent is often deemed too large to be considered an island. But there is another truism to be considered: that an island deserves a unitary polity. Islands are such special places that they should only be run by, and as, a single administration. How else could one explain Australia, not exactly a small territory, being called an island continent? If Australia is successfully conceptualised as an island – apart from being a continent – this may result not so much by virtue of its size – which is considerable, since it is almost as large as Europe – but by virtue of the fact that it has been, since January 1901, a single country (McMahon 2010).

It is true that there are various practical and logical conveniences in having an island administered as a single political unit. Discrete pieces of land separated by stretches of water from mainlands are difficult to administer from afar, by ‘remote control’, without a modicum of local administration. There is therefore a logistical tendency and preference for an island to be self-administered, especially if distant from its metropolitan power (Peckham 2003: 503). But, there also seems to be some difficulty – conceptual, political, emotional, imaginary and symbolic – with accommodating more than one sovereign state on the same island space.

Even the hugely popular cartoon fictional character *Popeye the Sailor Man* finds himself embroiled on a divided island. In 'Chapter III: The Great Rough-House War', Popeye is unwittingly recruited on behalf of King Blozo and the Nazilian Army to lead the fight against 'the cowardly Tonsylanians' led by King Gargileo (Segar 1931/2007: 32). The 'great war' is unfolding on the Addynoid Islands, and the map shows a bare, oval-shaped Pacific island neatly divided by a straight line between the two warring kingdoms (*ibid.*). The subject matter is clearly humorous – all the names are contrived from the human nose and mouth region – but there is apparently, even in the world of cartoon strips, no better or more poignant way to dramatise a division than by having two warring factions living cheek by jowl on the same, small piece of land in the middle of a vast ocean. The dispute is suggested to be a petty affair, and its unfolding on the same small and remote island adds to its overall insignificance. Jonathan Swift might have done even better to emulate this example and locate Lemuel Gulliver's adventures in Lilliput and Blefuscu on the same island, rather than have two distinct warring island kingdoms, separated by an 800-yard channel (Swift 1726: part I).

There are many islands and archipelagos in the material world, and in some cases they are subject to the competing claims of various regional powers. Consider Mayotte in the Indian Ocean (contested between France and the Comoros); Hans Island/Tartupaluk in the Nares Strait (claimed by both Canada and Greenland/Denmark); Iturup and Kunashir Islands, in the Kurile Group (occupied by Russia but claimed by Japan); and Dokdo/Takeshima (claimed by both Japan and South Korea); and the 250-or-so islands in the South China Sea, including the Spratly Islands, for which claims have been submitted by no less than six countries. However, what is striking here is that, in all these and other cases, the submitted claims for sovereignty are usually to *whole* islands, not to parts thereof. 'In fact, only very rarely are islands divided between nation states' (Royle 2001: 150). There are today *only ten* inhabited islands whose territory is divided amongst two or more countries. (Or 11, if one adds Sebatik Island, alongside Borneo.)

## Islands as absolute spaces

But an island is a naturally closed entity. Its shoreline is the boundary of the bubble separating it from the rest of the world. And then impose a human-made barrier on an island? What is the meaning of isolation – a word derived, in fact, from the Latin for 'island' – if you have to share it with someone else?

(Jacobs 2012)

Islands, like the maps that frame them, present themselves as absolute spaces. They are easily imaginable wholes; they are not arbitrary (Jepson 2006: 158). Being geographically defined, and often imagined as circular, an island is easier to hold, to own, to manage or to manipulate, to embrace and to caress. Is this part of the reason why so many islands are self-contained jurisdictions? Just as much as anyone finding oneself on, or close to, an island finds early on a craving to circumnavigate, circumambulate or climb its highest point and 'take it all in' (e.g. Baum 1993: 21, Redfield 2000). A drawn island thus tends to fit quite nicely onto a sheet of paper. Is it their boundedness and separation that make islands so attractive to fantasy and mythology? Their beguilingly simple form – often perceived to approximate a circle, that perfect shape – makes the exercise easier, as well as somehow more perfect (Baldacchino 2005a). Utopia, Thomas More's perfect commonwealth, had to be located on a befittingly 'just right' island space: it was enisled, cut away from its original peninsula (More 1516).

The reference to Utopia, and its deliberate islanding, reminds us that islands are also sites for thinking about how to govern; about changing understandings of territory, security and sovereignty (Baldacchino 2010). Islands represent quintessential platforms for nation states: they are delineated spaces and discrete bounded territories that are at once knowable and, because of their consolidated, readily defensible form, also function as ideal embodiments of the state's relationship to the nation (Peckham 2003: 503). Such a finite and self-evident island geography smoothens the nurturing of a sense of identity that is contiguous with territory (Anckar 2005, Baldacchino 2005b, Srebrnik 2004). Perhaps this condition is one strong explanation for the existence of such few islands in the world today that are divided between more than one country. The political map of the world ushered in after the Treaties of Westphalia (1648) abhors divided islands: countries, and nations, on continents may be carved up by politicians in various ways, and often driven by expediency or compromise; but countries on islands are fashioned by God and/or Nature, and are not – or should not – as easily to be tampered with. To reach such a conclusion is to fall into the 'territorial trap': uncritically accepting the notion of territory as embedded in modernist ideas about the state as a fixed unit of sovereign, material space (Agnew 1994).

The elimination of divided islands in recent centuries has indeed proceeded hand in hand with the march of the richly imagined nation state as the default jurisdiction of choice. Prior to the age of the nation state, islands have often been divided: islands such as Sicily (now part of Italy)

and Euboea (now part of Greece) were long divided amongst several city states; Tasmania (now part of Australia) was divided between various indigenous tribes prior to European colonisation; mainland Australia itself was effectively run as a series of separate colonies before 1901. Islands such as Corsica (now part of France), Efate (Vanuatu), Elba (Italy), Long Island (New York, USA), Newfoundland (Canada), Sakhalin (Russia), Sardinia (Italy), St Kitts (St Kitts-Nevis), Ternate (Indonesia) and Tobago (Trinidad and Tobago) may now each be territories of single countries, but they have all spent periods of their history as divided places. Until as late as 2008, Sri Lanka was a de facto divided jurisdiction, with the separatist Tamil Eelam coexisting with the official state. Mindanao, in the Philippines, remains in a similar predicament, with a well-entrenched separatist Muslim movement – the Moro Islamic Liberation Front – in control of a significant part of the island. Perhaps the best-known example of a long-divided island that became a single sovereign state in 1707 via ‘Acts of Union’ is Britain: a union, however, whose days may be numbered if Scotland votes ‘yes’ in an independence referendum due in 2014.

That the status of divided islands is problematic or uncomfortable is also evidenced by the tensions that have historically existed between many of those states that find themselves sharing the same island space. Most of the divided islands showcased in this collection spent some time as a single political entity, even if (as in the case of Borneo and Timor) for a few years as Japanese-occupied territories during the Second World War. In other cases – Bolshoi Ussuriiski/Heixiazhi, Cyprus, Hispaniola/Quesqueya, Ireland, Tierra del Fuego, Usedom/Uznam and again Timor – one or more of the concerned powers, or constituent organisations thereof, would have coveted (or even controlled, for some time) the whole island, and would typically have tried to either prevent or undo its division, arguing that unification offered a ‘better’ and a more ‘natural’ status. And, in most cases, nationalism and politics apart, there are today serious attempts at crafting transnational economic zones of cooperation from which both sides seek to benefit, even if just to reduce dangerously high border tensions. Indeed, divided islands often have a *sui generis* trans-border political economy, which is what much of this book is about.

## **Islands and idiosyncratic governance practices**

Recent history continues to throw up examples of political exceptionalism, and islands are very well represented.

The uninhabited island continent of **Antarctica** is one such place: geography and serendipity have delivered it to the modern world in a shape that has somehow reconciled the traditional states-based rivalry over rights and duties on an entire continent, where a few claimed territorial prerogatives, others denied these in principle or detail, and most of the globe was denied standing at all. Its 20th-century model of governance – the Antarctic Treaty System – remains idiosyncratic; what is more worrying is that it is becoming fragile as states become even more aggressive in extending their territorial rights in search of lucrative mineral deposits (Hemmings et al. 2012).

From the 17th through the late 19th centuries, **Svalbard** (also known as Spitzbergen), in the Arctic Circle, hosted only seasonal habitation by European and Russian whalers. In 1906, the American-owned Arctic Coal Company founded the first permanent settlement, the town of Longyearbyen, which was soon sold to Norway's Store Norske coal company. This permanent Norwegian presence was, perhaps, a fateful circumstance: the Spitsbergen Treaty, signed following the First World War, granted Norway sovereignty over the islands; nevertheless, the treaty's other signatory states could undertake economic (mainly mining) activities on the islands, and the territory was partially demilitarised. Thus, for most of the 20th century, human settlement in the Svalbard archipelago primarily took the form of coal mining company towns operated by Norway and USSR/Russia. Today, Longyearbyen is a multinational town, featuring a fledgling local democracy that at times clashes with the archipelago-wide jurisdiction exercised by the Norwegian-appointed governor (Grydehøj et al. 2012).

Until 1975 part of the four-island French Overseas Territory of the Comoros, **Mayotte** voted to remain French, thanks largely to manoeuvres by the Paris government, while the other three islands declared independence unilaterally, but on behalf of all four (Newitt 1984). The UN accepted the new state as consisting of all four islands. Since then the dispute has dragged on. The Comoros has meanwhile been battling internal secessionist tendencies and opted for a federal structure to try and assuage these. In 2011, Mayotte became a French overseas region-department (and the only one with a significantly Muslim population); it will probably become an EU Overseas Region in 2014. France justifies and seeks to build legitimacy for its continued 'occupation' of Mayotte by writing a historical narrative which detaches Mayotte from the other islands (Muller 2012).

**Tuvalu** (formerly Ellice Islands) had the unique experience of separating from the Gilbert and Ellice Islands by agreement before

independence. As the British colonial administrators introduced representative institutions from the 1970s, tensions developed between Micronesian Gilbertese, resenting disproportionate Ellice success in the civil service, and the Polynesian Ellice Islanders sensing their permanent minority status in the legislature. After a thorough report in 1973 and a referendum in 1974, British officials still doubted whether a separate country of 9,000 would be viable, but they feared unilateral secession. Separation followed in October 1975 and the former eight inhabited islands of the Ellice Group achieved independence as the state of Tuvalu – which means ‘eight standing together’ – in October 1978 (McIntyre 2012). The lingering secessionist tendencies of even small archipelago states and territories – think of Anguilla, Aruba, Nevis and the Netherlands Antilles – are often referred to as ‘the Tuvalu effect’.

But perhaps the best-known and most notorious case of all concerns Guantánamo: the United States continues to detain suspected terrorists and enemy combatants in ‘legal limbo’ on its sprawling 115 km<sup>2</sup> island base at **Guantánamo Bay**, an enclave on the island of Cuba, granted in perpetual lease to the US under the 1903 Cuban–American Treaty (Supreme Court of the United States 2004). In choosing a place that is physically outside the nation itself, the US administration has kept various arrested persons ‘abroad in a cynical attempt to delocalise liability on the use of torture’ (Bigo 2007: 19). Guantánamo Bay has effectively been crafted as a ‘juridical limbo’, a ‘zone of indetermination’, a ‘carefully constructed legal absence’ and a field of experimentation because it is a threshold where the border between inside and outside is uncertain (Bigo 2007: 17–18, Butler 2002, Fletcher 2004, Reid-Henry 2007: 630). Guantánamo has become ‘an ambiguous space both inside and outside different legal systems’ (Kaplan 2005: 833). This situation recalls that of refugees (mainly from Haiti, but also from Cuba itself) held at Guantánamo Bay in the 1980s and early 1990s: they were denied any rights to appeal for asylum on the grounds that they were in a ‘lawless enclave’ outside US jurisdiction (Kaplan 2005: 839, McBride 1999). In spite of promises by the US Obama administration to close it down, Guantánamo Bay persists as a ‘legal black hole’ (Lopez 2010).

## **This collection**

This edited collection is the first ever focused study of the intriguing and unique political economy of these rare, shared island spaces. It examines the fascination, and obsession, with islands as unitary geographies *and* politics, and explores the tensions in contemporary ‘divided islands’ –



as in the case of formal and informal, legal and illegal 'border crossings' and practices – from both an 'island studies' and an 'international relations' perspective. It also offers comparative insights that can be considered by scholars of other divided but non-island territories, such as Palestine, Korea and Somalia.

This collective work provides an interesting twist to the post-colonial experience. Admittedly, '[i]sland stories have tended to slip the net of postcolonial theorising' (Edmond and Smith 2003: 5). But, even within islands, the stories of these ten are even more exceptional. Some of the largest of these – New Guinea, Borneo and Hispaniola, but also Timor – were long fragmented into separate kingdoms or tribal chiefdoms before the onset of Western colonialism. In their case, it was the lingering presence of more than one colonial power that eventually led to a reduction of polities to the current two-way division (and the three-way split for Borneo). But, in most cases '[w]hat becomes clear... is that each of [the world's divided islands] became divided after interference from the outside, be this colonialism, migration, or invasion – sometimes all three' (Royle 2001: 152). The territories involved – with the exception of French St. Martin/Dutch Sint Maarten, each of which remains totally disinterested in independence – have had not just to contend with a transition to full sovereignty as, or as parts of, decolonising states, but to warily watch over their shoulders at their neighbour's own transformation and its territorial and nation-building designs. There are many cases of violence (and even more threats thereof) that have preceded, accompanied and followed the islands' divisions. But there are also many examples of 'trade' – from fruit and vegetables to manufactures; from smuggling of immigrants to tourism – that may operate through official border posts and protocols, and that may not. And there is the role and influence of 'third parties': supranational bodies like the European Union, regional powers like the US and Australia, neighbouring states and multinational corporations who may have an eye on lucrative mineral deposits – copper, gas, gold, oil – on land or in the sea and smaller 'stateless nations', with independence-leaning political parties waiting and watching closely to see how to advance their own claims to sovereignty (Baldacchino and Hepburn 2013).

## Border matters

Borders reflect humanity's need for obstacles, for a line in the sand between Them and Us.

Jacobs (2011)

An island's boundary – where it meets the sea – is self-evident and non-negotiable. In contrast, a land boundary, almost by definition, is contestable: it can be changed, shifted to suit, reflecting power politics, the outcome of victor and vanquished in warfare or negotiated compromise. And then there are the ten inhabited islands where both these dynamics pan out.

This collection is also a study of the flexibility of borders. While always being at the edge, borders are powerful symbols of the reach of the state and its territorial powers. There is a symbolism that inculcates a sense of identity as much as of alterity; of security as much as of threat. Borders keep people in as much as they keep people out. Whether one is dealing with the deliberately invisible border on St. Martin/Sint Maarten, the completely fenced and UN-patrolled Green Line on Cyprus or the exclave of Oecusse in Timor, the world's divided islands must contend with a specific political economy, a space of transition which can only partly be regulated, but whose reality and representation of the Other is an important and unavoidable constituent of the national psyche. There are clear, often explicit relationships between a state's material indivisibility and discourses of national identity, to the extent that the portrayal of the national territory is often done at the expense of the island's comprehensive geography. Of course, this is habitually done by all states, but does it not look especially contrived when the rest of an island space simply goes missing from the political map? One wonders how the tensions between any unitary island imagination and the stark symbols of its violation – by such statist artefacts as flags, borders, checkpoints and currencies – are habitually represented, projected and constructed beyond cartography: as in literature, art, song and music.

But then, and to the chagrin of their guardians, borders always leak. In spite of the necessity of bordering, there are always considerable temptations and incentives to cross the border. Where erstwhile national divisions may have resulted from colonialism and state building, locals may navigate across borders almost with the same impunity and inconsequentiality of their forebears: properties, fields, hunting grounds, their very relatives may be found in what are today different countries. Spoken languages trickle over state frontiers. There are opportunities for trade and commerce that arise from comparative and competitive advantage, and are not to be missed: thriving markets of all kinds can be found in many border regions, offering bargains not readily available locally. It is not just products, services and finance that are mobile, but people shuttle across boundaries for work,

education or tourism; they look for bargains, asylum or just adventure. The more porous a boundary, the greater and keener the human traffic across.

### Layout

This book should prove to be of interest to scholars of political geography, world history, comparative politics, international political economy, governance, international relations, island studies, as well as peace and conflict studies. This is, after all, a unique and thorough collection of a fairly idiosyncratic group of jurisdictions.

Reflective of the nature of the topic, its organisation is also twofold. First is an introductory section. This includes a pithy foreword (by Philip E. Steinberg), which alerts us to some crucial differences between islands and continents; next comes this editorial overview, followed by a synthetic thinkpiece (by Stewart Williams) that looks at the subject matter from a more theoretical angle. It presents a double problematique of politically divided islands. First, because this class of territories does not fit a still dominant disposition to simplify island spaces and their phenomena often in stark binary terms, as glocal spaces perched between closure and openness, interiority and exteriority, singular fixity and diasporic multiplicity. Second, because the state – the basic unit of analysis in political science – does not fit in its conflation with the nation, and less so in these challenging divided polities, requiring in turn an accommodation to new interpretations and manifestations of sovereignty and identity. In both these tensions, there is a critical role for a trans-border, and effectively *inter-national*, political economy, where boundaries matter for their (re)inscription and social construction as much as for their erasure.

### Content review

The second, and most substantial, section of this book presents a critical exposé of each of today's ten divided inhabited islands. (There are various other uninhabited, and very small, divided islands (Jacobs 2012) and their division is often accidental: they include Märket island, which means, quite aptly, 'the mark', a skerry shared between Sweden and Finland.) Here is a critical exploration of the nature of borders, competing claims for full sovereignty, transition to accommodation and settlement, the political economy of trade, migration and co-habitation, typically within a largely descriptive historical framework.

A review of three divided Asian islands comes first. We should not be surprised that the common denominator in all three is the world's largest, exclusively archipelagic state, Indonesia. State formation in this country may be said to have begun during the Second World War, when the territory was occupied by the Japanese, who ended Dutch colonial rule in 1942. But Dutch imperialism in Southeast Asia had been shared begrudgingly for decades with other European powers, particularly the British and the Portuguese. Where such powers ended up sharing islands, permanent political borders have been drawn up, and not always with the full cooperation of those concerned.

We begin with **New Guinea**, the world's second largest island (after Greenland), currently divided between the independent state of Papua New Guinea and the Indonesian territory of West Papua. The chapter co-authored by Ron May, Evangelia Papoutsaki and Patrick Matbob explores the ambiguous relationship between these two 'brothers'. It diligently reviews the island's colonial history context and the role of the main colonial powers that led to the island's division, along with the post-colonial and cold war legacies that sealed the fate of the island as a divided one. The second part deals with the current geopolitical situation that involves the interests of Indonesia, PNG and, increasingly, Australia. Evidence is presented using both a comparative historical overview as well as an ethnographic, richly descriptive account of border events. There is a rich trans-border political economy in place; one that includes various forms of human displacement.

**Borneo** (and including much smaller Sebatik Island alongside), the world's third largest island, is today split into three separate political jurisdictions. In his contribution, Taufiq Tanasaldy examines the governance of the island prior to the arrival of European colonisers, the bordering that accompanied the construction of the post-colonial developing states of Indonesia and Malaysia (and resource-rich Brunei deciding to go its own way) and the regional problems and their impacts on the partition of the island in the post-independence period. This chapter looks at the range and extent of cross-border dynamics and exchange, and their relationship to the nation-building pursuits driven by Kuala Lumpur and Jakarta.

The withdrawal of Indonesia from Timor-Leste in 1999 and the international recognition of East Timor's independence in 2002 mark the recent acceptance of the (recent) division of the island of **Timor** into two halves: the eastern half – but also including the exclave of Oecusse – forming the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, and the western half forming part of the Indonesian province of East Nusa Tenggara. The

chapter by Anthony Soares charts the formation of the border dividing this island, arising initially from territorial disputes over Timor – the world's 44th largest island – between the Dutch and the Portuguese colonial powers, and then from East Timorese resistance to the eastern half's integration into the Republic of Indonesia. It also considers the border's porosity in terms of contemporary two-way population movements, as well as its strategic use by the governments on both sides in moving individuals out of the jurisdiction where they stand accused of serious crimes. Given its occasional fragility, for many within Timor-Leste the border between east and west has not brought an end to colonial history.

While European powers were contributing to island divisions across the globe, the drama of division was unfolding in Europe as well. **Ireland**, as Stephen Royle argues in his contribution, has long been caught up in the grip of that dominant island to its east, Great Britain. The Anglo-Normans invaded in 1169; in the 17th century, locals were cleared to make way for British settlers. Resistance was inevitable; strife in 1642, and in 1798 especially, shortly after which came the Act of Union in 1801, which made Ireland – the world's 20th largest island – an integral part of the United Kingdom, but was actively resisted, particularly by Ireland's majority Catholic population. In those places, as in Belfast, where the Catholics rubbed up against Protestants, there was constant conflict and tension between competing groups. Matters came to a head during the First World War when in 1916 nationalists rebelled in Dublin (the Easter Rising) when the theoretically United Kingdom was at war, whilst Ulster Protestants died in their thousands on the Somme. After the war, division was inevitable; much of the island could not be held within the UK, whilst in Ulster the Protestant majority areas could not be forced from it. The eventual boundary ensured that six ancient contiguous counties in the northeast were retained in the UK, whilst 26 counties left to form what became the Republic of Ireland. Partition did not solve the political problems; there was bloodshed and violence, most horribly during 'The Troubles' from the 1960s to 1990s. Since then, there has been an uneasy peace and a power-sharing government in Northern Ireland. Meanwhile, there has also been a steady stream of cross-border transactions, legal and otherwise, as citizens on either side seek to exploit the comparative advantages of two markets, as well as to minimise the damage from excessive exposure to their weaknesses.

'Today, [post-Troubles] one probably does not notice the border has been crossed until observing that the road signage has changed', writes

Royle about Ireland. The border in place in **Cyprus**, in contrast, is a very visible one. As Ahmet Sözen reminds us in his chapter, the conflict on this Eastern Mediterranean island – the 81st largest in the world – has been on the UN's agenda for more than five decades. After the collapse of the 1960 Republic of Cyprus as a partnership between the island's two communities (Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots), efforts to reach a solution have proved elusive. More so after the military intervention/invasion and subsequent occupation of Northern Cyprus by Turkey in June 1974, which institutionalised the border and its buffer zone. Things have improved since the opening of the border in 2003, but the main form of cross-border 'trade' remains the movement of day trippers, plus some Turkish Cypriots working in the Greek Cypriot economy. We are also reminded that 3 per cent of Cypriot territory was excised as two British Sovereign Base areas of Akrotiri and Dhekelia in the run-up to the independence of Cyprus from Britain in 1960. This is the world's most complex island division.

Not all divided islands trace their histories to colonialism. The political division of the island of **Usedom** (in German) and **Uznam** (in Polish) – for centuries a wholly German island – ensued from the 1945 Yalta Conference and included Poland's annexation of Szczecin, whose economy was closely linked with the functioning of Świnoujście (Swinemünde), the city located at the eastern end of Usedom. In Poland, the territory was regarded as a part of the Regained Lands and a war trophy compensating for the loss of Polish eastern territories to the Soviet Union. The Germans, on the other hand, found it difficult to accept the loss of the territory and the resettlement of its German population. Nevertheless, the division was recognised first by various bilateral treaties, and finally by Poland's accession to the European Union in 2004, as well as the abolition of border controls in 2007 (Poland's accession to Schengen Area). The result – a fast-paced economic, cultural and political unification of both parts of the island – is critically described in the chapter by Maciej Jedrusik. Today, it is almost impossible to regard Usedom/Uznam as a divided territory.

We head out next to the Caribbean, and the world's only island shared by the full territories of two sovereign states. A large Caribbean island – 22nd largest in the world – is shared by two sovereign states: Haiti and the Dominican Republic (DR). It is known by at least three different names: **Hispaniola**, Saint-Domingue or Quisqueya. This ambiguity of nomenclature, as Marie Redon reminds us in her piece, is redolent of a fractured insularity, reinforced by the stark economic, social and cultural differences that pertain to the two countries that share this island,

separated – and united – by a 300-km border. The island is split asunder by this historically forged space: a border, a frontier, an interface, a transit zone for goods, workers and migrants. Even the landscape looks different on either side. With long years as a plantation economy driven by slave labour on the west and an extensive livestock industry with grazing pastures on the east, distinct socio-economic systems have developed in parallel. These have, in turn, impacted upon not just the histories but even the characterisations and the bilateral relations of the two neighbouring states and their peoples. Even though an international frontier suggests a pause and break to mobility, the Haiti–DR border plays a significant role in facilitating the construction of a hybrid, pan-island culture: whether it deals with transnational alliances carved through marriage, or Haitian labour conscripted to work in the DR economy.

As for the much smaller **Sint Maartin/St. Martin**, its history of division dates from the Treaty of Concordia (1648). In his chapter, Steven Hillebrink traces the division of this Caribbean island between the French and the Dutch, up to the recent completion of constitutional reforms on both sides. A long history of multiple jurisdictions has affected the culture, economy and other aspects of life on this island. On the one hand, Sint Maartin/St. Martin serves as an example of how one island can be administered by many governments (France, Guadeloupe, EU, Holland, the Netherlands Antilles, along with the autonomous Sint Maarten and St. Martin governments) with very few border disputes. Yet, on the other hand, there are (failed) attempts at nation building (at least on the Dutch side) and a feeling that the metropolitan governments have contributed to dividing a society which used to be more united than it is now. Various attempts at cooperation between governments have failed, although a new treaty regulates a form of shared border control. There has also been of late a strong and almost simultaneous movement on both sides of the island towards a separate constitutional status; this new development may affect the chances of both sides becoming united under a single government in the future.

We next head south, to **Isla Grande de Tierra del Fuego** – the world's 29th largest island – at the southern tip of South America, split as the result of an 1881 boundary treaty that allocated the eastern portion to Argentina and the remainder to Chile. A dispute over adjacent smaller islands intensified in the late 1970s into preparation for a conflict that was fortunately avoided. While some tensions persist, the island is now the site for profitable mineral extraction, tourism and trout fishing. The

chapter by Peter van Aert addresses the origins of the island's division in the context of nation building by both Argentina and Chile, the history of disputes on the island, the difficulties in the management and protection of natural heritage in a divided island and the likely pressures on regional management in forthcoming decades.

We return to Asia, where we have left **Bolshoi Ussuriiski** (in Russian) or **Heixiazi** (in Chinese Mandarin) for last. Along with Tarabarov Island, this was one of the disputed spaces between Russia and China, and lying close to the Russian city of Khabarovsk, between the rivers Amur and Ussuri. Since the Aigun Treaty of 1958 stipulated that the left bank of the Amur belonged to Russia, possession of the largest islands on the river-border has been a sore point in Sino-Russian relations. After the Chinese Eastern Railway incidents in 1929, when Russia expelled Chinese residents from the island, China has persistently claimed Heixiazi Island as its own. A Sino-Russian military clash on Damanskii Island in 1969 was triggered by assertive and uncompromising claims on Heixiazi Island. China and Russia eventually concluded an agreement in 1991, but the Sino-Russian 'deal' on Heixiazi Island, based on a 'fifty-fifty' solution, was only secured in 2004, and started being implemented after 2008. In his chapter, Akihiro Iwashita regales us with the fine details of this division and of its operationalisation, confirming that, indeed, the devil is in the details.

Meanwhile, what next? An 'independence referendum' in Scotland slated for 2014 shifts the spotlight to the island of **Great Britain**, the 9th largest island in the world. Notwithstanding its avowed status as a multinational political formation, the 'national' institutions of this assumed 'nation'-state tend to present themselves through the monofocal prism of the dominant partner as the 'island race' of England's historical lineage, the 'sceptred isle' of patriotically English cultural referents. At the heart of the notion of 'Great Britain' as a unitary island polity lies the union first (since 1536) of Wales and England and then (since 1707) of Scotland to that union. The concluding chapter, penned by Ray Burnett, examines the tensions within the Scotland-England relationship from a distinctively Scottish and subaltern viewpoint. After outlining the reasons why the relationship is disintegrating as the ideological unction of 'Britishness' thins and evaporates, from Shetland to Cornwall, it considers the repercussions of 'break-up' within and beyond Scotland for the UK's other constituent units. Far from abrasion and rupture being a prospect of the future, division has always been an ever-present reality of this creaking island polity, one that has been ignored or overlooked for far too long (Cartrite 2012). The chapter



concludes that the implications of the Anglo-British imperial project had profound implications not only for the internal crafting of the cultural constructs of its own small island periphery, but for the multiplicity of its island territories across the globe (Matthews and Travers 2012).

## Conclusion

In his novel *The Stone Raft*, Literature Nobel Laureate José Saramago conjures up a whimsical tale of how one day, inexplicably, the Iberian Peninsula simply breaks free from the rest of continental Europe, and starts to drift westwards across the Atlantic. (Gibraltar, meanwhile, remains rigidly stuck in its place, and becomes an island.) This geophysical oddity is merely the backdrop to Saramago's story, but it offers us a few interesting insights relevant to this collection. The Spaniards and the Portuguese, finding themselves thrust out on the high seas alone and together, are suddenly looked upon, to their respective dismay, as Iberians by the rest of the world. What was a peninsula, now an island, has been reduced 'to a single country' (Saramago 1995: 249); and Spain and Portugal are proposed as the signatories to a 'joint and complementary strategy' (*ibid.*: 263) to chart their common future. Even in fiction, and re-echoing *Popeye*, the pressure is there to dismember international borders on islands and to chastise them for highlighting and constructing differences rather than commonalities between people, cultures, customs, labour markets, networks of conviviality, consumption and exchange. Why at all should there be an international political economy of divided islands?

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# 2

## Coherent Unity or Fracture and Flow? The Problematic Island Polity

*Stewart Williams*

### Introduction

It is exceptional when an island gets rent apart to create two separate polities. Yet it does occur. At the time of writing, plans to hold a long-awaited referendum on Scotland's secession from the United Kingdom in 2014 have just been announced. The change that could result from the outcome of such a referendum poses a major disruption to the island – in this case, Britain – as a basic unit of analysis.

The island polity has, however, always been a doubly difficult problematic. First, within the multi-disciplinary field of island studies, the empirical focus is explicitly on islands as well as the attendant notion of islandness. While islands tend to comprise singularly unique places of study, they can also offer up some useful generalisations. In particular, islands represent difference in terms of an otherness, and the ambiguous and paradoxical nature of islandness is therefore relevant here.

Second is a much more expressly political approach in line with the understandings and practices of international relations and political economy, as well as the theorisations of political philosophy and political geography. This approach reveals a similarly necessary shift in the conception as well as in the practice of the relevant notions of territory, sovereignty and identity. Their manifestation in and as nation states has been accepted as the distinct and solid foundation for an internal domestic order on which is based the study of comparative politics. However, the nation state is today widely seen (rightly or wrongly) to be on the decline; this development has both presented opportunities and

posed threats in relation to matters of political identity and sovereignty with their various de- and re-territorialisations.

This chapter first presents insights into how insular and political entities each comprise particular forms of problem. The next section then identifies borders or boundaries as a common critical component that warrants further attention; after all, it is with their use to delineate precisely the island as an internally consistent spatial container – including that of the nation state or sovereign entity – that problems arise.

### **Places of paradox: islands, insularity and islandness**

The study of islands and island phenomena has come to be well established in its own right as key authors, publications, websites, research centres, institutions and events are now identified with island studies (Baldacchino 2004, 2006a). This area of research is easily imagined to be discreet, with its scope or extent somehow limited, as in and of itself like an island. However, the reverse is now increasingly the case, as island studies has blossomed, with an abundance of topics examined from an array of disciplinary perspectives. Its contributors have variously discussed the Earth itself as an island or reflected in islands, and they have linked archipelagos and globalisation in this world of islands, stepping on and off beaches and crossing bridges in their refusal to be confined to any one or other island nor to matters specifically insular (e.g. Baldacchino 2007a).

Such a paradox is typical of islands themselves, which frequently get explicated in relation to those other islands and mainlands, as well as oceans and continents, which constitute their outside. This has been alongside calls for ‘nissology’ as a coherent approach to the study of islands on their own terms (Hay 2006, McCall 1994). Indeed, the attraction of islands as specific places of interest tends to valorise a particularity that gets grounded in otherness. The difference encapsulated within or on an island and celebrated by islanders is usually in relation to, and contrasted against, an outside world. It might even only be noted and remarked on as distinct when encountered or examined by outsiders, extrapolated beyond there, compared with elsewhere and made meaningful in other contexts. Islands are thereby seen to comprise uniquely individual cases that can offer some generalisable lessons and insights. They are often then made subject to alternating and extreme interpretations, ranging from utopian paradise to hellish prison, from a place of progress and novelty to a parochial and stultifying backwater,

in their absolute difference. Yet there is still much variation in-between too, and which island studies is starting to document and analyse (often conducted by or with islanders).

An ambiguity also insinuates the notion of 'islandness': a term coined to help describe and manage the many, often contradictory phenomena associated with islands as objects of study. Through major scholarly undertakings, the periphery is seen to have returned to the metropole with a vengeance; those enduring perceptions of islands (and islanders) as quite simply static, backward, remote or inaccessible have necessarily changed. The concern that once may have been fixed on a singular island has now evolved to embrace other islands in all their fluxing totality (and beyond): it has shifted its focus away from insularity towards islandness, exuding an interest in globalisation as well as in isolation, openness as well as closure. Baldacchino (2006a: 9), for example, thus advocates examining 'small islands as somewhat closed (read manageable) systems...in order to test and explore conceptual schemes and specific hypotheses emerging from academic and policy debates at a mainland, regional or global level' and 'looking critically and comparatively at island experiences and at "pan-island" approaches to similar challenges'. Their usefulness as heuristic devices informing us about globalisation is explicitly recognised (Clark 2004). Islands are seen as having become special places expert at leveraging global markets in commodities, such as food and water produced in environments with a clean, green image (Jay 2007, Khamis 2010).

Likewise, as indicators of change, islands have always provided a litmus test in elucidating political developments on a spectrum, ranging from conservative stagnation to radical innovation; they include tax havens and entrepreneurial enclaves as well as failed states and economies propped by aid and migrant remittances (Baldacchino 2006b, 2006c, 2006d, 2010, Baldacchino and Milne 2000, Bertram 2006, Stratford 2006, 2008). Elsewhere they are being likened to the canary in a coal mine when it comes to the world's currently most pressing ecological concerns. With climate change, for example, polar ice melts and sea level rise are already reshaping coasts, waterways, islands and continents, threatening some islands with their own disappearance and testing their resilience, raising questions around the issues of environmental refugees, humanitarian aid provision and global responsibility in the process (Barnett 2006, 2010, Barnett and Campbell 2010, Farbotko 2010a, 2010b, Gerhardt et al. 2010, Vannini et al. 2009).

Then again, islands have for quite some time been sought out and valued as particularly good places in which to make observations and conduct experiments on other phenomena such as sustainable development and ecological modernisation (Baldacchino and Milne 2000, Biagini and Hoyle 1999, Stratford 2003). This claim is all the more valid if we consider earlier anxieties about the biodiversity, invasion, competition and extinction of various species, although the lessons continue to be drawn out for wider use in other times and places, and including references to the evolution, colonisation and collapse of human societies (Diamond 2005, Olson and James 1982, Quammen 1996). Likewise, the exploration of possible fixes for flailing island economies has included forays into sustainable tourism (Briguglio et al. 1996, Lockhart and Drakakis-Smith 1996).

However, it is with the natural sciences that we see the island rendered in its most familiar form as the hermetically sealed space of a laboratory. Classic work here includes the development of island biogeography and evolutionary theory. For these disciplinary fields, and such others including archaeological and anthropological studies of specific peoples and places, islands continue to provide important research settings and empirics (Baldacchino 2007a). With some islands, smallness and remoteness, as much as any supposed isolation or insularity, have been the key factors in creating conditions for the evolution of distinct species, lost or hidden cultures, remnant populations and environmental refugia together with all the opportunities and challenges attending them. Yet they became what they are through previous arrivals from elsewhere, including via land bridges now long since gone and past mass migrations.

Scholars who study human migration to/from islands are concerned with the movements in an island's population inwards as much as outwards (Connell 2010, King 2009, King and Connell 1999). Similarly, it is the flows of material objects, resources or commodities, money, information and ideas as much as people (and again in both directions and at multiple scales) that are so critical to the socio-cultural, environmental and political-economic life of an island and especially if it is small or somehow constrained. Island barriers exist but they can be surmounted and are always permeable. Alternatively, they can be reinforced even if only in the mind's eye rather than, say, economically, legally or physically. In fact, islands are often as much imaginary as real (Deleuze 2004, Edmond and Smith 2003, Gillis 2004, Williams 2012). They therefore continue to provide not only laboratory settings as traditionally conceived but also, and most recently, for hi-tech industries such as genetics

research and pharmaceuticals production that need closure, secrecy and security while still being well networked with other places around the world (Greenhough 2006, 2011, Williams 2010).

Islands and island phenomena exude paradox and duality. They are clearly diverse and contradictorily complex. Yet, when drawn variously together, their differentiation most often hinges on notions of closure *and* openness, interiority *and* exteriority, a singular fixity *and* diasporic multiplicity, the insular *and* the global. Islands are portrayed not only as traditionally simple, insular entities, but are also constituted as ever more complex units, both internally and in relation to others; they are worlds unto themselves as well as global places. In fact, as difference so deeply cross-cuts islands and island phenomena, it has become most apparent that there is need to revisit these places of ambiguous extremes and to reconsider them in light of all there is in-between.

### **States of confusion: territory, identity and sovereignty**

Alongside the paradoxes of islands, there are parallel issues with states constituted as the basic unit of comparative politics, international law, international relations and political economy. Contradictions and confusion have arisen here with the conflation of state and nation set against a background of shifting notions and practices of territory, identity and sovereignty. For the political sciences, the Peace Treaties of Westphalia in 1648 continue to be taken as the instituting moment in the creation of the modern political world. Also central are those foundational myths of the state understood as a fixed, contiguous and clearly demarcated territory inside of which operates a central sovereign power.

The conflation of state and nation has involved their collapse together as an immutable sovereign space or territory, despite the many challenges to the nation state today contributing to 'the crisis of the hyphen' (Antonsich 2009). A seminal work here is the still well-respected thesis on 'the territorial trap' (Agnew 1994), which posits three core problems: first, the historically blind assumption that the state is a fixed unit of sovereign space that enables political organisation inside its territory; second, the domestic/foreign polarity defined in terms of the state's internal order versus an anarchic outside, which reduces states to individual actors engaged in competition and a 'war of all against all' but since made redundant especially in the age of footloose capital and trans-national corporations; and third, the assumption of the territorial state that is imagined having been in existence prior to and as a



container of society, such that social matters are understood as equating far too simply and neatly with national phenomena.

Agnew's (1994) original thesis was promulgated at a time of intensifying globalisation and post-Soviet fragmentation, but it has continued to be borne out by various developments worldwide. Notable examples comprise the many varied international conflicts, military alliances, peace-keeping roles, concerns over 'failed' or 'rogue' states and assaults on territorial integrity as well as the rise of common markets, trading agreements, currency regimes and exchange-rate mechanisms (Agnew 2005, 2009, Elden 2006, 2009, Ruggie 1993). In the wake of the latest financial as well as terrorist crises, it is notable that the state's economic prosperity and military security tend to be imagined increasingly now as resources and capacities that are attained or threatened at the global level: 'capacity building' has become a major consultancy industry the world over. However, territory remains a critical component in the constitution of political identities and not least as sovereign entities acting on the world stage. Agnew's thesis therefore continues to be revisited with 'the continued need to think very carefully about the ways in which the claims of state sovereignty and national security are mobilised in our geopolitical present' (Reid-Henry 2010: 752).

In the contemporary world, there appear to be ever more political entities that are not actually sovereign nation states with their own bounded territory but behave like states and strive to exist within the state system. Examples include the various ethno-regionalist parties that continue to emerge in the European Union (EU) as well as other, more long-standing stateless nations such as the Tibetan Government in exile, but extending to include micro-states and leased territories or 'states of exception' such as Guantánamo Bay (Agamben 2005, Bahcheli et al. 2004, Duursma 1996, Guibernau 1999, Kingston and Spears 2004, McConnell 2009, 2010, Miodownik and Cartrite 2006). At the same time, there has also been an enduring significance and value attached to the nationalist territorialisation of the world. Consider, for example, the efforts made today to preserve Iraq or Afghanistan in the face of tribal differences. The traditional state's functionality has faced recent challenges, which range from supra-state nationalist projects through to shared sovereignty arrangements, and state spaces are no longer considered wholly exclusive and limited. But there is still need to examine the stubborn persistence of nationalism, territorial identities and the ideological underpinnings of such entities as they exist and are being maintained or envisaged (Elden 2005, 2010, Murphy 2010).

Antonsich (2009) likewise suggests that, in the face of global flows, relational networks and the rescaling of places, we are better off pursuing research on territory rather than just dismissing it as *passé* (as believed most strongly when in association with the nation state). In general, territory has often been reduced either to a device of state control, containment and discipline or to a symbolic source of national identification. In these frameworks, he concludes, we risk treating people as passive subjects or failing to distinguish the territory as a space of socio-political organisation from its being a source of ethno-cultural identity. The conflation of state and nation is recognised here as having been discursive as well as territorially based. Thus the tendency now is for governmental authorities and other institutions to respond to the historic and culturally contingent factors associated with their different peoples and communities.

Still, Antonsich (2009: 801) notices 'a contradictory reaction' among (and sometimes within) nations; this couples 'de-ethnicising' moves towards more generic principles of tolerance and respect, for example, with efforts to protect and preserve particular ethno-cultural identities by limiting immigration and testing for compatibility. Such post-national territorialisation therefore admits of the new, multiple, hybrid and discontinuous spaces of cultural identification while still also retaining the geographically contiguous and bounded space of political belonging. The success or failure of territorial accommodation as a way to manage differences and conflicts identified in ethnic terms, for example, can however only be gauged individually, and thus warrants more comparative case studies (Wolff 2011).

Sovereignty is the other pertinent concept here, with its own popular variants linked to ideas of selfhood, community and identity as well as its more traditional deployments within the political sphere (as state sovereignty). Following the Roman imperial legacy, sovereignty was deemed 'the highest power of command' and taken mostly to mean a political and legal relationship of subjection. Except, that is, in its more recent interpretation as a founding and constitutive power (e.g. Schmitt 1927/1996). Sovereignty is no longer seen as a relatively uncontested nor simply accepted, timeless concept or universal ideal; it is far more contingent on historical and political contexts, perhaps even becoming redundant, yet still retaining great 'explanatory power and normative relevance' (Bartelson 1995, 2006: 465, 2010, Krasner 2001, Sassen 1996, 2006, Spruyt 1994).

There are conflicts and contradictions that inhere within 'the notoriously ambiguous concept of sovereignty' (Bartelson 2006: 470). With

the various claims to sovereignty made by different peoples and communities, the many are rendered into one and a constituent power invested in *the People*, *the Community* or *the Nation*. Likewise, with the multiplicity of forms embraced by late sovereignty, evinced by such terms as constitutional plurality and cosmopolitanism, one encounters a tendency to reduce difference in the universal values of 'respect' or international human rights regimes. Furthermore, when a sovereign authority is installed with a new juridical order, such as a democratic constitution (rather than, say, through political imposition or military force), there is usually a justification based on enduring right (based, for example, on claims to represent everyone) as well as a dismissal of all that went before that particular constituting act. Therefore, its legitimacy is based necessarily on some originary violence and often with reference to a transcendental authority such as God (Bartelson 2006, Kalyvas 2005).

The political problematic of the state is understood most frequently in terms of its identification with a territorialising presence. In fact, it continues to be very much about the constitution of one discreet, enclosed entity with its own internal order *contra* an anarchic outside. The notion of a sovereign people or nation is thus often based contradictorily on the claim to represent all or to be the one enduring constitution. Furthermore, its practices as well as conception as a polity still usually require being spatialised in one fashion or other, even if it is not always nowadays (if ever) completely bound and hence contained within a territory.

### **Borders unlimited**

Thus, a paradigm of fracture and flow might best describe the insular and political entities of our world. It certainly accords with the fact that globalisation has been a major force producing such effects as seen, respectively, with a shift in focus from insularity to islandness or with calls heralding the demise of the traditionally territorial nation state. However, there is a persistent spatiality too, which undergirds both islandness and politics. The geographical imaginary with its capacity to delineate extension and containment therefore remains useful (and seemingly inevitable) in the identification and analysis of those variously relevant insular and political phenomena. And hence the inscription of borders or boundaries is also critical here.

The study of borders and boundaries has flourished over the past two decades (and across an array of academic disciplines) despite the assertions that have constantly been made about the globalised post-modern

world being borderless and de-territorialised. Much of this border work has been conducted by political scientists and scholars, working in related fields such as international law, who have an interest in the de- and re-territorialisations of the state and other political economic institutions, processes and practices. 'Notions of territory and borders... go hand in hand' (Newman 2010: 774). There has been a significant qualitative shift here too, however. The usual focus on describing borders as the physical, static outcomes of political decision making has widened to include analyses of what are the more dynamic processes of trans-boundary relations, cooperation and functionality (Newman 2006, Newman and Paasi 1998, Van Houtum et al. 2005).

The understanding of political borders – traditionally seen as a rigid and deterministic delineation that bounds state space – now resonates better with a broader definition of human territoriality that recognises more of the factors at play in our attempts 'to affect, influence or control people, phenomena and relationships by delimiting and asserting control over a geographic area' (Sack 1986: 19). Political scientists have since continued to suggest that there is a territorial logic at work here (Brighenti 2010, Elden 2007, 2009, 2010, Shah 2012, Vollaard 2009). A key aspect of it includes that instrumental, spatial calculus one sees in cartography and surveying as used in marking out the borders of lands that are then claimed as a fixed, impersonal and empty (so also refillable) space. But the other critically important components now also accepted here are the organically fluid, socio-culturally and economically meaningful relationships that individuals and communities have with, in and through places as they are imagined in all their diversity and multi-scalar imbrications.

Rather than focus on the border simply as a marker of inclusivity and exclusivity, it is deemed more productive to look at the discursive and material practices of bordering in themselves because they are what actually constitutes political and other relations. Contrary to the essentialising, objectivist concerns with islands and states understood primarily as abstract spaces imposed on the naturalised (more than just 'natural') physical terrain, this shared perspective reveals insular and political entities to be immanent, relational events and processes that are constantly taking place together with and through all manner of things real and imagined.

Islands are not necessarily just fixed or enclosed entities. Instead, there are marshy, intertidal islands; floating islands that come into view then recede; global islands in a world of islands; and islands that have been mapped and remapped hence even relocated here, there

and everywhere (Atkinson and Blandy 2009, Baldacchino 2006a, 2008, Benítez-Rojo 1996, Bradshaw and Williams 1999, Royle 2001, Steinberg 2005, Williams 2010). The likelihood of limiting islands and island phenomena to any static, bounded (perhaps more traditionally conceived) form can thus seem virtually impossible (Williams 2012). Indeed, island scholars have long been as enticed by the sea as by the islands it surrounds, and their interests have been captured by this watery medium of communication as well as transported to yet other islands elsewhere and configurations, such as archipelagos (Benítez-Rojo 1996, De Loughrey 2007, Depraetere 2008a, 2008b, Hau'ofa 1994, Steinberg 2001, 2005, Stratford et al. 2011, Vannini et al. 2009). Some have written extensively on the critical liminal space of the beach as a place of border crossings (Denning 1980, 2004, McGlashan and Duck 2011). For others, there has been a focus on the transformative technologies of bridges and ferries on islands (Baldacchino 2007b, Royle 1999, Royle et al. 1990, Vannini 2012). All have contributed to a reworking of the island border: an analysis into how insular and political entities are being constituted in the contemporary world demands attention to borders and boundaries that are simultaneously being both erased and reinscribed.

Already there is some overlap. From a political studies perspective, imperial and dynastic power is seen for centuries to have pushed forwards frontiers, embracing islands, rivers and estuaries in the territorial claims made over the seas as well as land. Likewise, the exclusive relations assumed to exist between sovereignty and territory are being problematised with analyses of extra-territoriality in the case of embassies understood as 'alien islands', for example, and biopolitical zones described as a 'global archipelago' of states of emergency and exception (Benton 2010, Elden 2009, Ruggie 1993, Shah 2012, Vaughan-Williams 2008, 2009). It is significant that Newman (2010) refers to divided islands such as Cyprus and Ireland when commenting on the need to consider the human experience and narration of bordering in relation to the ongoing contests over political boundaries that are continuously and variously being made, unmade and then remade in the contemporary world.

## Coda

The division of the island polity represents yet another variation in the constant making and remaking of such insular and political entities as discussed here. Research has thrown up similar issues in dealing with

both the paradoxical places that comprise islands and the contradictory natures of territory, identity and sovereignty. There is a critically important and shared role here for borders and boundaries understood in the broadest sense, including in relation to the production of discursive meaning and material practices. With the various inscriptions, erasures and then reinscriptions of the borders that constitute island and political entities happening at various scales, new avenues of inquiry are needed to look at the processes occurring within, through and outside these spaces, including through more grounded empirics and local case studies. This book makes one significant contribution in this direction.

The observations brought together in this collection provide valuable insights into what have always been and will likely continue to be the problematic spaces of islands and polities. The interest and intrigue are redoubled though, with the book's focus on these few island polities that are so manifestly and unusually caught in the upheavals of division. The great rarity of such phenomena is in itself quite telling. The constitutional enactment of a sovereign entity is reinforced with its demarcation made clear by naturalised markers of history, blood and soil; and so, while a polity will often be identified with a particular people, it also gets territorialised or mapped onto a physical space. This constitutive political act is perhaps never more easily rendered inevitable (and hence its upset most vehemently resisted) as when it is superimposed, and is thus consolidated, on the discreet physical geography and spatial container of an island. Here, all the mythologies that ride on the nature of islands and polities are brought to bear in unsettling the fragmented island polity. There may be only a few around today; but there is little wonder that there is so much value to be had from a close and critical examination of such divided islands.

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# 3

## New Guinea

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### Introduction

New Guinea is the world's second biggest non-continental island; only Greenland is larger. Politically, the island is divided in two. The western half, generally referred to outside Indonesia as 'West Papua', comprises the two Indonesian provinces of Papua and West Papua; the eastern half is the independent country of Papua New Guinea (PNG). This chapter provides an overview of the island's history, contrasts the independent state of PNG with the 'internal colony' of Indonesia's West Papua, and looks at the impact of transnational political economy on the relationship between the two parts of the island and Indonesia by focusing on border trade activities and human displacement, influenced by geopolitics and globalisation.

### Context and legacy

New Guinea, located north of Australia and at the eastern end of Indonesia, consists of a land mass of 785,753 km<sup>2</sup>, with several associated large island groups. Second only to the Amazon, the island has one of the largest tracts of tropical rainforest left in the world: around 70 per cent is still covered by native forest, although that is being reduced by logging. The level of biodiversity is high, with new species constantly being discovered. New Guinea's predominantly Melanesian population, totalling around 11 million in 2011, consists largely of fragmented clan- or village-based groups engaged primarily in subsistence agriculture. Some 1,100 distinct languages are spoken; New Guinea thus accounts for about 16 per cent of the world's languages (Lewis 2009).

The border between what is now Indonesia and PNG follows the line drawn in 1883 to separate Dutch New Guinea from German and British New Guinea (May 1986, Sinclair 2001, Van der Veur 1966). It was defined more precisely by an Australian–Indonesian border agreement of 1973 and has been the subject of a series of agreements between Indonesia and PNG concerning border administrative arrangements. The border follows longitude 141°, except for some 55 km where the Fly River crosses from PNG into West Papua and back again and where the border is defined by the thalweg of the river. The border area is sparsely populated and the border itself poorly defined. Until the 1980s, there were only 14 markers along the entire 760 km of the land border.

The name ‘New Guinea’ (*Nueva Guinea*) was given to the island by Spanish explorer Yñigo Ortiz de Retez in 1545. Referred to as ‘the last unknown’ (Souter 1963), New Guinea was one of the last areas of the world to be subjected to European colonisation. The well-populated highlands valleys of New Guinea were not visited by Europeans until the 1930s; and as late as the 1950s first contact was being made with remote groups. It is claimed that there may yet be uncontacted groups in West Papua. Prior to European contact, inter-group or ‘tribal’ fighting was endemic; inter-group fighting still occurs fairly regularly.

The western part of the island was once considered part of the Majapahit Empire centred on the island of Java in what is now the Republic of Indonesia. Prior to European settlement, the Sultan of Tidore claimed sovereignty over parts of the western coast of West Papua, and there was extensive trade between coastal villages and Maluku. In 1828, West Papua was claimed by the Netherlands as part of the Dutch East Indies, although until well into the 20th century there was little outside penetration beyond the coastal fringes of what became Dutch New Guinea. In 1942, Japan invaded and briefly occupied northern New Guinea. After the war, the Dutch returned, but the status of West New Guinea or West Papua (as Dutch New Guinea became known) became a point of contention between the Netherlands and the newly independent Republic of Indonesia. After protracted dispute (see below), in 1969 the territory was formally (but controversially) incorporated into the Republic of Indonesia.

In the northeast, where German traders and explorers had been visiting regularly since the 1870s, Germany established a formal colonial presence in 1884. German New Guinea included the northeast mainland, to which was given the name Kaiser-Wilhelmsland, and the Bismarck Archipelago (present New Britain and New Ireland) as well as North Solomons (Bougainville and Buka) from 1886. From 1885 to 1899,

the territory was administered for Germany by the German New Guinea Company. When the First World War broke out in 1914, Australia dispatched an expeditionary force to German New Guinea, which took possession of the German colony. After the war, Australia remained as the administering authority of a League of Nations mandated territory (and subsequently a United Nations trusteeship) of New Guinea.

In 1883, the then British colony of Queensland annexed the south-east portion of the island, including the D'Entrecasteaux Group and the Louisiade Archipelago. This claim was revoked by Britain; but, under pressure from Australia, Britain established a protectorate over southeast New Guinea in 1884 and declared it a colony in 1889. In 1905, British New Guinea was renamed Papua, and the following year the Territory of Papua was transferred to the recently federated Commonwealth of Australia.

Although the two parts of eastern New Guinea were formally under Australian administration from 1920, they were administered separately until the Second World War came to the Pacific. From 1942, northern New Guinea and the New Guinea Islands (New Britain, New Ireland, Bougainville, Buka and Manus) were briefly occupied by Japan and became the scene of intense fighting. From 1942 to 1946, both territories came under the wartime Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit (ANGAU). After the war the joint Australian administration continued under a civil authority; the territory was known initially as Papua and New Guinea and subsequently as Papua New Guinea. In 1975, the country became an independent state (see Table 3.1).

Around the time of West Papua's incorporation into Indonesia and the lead-up to independence in PNG, there were proposals, coming mostly from expatriate settlers in PNG, for a federation of Melanesia, incorporating West Papua, PNG and Solomon Islands; but there was never serious support for the proposal.

## **West Papua**

In 1949, the former Dutch East Indies – with the exception of West Papua – became independent as the Republic of Indonesia (Bone 1958, King 2004, May 1986, Ondawame 2010, Osbourne 1985, Penders 2002, Singh 2008, Tebay 2005). West Papua was not initially included in the demands of the Indonesian nationalists, and for a while the Netherlands sought to retain control of the territory, in which it had made belated attempts to promote development and nurture a Papuan nationalist elite – what Van der Veur (1963) called 'terminal colonial democracy'.

Table 3.1 Comparing West Papua (Indonesia) and Papua New Guinea

	West Papua	Papua New Guinea (PNG)
Political status	Province of Indonesia in 1969. Split as two provinces – Papua and West Papua – since 2001	Independent sovereign state since 1975
Area (km <sup>2</sup> )(incl. offshore islands)	420,540	462,840
Population (millions, 2011)	3.7	7.1
Population density (persons/km <sup>2</sup> )	9	13
Capital city	Jakarta (on Java)	Port Moresby
No. of living languages	274	830
Human development index	Papua 0.655 West Papua 0.685 (2009)	0.466 (2010)
% of population that lives in Urban Areas	44%	13%
Life expectancy in years (2009)	68.5 (for Indonesia)	62.1
% annual population growth	1.07% (for Indonesia)	2.7%
GNP per capita (US\$, 2010)	Not available (4,200 for Indonesia)	2,420
Standing on human development index (2011)	124th out of 187 countries	153rd out of 187 countries
% of population below poverty line	Over 35%	37%
Adult (15+) literacy rate (% , 2011)	92% (for Indonesia)	60%
Main language(s) spoken	Bahasa Indonesia	Tokpisin (English-based creole); also English and Hiri Motu
Currency (exchange rate as at November 2011)	Indonesian Rupiah (1US\$ = 9.2IDR)	PNG Kina (1US\$ = 2.2PGK)

Elections for a West Papuan parliament were held in 1961 and a Papuan People's Congress, anticipating independence, chose the name West Papua, a flag (the Morning Star) and an anthem. Indonesia strongly opposed these moves. Following a brief military confrontation with Indonesia in West Papua, and facing growing international pressure, the Netherlands accepted that continued occupation of West Papua was not an option and instead initially supported Papuan nationalist

demands for a separate West Papua. Concerned about the potential rise of communism in Southeast Asia, however, the United States put pressure on the Netherlands and Australia to withdraw their support of West Papua's independence. Under a US-initiated and UN-brokered agreement, a United Nations Temporary Executive Authority (UNTEA) was set up in 1962 to govern the territory pending a referendum on the future status of West Papua in 1969.

In 1963, Indonesia took control of UNTEA, dismissed the West Papuan Parliament and replaced it with an appointed regional assembly. It banned political activity by West Papuans and carried out military operations against West Papuan nationalists, making it clear that, in a future referendum, only a vote for incorporation into the Republic would be acceptable. In the event an 'Act of Free Choice' (known among its critics as the 'Act of No Choice') was held under strict Indonesian military supervision; 1,026 'representatives' were chosen to vote on the future status of West Papua and unsurprisingly opted for incorporation. Observers of the process reported widespread intimidation and harassment of the representatives and the general population (Hastings 1969); but the UN General Assembly 'took note' of the outcome of the exercise (with some African countries protesting that the process did not represent a popular vote). In the context of the Cold War, neither the countries of the Western bloc (least of all the United States) nor the countries of the Eastern bloc saw value in questioning Indonesian rule in what became the province of Irian Barat and later Irian Jaya.

West Papua is seen as a basket case of Asian colonialism (Kennedy Report on West Papua 2006, Matbob and Papoutsaki 2006a: 3). This has also been the sentiment of regional leaders who condemned the transfer of West Papua to Indonesia. Melanesian Papuans could not be turned into Indonesians: 'we are helping to prepare the ground for a Papuan irredentist movement and laying up grave trouble in store for New Guinea ...' (*Sydney Morning Herald* editorial, quoted in Osborne 1985: 47).

The realisation among the Papuan elite, who had initially supported the Indonesian independence struggle, that colonial rule was being replaced by the internal colonialism of Indonesia, caused several to leave their homeland, mostly for the Netherlands or PNG. This also led, around 1965, to the formation of a separatist group, *Organisasi Papua Merdeka* (Free Papua Movement, or OPM), which has carried on a propaganda and guerrilla campaign against Indonesian rule ever since, but with little international support (Ondawame 2010).



Over the ensuing four decades, repression of West Papuan political aspirations and cultural identity has been maintained through a strong military presence. Estimates vary of the number of West Papuans killed in military operations, but there is general agreement that several thousand lives have been lost; the military has made frequent use of torture, and significant areas of traditionally owned land have been alienated (Brundige et al. 2004, Sidel 2007, The New Internationalist 2002, 2005: 4–5, Wing and King 2005).

Following the demise of Indonesian president Suharto in 1998, some concessions were made to West Papuan demands. It was agreed to change the name of the province from Irian Jaya to Papua, and the Papuan people were permitted (under increasingly stringent conditions) to fly the West Papuan Morning Star flag. Prior to this, the raising of the Morning Star flag was considered to be an act of subversion (*makar*) and a number of people were shot in flag-raising incidents. The province was also granted special autonomy (*Otonomi Khusus* (OTSUS)), along with Aceh, and a Papuan People's Assembly (*Majelis Rakyat Papua* (MRP)) was to be set up to represent the cultural interests of indigenous Papuans. In 2000, a second Papuan People's Congress (the first being that of 1961) was held in Jayapura. Attended by some 5,000 West Papuans, including a number living abroad, the Congress endorsed the aspiration for independence, to be pursued through peaceful means, and established a Presidium Council (*Presidium Dewan Papua*) to carry on a dialogue between West Papuans and the Indonesian government.

Subsequently, however, these concessions were progressively wound back; the autonomy provisions (enacted in 2001) were never fully implemented; flag raising has again become an offence; the province was subdivided into two, with recent proposals for a third province of Central Papua (a move widely seen in West Papua as an attempt to undermine West Papuan solidarity); and the chairman of the Papuan Presidium, Theys Eluay, was murdered by Indonesian soldiers in 2001 (Chauvel 2004, Sullivan 2003, Tebay 2005).

With growing frustration at the lack of progress towards genuine autonomy, and continued repression of the Papuan people by the Indonesian military, in 2010 groups of protesters began calling for the rejection of OTSUS and for a referendum on independence. In October 2011, a third Papuan People's Congress was convened. This re-endorsed demands for West Papuan independence and declared the creation of a Federal State of West Papua. As on previous occasions, the Indonesian army's response to the protests was marked by excessive force, with

at least six people killed and hundreds arrested, including the chair of the Papuan Traditional Council (*Dewan Adat Papua*, DAP), Forkorus Yaboisebut, who had been named as president of the Federal State. In March 2012, the Jayapura state court found Yaboisebut and four others guilty of treason.

The West Papuan provinces are resource rich, with one of the world's biggest gold and copper mines at Grasberg, operated by Freeport Indonesia, a subsidiary of the American-owned Freeport McMoRan Copper and Gold Inc., the largest taxpayer to the Indonesian government (The New Internationalist 2002: 12), petroleum and natural gas resources under development at the western end of the island, and extensive rainforests whose hardwoods have been extensively (and often illegally) logged. The Indonesian military has been heavily involved in economic activities in the province, both in providing security at the Freeport mine and in logging. Notwithstanding this resource wealth, living standards among the indigenous population are among the lowest in Indonesia. In 2011, the Indonesian government announced plans to establish a Special Unit for the Acceleration of Development in Papua and West Papua (*Unit Percepatan Pembangunan Papua dan Papua Barat* (UP4B)), as a basis for dialogue with West Papuan leaders; to date (March 2012), West Papuans have shown little enthusiasm.

West Papua has been a major destination for both state-sponsored (and World Bank funded) internal migration (*transmigrasi*) and spontaneous migration. The result is that West Papuans are estimated to constitute only about half of the population: Tebay (2005: 14) cites a figure of 52 per cent Papuans in 2005; and in-migration since then is likely to have exceeded any natural increase. The proportion is even lower in urban centres. Most of the small businesses and market stallholders in West Papua are migrants from other parts of Indonesia, as are many of the public officials in the two provinces. The influx of mostly Muslim migrants to West Papua, whose population is mostly Christian, has further created tensions and potential for future communal violence, as has occurred in other parts of Indonesia (ICG 2008). West Papuans also complain that their land has been taken for big resource projects without compensation and that the jobs generated by such projects have mostly gone to people from outside the province. On several occasions the mining operations at Freeport have been disrupted by local landowners protesting at the lack of benefits from the mine, and in 1977 the pipeline carrying copper ore from the mine to the port at Ammapare was sabotaged.

Regular reports of human rights abuses against the people of West Papua, both from within (notably from the Indonesian Commission on Human Rights, *Komisi Nasional Hak Asasi Manusia*) and from international organisations, have received little attention despite efforts of the OPM and supporters of West Papua to mobilise regional and international support. For some years West Papuan leaders have sought recognition from the Pacific Islands Forum, the major regional grouping for the island Pacific, and more recently from the sub-regional Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG), comprising the independent states of PNG, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Fiji and the Kanak nationalist group, *Front de Libération Nationale Kanak et Socialiste* (FLNKS) in New Caledonia (a French territory). Neither group has agreed to grant West Papua membership or observer status; but, in 2010, the MSG accepted Indonesian demands for observer status.

The achievement of independence by Timor Leste in 2002 raised hopes among West Papuans that they might also attain separate status, but there has probably never been any serious prospect of Indonesia letting go of its wealthy eastern provinces. Only the Republic of Vanuatu has taken concrete supporting action by allowing West Papuans to open an information office in its capital (Ondawame 2010). To this day, the West Papuan situation remains one of the least reported conflicts both regionally and internationally. The Indonesian state sought to obstruct the flow of information about West Papua to both Indonesian and foreign media (e.g. Kirsch 2002: 72). The availability of local information through West Papua media is also limited. Local papers, like *Cepos Cederawasih Pos* and *Tifa Irian*, both in Indonesian, are owned or run by the Army (*Tendrasa Nasional Indonesia*, TNI) and/or politicians: (Werror, personal communication with Papoutsaki cited in Matbob and Papoutsaki 2006b: 90; see also Pacific Media Watch 2006a, 2006b). An earlier ban on all foreign media, churches and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) was enforced on the argument that their presence in West Papua would 'encourage Papuans to campaign on issues of human rights' (IFJ 2006).

## Papua New Guinea

After years of Australian colonial administration, PNG made a smooth transition to independence in 1975, although for the most part the indigenisation of business, the public service and even the churches had been slow (Connell 1997, Dorney 2000, Griffin et al. 1979, May 2001, 2003). In the populous highlands, where for many communities there

was little presence of government until the 1960s, some indigenous leaders resisted the rapid movement towards independence in the early 1970s, fearing they would be dominated by people from the coastal communities who had experienced colonial administration for a longer period and gained higher levels of education. Within a decade of independence, however, the tensions between highlanders and coastal people had largely dissipated, and in 1984 Papua New Guinea had its first highlander prime minister.

PNG's national constitution, drafted by a wholly Papua New Guinean Constitutional Planning Committee after an extensive process of consultation across the country, provides for a Westminster parliamentary system. Elections for the National Parliament have been held, on schedule, every five years and are keenly contested: in 2007, there were, on average, 25 candidates per single-member constituency. Electoral irregularities and some violence have characterised elections, increasingly since the 1990s and particularly in the volatile highlands electorates: in 2002, elections in six electorates in the Southern Highlands were declared 'failed' and had to be re-conducted in 2003. Nevertheless, the outcomes of the electoral process have been broadly endorsed by international observer teams and there has been little post-election disputation beyond some localised violence and the legal appeals of losing candidates.

Every government in PNG has been a coalition, and up till 2002 every government since 1977 had changed during the course of the parliamentary term, mostly as a result of parliamentary votes of no confidence, as members of parliament (MPs) shifted from one party to another and parties shifted from one coalition to another – what Papua New Guineans refer to as 'yo-yo politics'. The turnover of MPs has been high – over 50 per cent in all elections and almost 80 per cent in 2002. In 2001 an Organic Law on the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates (OLIPPAC) came into force, seeking to strengthen the political party system and providing sanctions against MPs who switched parties. Partly as a result of the OLIPPAC provisions (and the governing coalition's use of its majority to silence the relatively small parliamentary opposition), the Somare government of 2002–2007 became the first to survive a full parliamentary term. Somare was voted back as prime minister in 2007; but in 2010 the PNG Supreme Court invalidated certain sections of OLIPPAC, opening the way for a resumption of 'yo-yo politics'. In 2011, while Somare was in Singapore receiving medical treatment, the National Parliament controversially declared the prime ministership vacant and a new prime minister, Peter O'Neill, was

elected. In December 2011, the Supreme Court ruled against Parliament's action; but O'Neill refused to accept this decision. For a while, there were thus two claimants to the office of prime minister, though the majority of MPs, and subsequently the public service, lined up behind O'Neill. The impasse was broken when scheduled national elections were held in June 2012. O'Neill's party won the largest number of seats, and he became prime minister, heading a large coalition. Surprisingly, Somare and his National Alliance Party joined the O'Neill government.

Below the national government level, there are twenty-one provincial units, including the National Capital District. Below the provincial level are district administrations and elected local government councils. Government functions are distributed between the three levels of government (national, provincial and local) in this quasi-federal system; but, because of a combination of limited funds, financial mismanagement and lack of capacity, service delivery is poor in most provinces. In more remote areas, people often look to churches and big resource projects for service provision; currently, the Australian government channels a small part of its substantial development assistance through churches and resource project operators.

In the first decade after independence, PNG's economic performance and governance record defied the pre-independence 'prophets of doom', with PNG's currency (the kina) appreciating against both the Australian and US dollars, and governments pushing ahead with reformist agendas and public sector localisation. This began to change around the mid-1980s (May 1997). Problems of law and order, including inter-group (or 'tribal') fighting, mostly in the highlands, and urban and rural crime ('*raskolism*') accelerated. The PNG Defence Force (PNGDF) was called out to assist police in several declared states of emergency. On the island of Bougainville, home to one of the world's largest gold and copper mines, landowner demands for increased compensation in 1988 culminated in the closure of the mine (which at the time contributed about 17 per cent of government revenue and over 40 per cent of exports) and an armed rebellion that continued for a decade and whose effects are still being felt (Regan 2010). Loss of revenue from the Bougainville mine was exacerbated by falling export commodity prices and poor financial management. Corruption and nepotism, in both the public and private sectors, also impacted negatively on governance and service delivery.

In 1997, an attempt by Prime Minister Sir Julius Chan to resolve the Bougainville conflict through the engagement of military consultants

Sandline International came unstuck when Defence Force Commander Jerry Singirok opposed the government's action, 'arresting' and deporting the Sandline mercenaries and calling on the prime minister, deputy prime minister and defence minister to resign. Singirok received widespread popular support but he was dismissed and charged with sedition, a charge of which he was later acquitted. Chan 'stepped aside' pending an inquiry, which cleared him of wrongdoing; he resumed the prime ministership but lost his seat in the national election soon after (Dinnen et al. 1997, Dorney 1998, O'Callaghan 1999). This was the closest PNG has come to a military coup.

Following political and economic crises in the late 1990s, under the government of Sir Bill Skate, PNG's economy and politics experienced something of a turn-around under the leadership of former Treasury secretary and Central Bank governor Sir Mekere Morauta and then Sir Michael Somare. Improved commodity prices and administrative reforms contributed to an inflow of foreign investment, particularly in the mining and petroleum sectors. Having failed to secure a gas pipeline to Australia, PNG has embarked on a liquefied natural gas (LNG) project, based in the Southern Highlands, to come into production in 2014, which is expected to double the country's gross domestic product (GDP).

Unlike West Papua, where all land comes under state control, 97 per cent of land in PNG is held by landowners under a variety of traditional, essentially communal, landholding arrangements. But land ownership is often contested, and the identification of the legitimate landowners, particularly for the payment of compensation and royalties involved in big resource projects, has raised seemingly intractable problems. Some commentators see PNG's traditional land ownership as a barrier to development and call for privatisation of tenure, either to individuals or to incorporated land groups. But there is considerable popular opposition to changes in land tenure systems (Yala 2010). Recently, there has been particular concern over special agriculture and business lease (SABL) arrangements meant to facilitate local and foreign investment in agriculture, but misused to enable foreign interests to gain access to customary land, mostly for logging (Filer 2011).

There are high expectations from the benefits to be gained from the LNG project, which have been factored into an ambitious *2050 Vision* statement designed to guide PNG's development into the mid-21st century. But the management of expectations, especially among traditional landowners in the areas impacted by the project, as well as the infrastructure demands associated with this and other projects, poses substantial challenges.

With regard to PNG's trade relations with Indonesia and its neighbouring province of West Papua, one needs to look first at the impact of economic liberalisation since the 1990s when the Pacific Islands started opening up their economies through greater regional integration. This set off the creation of a number of regional associations, such as the Pacific Islands Forum in 1999 (originally set up as the South Pacific Forum in 1971), agreement pacts (such as the Pacific Island Countries Trade Agreement, or PICTA) and others beyond the region that opened up trade markets in Asia and Europe. The involvement of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in the Indonesia/PNG Border Trade and Investment Development Project is an indication of the increasing importance of regional trade. By opening up its trade policy, PNG has encouraged faster economic growth, much of which remains trade dependent: in 2009, exports accounted for about 60 per cent of the GDP; and minerals, including gold, copper and oil, accounted for about 77 per cent of the total value of exports (ADB 2009). The move by a previous government, led by the National Alliance Party, to dramatically increase investments that exploit natural resources has seen a massive growth in commercial and industrial activities on a scale that the country's own infrastructure and manpower are not able to support. This has had serious implications on the capacity of the state to meet the demands of the investors and at the same time ensure that the laws of the country are being followed and the people are not exploited. For instance, the agreement between PNG and China to develop the Ramu Nickel project has posed a challenge: the majority of Chinese nationals brought into the country to work could not speak English, which is a legal requirement for foreigners to be employed in PNG; Chinese interests were however accommodated (Papoutsaki et al. 2011). The government at the time overlooked legislation and made amendments in Parliament that would favour the interest of foreign investors. Supreme Court reviews of the new laws have been sought to determine whether they are constitutional or not (*ibid.*). Furthermore, PNG's porous borders pose serious issues of security and its trading relationship with Indonesia is compromising issues of human rights, especially those of West Papua refugees in PNG.

### **PNG and West Papua: a shifting relationship?**

In 1957, a joint Australian–Netherlands Co-operative Agreement provided a formal basis for contact between the two colonial administrations and their Melanesian protégés, and as the Dutch moved to

promote West Papua's political development and Papua New Guineans began to question their colonial status, personal relations were created between the emerging indigenous leaders in the two halves of the island. In 1962, the PNG Legislative Council expressed concern over the handling of the West New Guinea question and supported an immediate referendum on self-determination.

In 1969, Michael Somare, leader of the PNG independence movement, then a member of the Papua and New Guinea's Territorial Assembly, accused Australia of maintaining 'concentration camps' along the border for West Papuan asylum seekers: 'We often hear the UN condemning European colonialism but it never thinks of condemning Asiatic colonialism, and this is what is happening now on our border and it is colonialism on the part of Indonesians' (Somare, quoted in Osborne 1985: 44). After 1969, there was a good deal of sympathy and support in PNG for the West Papuan demand for separate status, and some West Papuans who crossed into PNG were subsequently granted PNG citizenship. 'Secret diplomacy' was also conducted in the early 1970s through meetings between OPM leaders and PNG's foreign minister, Sir Albert Maori Kiki. However, Somare, PNG's prime minister at the time, would later be called 'a good friend' by Indonesia. The predicament that Somare found himself in, changing from being a critic to an ally of Indonesia, is one shared by other Melanesians leaders and Papua New Guineans in general. Most of the latter sympathise with their Melanesian neighbours in West Papua and their cause, but are forced to also recognise Indonesia's sovereignty, not to mention trading interests.

A PNG media study indicates that there has been a great shift in coverage over the past 20 years, indicating a decline in stories on West Papua and a general lack of interest from PNG media to invest time and effort for proper coverage (Matbob and Papoutsaki 2006b). Up until the 1980s, the Indonesian embassy in Port Moresby was having great difficulty handling Indonesia's negative image in the PNG media with regard to West Papua. However, this changed since the 1990s with Indonesian officials taking the initiative to invite journalists to the embassy for functions and to organise trips to visit West Papua and other parts of Indonesia. The governments of PNG and Indonesia have also formalised bilateral agreements, which have benefited a number of Papua New Guinean organisations, including the media.

Acknowledgement of a shared Melanesian identity was implicit in the citizenship provisions of PNG's constitution: a person born in PNG does not have automatic PNG citizenship, but the constitution provides that



persons born in PNG before independence with two grandparents from PNG or 'adjacent areas' (specifically Irian Jaya, Solomon Islands and the Torres Strait Islands of Australia) have automatic citizenship. However, in 1978 PNG refused to grant asylum to a group of OPM leaders who had crossed into PNG in the belief that they were to have talks with PNG's political leadership. The West Papuans were eventually resettled in Sweden.

Anxious to maintain good relations with Indonesia, PNG governments have consistently recognised Indonesian sovereignty in West Papua and sought to discourage movement across the border. The fact that the two halves of the island, with their multiplicity of vernacular languages, have developed different *lingua franca* – *Tokpisin* in PNG and *Bahasa Indonesia* in West Papua – also contributes to the weakening of any sense of common New Guinean identity.

When in 1984 some 10,000–12,000 West Papuans crossed the border into PNG to escape a crackdown by the Indonesian army, following a flag-raising incident in Jayapura, and claimed refugee status, Papua New Guinean sympathies for their Melanesian neighbours were tested. The influx of border crossers into the poorly resourced areas along the border put strains on food and other supplies, and, apart from occasional thefts of food from village gardens, Papua New Guinean border villagers felt some resentment that the border crossers were receiving assistance from the PNG government and from NGOs that, as Papua New Guineans, they had never received.

Around this time, there were several incursions across the border by Indonesian soldiers and military aircraft, and complaints from Indonesia that PNG was not doing enough to deny access to the OPM, who had established several camps in the thick jungle along the northern section of the border inside PNG. Conscious of the potential adverse political reaction, PNG governments have consistently declined to be involved in joint border patrols with the Indonesian army. A highway being constructed along the Indonesian side of the border also crossed into PNG at one point, although the Indonesian government initially denied this. Relations between PNG and Indonesia deteriorated to the extent that PNG took its complaints about Indonesia's border incursions to the UN General Assembly in 1984. Many of the border crossers were re-settled at East Awin in PNG's Western Province, but several were later repatriated to Indonesia. Tensions between the two countries in this period were exacerbated by repeated Indonesian denials that well-documented incidents had in fact taken place (Blaskett 1989, May 1990).

In the aftermath of this, in 1986 the two countries signed a Treaty of Mutual Respect, Friendship and Cooperation. Under this treaty, the two agreed not to threaten or use force against one another and not to cooperate with others in hostile or unlawful acts against each other or allow their territory to be used by others for such purposes (an obvious reference to the OPM). Provision was also made for consultation and negotiation in the event of any dispute. The treaty was hailed at the time by Indonesia's President Suharto as 'another milestone in the history of both countries', although sceptics observed that there was nothing in the treaty that had not been the subject of earlier and repeated verbal assurances or was not already adequately provided for in the existing agreement on border arrangements (May 1987).

The situation along the border has quietened down since the late 1980s; though cross-border incidents, as noted above, continue to occur. In May 2011, PNG's foreign affairs minister accused Indonesia of breaching the border agreement when an Indonesian military helicopter violated PNG's air space near Wutung. With the PNGDF committed to the rebellion in Bougainville, there was virtually no patrolling along the PNG side of the border during the 1990s.

The sometimes strained relations between Indonesia and PNG were raised to a new level in March 2010 when, at a meeting in Port Moresby, President Yudhoyono and Prime Minister Somare agreed to open an official border post at Skouw-Wutung as well as sign a Defence Cooperation Agreement, a Double Taxation Agreement and letters of exchange on agricultural cooperation.

Papua New Guinean leaders, frustrated by their own country's problems of law and order, uneven development and poor service delivery, have looked to West Papua from time to time and praised Indonesia's authoritarian governments (perhaps over-generously) for bringing order and development. But most value the political freedom PNG has enjoyed as one of the few post-colonial states to have maintained an unbroken record of democratic government. West Papuans, on the contrary, mostly feel that the colonial rule of the Netherlands was replaced by the repressive internal colonialism of non-Melanesian Indonesians who have denied West Papua even of its promised autonomy and have sought to exploit West Papua's resources and wipe out its Melanesian cultures. Ongoing developments following the Third Papuan People's Congress in 2011 demonstrate that these issues remain unresolved.

## The political economy of trans-border trade

Before the arrival of Europeans, people in the border area, who share common languages across the border, regularly moved across the present political divide to harvest sago (a starch extracted from palms), hunt and visit kin. Border surveys in the 1960s found that the border ran through the middle of at least one village and that several villages, which had been administered by the Dutch, were in what was then Australian territory. In 1980, a village included in the PNG national census was discovered to be inside Indonesian territory. The situation is made more complex for administering authorities by the tendency, among populations of shifting cultivators, for whole villages to shift, reform and disappear over time. The border has never been contested, but it was not properly surveyed until the 1980s and has been a point of periodic contention as West Papuan refugees have crossed into PNG and the Indonesian military has made incursions across the border in pursuit of West Papuan separatists and suspected sympathisers (May 1987, 1990, 1991).

The first basic agreement on border arrangements was drawn up in 1973 (when Australia was the administering authority in PNG, although the agreement was signed by Somare, PNG's then chief minister). It has since been renegotiated several times – as with the 1993 special arrangement for traditional and customary land border crossing – with minor amendments. The agreement covers definition of the border area, consultation and liaison arrangements (including the establishment of a joint border committee), border crossings for traditional and customary purposes and by non-traditional inhabitants, customary border trade, the exercise of traditional rights to land and waters in the border area, border security, quarantine, navigation, exchange of information on major construction and major development of natural resources in the border area (which includes the large gold and copper mines in the Star Mountains of PNG's Western Province), environmental protection and compensation for damages. There are also provisions binding the two parties to prevent the use of their respective territories for hostile acts against one another.

There is only one road crossing the border, which links the PNG coastal town of Vanimo with the West Papuan capital of Jayapura. The only official border checkpoint is on this road, at Skouw-Wutung. This crossing sees significant trading activity. Elsewhere, the border is largely invisible, although there are 15 recognised traditional crossing points

in the mountainous hinterland, through which movement is sometimes monitored by local government ward councillors. Along with the Skouw-Wutung border crossing in the north, Daru in PNG's Western Province in the southwest is used for smuggling illegal immigrants through Indonesia and PNG into Australia. The smugglers use a network that exploits the customary cross-border rights. Daru's local economy is largely dependent on fishing and smuggling, so much so that it is called a 'smuggler's paradise' (Bohane 2006).

There is also the sea on both sides of the island that crossers use, often pretending to go fishing far out in the sea and then 'straying' into the PNG or Indonesian sides (KamReed 2004). But both land and sea borders can be porous, surveillance sporadic and officials corrupt: the borders are used for illegal trade and people trafficking. Migration is one of the national security concerns for PNG. Economic liberalisation sets off economic growth through transfer of human capital across borders and PNG is experiencing an economic boom that requires human capital to support it. This is linked to human smuggling and illegal immigrants bringing in non-traditional security issues through transnational crime (Hualupmomi 2010: 44). Asian illegal migration to PNG is on the increase, with the potential to trigger civil unrest such as the 2009 riots against Asian business.

Recognising the important role that cross-border trade could play in promoting economic development in its poorer border provinces, the PNG government created the Border Development Authority (BDA) in 2008. Its key mandate is to develop the border areas of PNG, especially in terms of providing infrastructure that would help authorities such as the Customs, Immigration, Foreign Affairs officers and security forces to do their work and promote socio-economic activities in border provinces.

West Sepik Province (WSP) is PNG's largest and one of the least developed. It also shares 260 km of land border with Papua Province, which is the second richest province in Indonesia; it offers products and services at prices 25–40 per cent lower than those of PNG (ADB 2009: 2). PNG buys from West Papua spare parts for trucks, rice, water, electronics, textiles and house ware while Indonesia buys beef, beer, betel nuts, cocoa, snack foods, tuna and vanilla from PNG (UNCTAD 2006). In 2007, this cross-border trade reached about US\$7 million, including a substantial revenue from trading vanilla produced in this province (ADB 2009: 2). This expanding trade with Indonesia across the borders with West Papua is important for the economic growth of the region.

## Border observations

Wutung border post on the PNG side is a 45-minutes travel west along a well-sealed road from Vanimo town. The Vanimo border post is manned by police, customs and National Agriculture Quarantine and Inspection Authority (NAQIA) officers who monitor movements of plants, animals and goods. A military post guarded by PNG soldiers is where vehicles and travellers are generally checked first. At the border post, those who cross over some 300 metres to Batas market record their names under the supervision of a police officer. Local traditional border crossers going across to Indonesia to tend their gardens report to the post and register their names. These are issued with simple yellow border crosser identity cards that include their photo.

While the natural environment looks the same, there are obvious signs that one is moving from one country to another. The most telling is the difference in architecture and infrastructure. There is a well-sealed road with high embankments and paved footpaths on both sides that lead to the Indonesian post. The post itself is 'Asian' in architecture with thick walls, steep red roofs, protected by metal picket fences fixed to solid concrete posts. Unlike the PNG border post, all crossers are required to enter the Indonesian post and go through a security check carried out by soldiers.

Other than the traditional border crossers from the West Papua side, there are fewer visits to PNG by Indonesians than the number of Papua New Guineans who cross to the other side. Papua New Guineans cross over regularly for gardening or to shop at the Batas market. There is a well-organised PMV (public motor vehicles, usually small vans converted for public transport) system that transfers market goers across the border to the market in an orderly manner and from an allocated parking lot. The provincial government authorities obviously place some importance on the transportation system to the border post and the Batas market. Until September 2011, the Batas market had been operating daily, adding pressure on the authorities to effectively monitor the activities happening across the border. Despite its fame throughout PNG, the market remains a clutter of hurriedly nailed together timber and iron roof sheds packed with cheap varieties of Asian goods coveted in PNG. On sale are clothing and household goods, electronic gadgets (mobile phones, TV sets, MP3s), a range of basic food items such as rice, flour, noodles and cooking oil mostly sold in bulk, as well as building and hardware materials (such as roofing iron). Rice and flour, for instance, are sold cheaper at K50 for 25-kg bags (normal PNG price:

K80). Prices of all items, which start at around K10 and upwards, can be bargained for. There are no currency exchange facilities and all items are priced in PNG kina. It is not clear whether the PNG kina that goes across the border is banked in Indonesian banks or used to purchase PNG goods. The Bank of South Pacific in Vanimo often runs out of cash because of the huge amounts being withdrawn and spent across the border.

The steady flow of goods being bought and brought into PNG over the border provides customs duty revenue and generates income for a number of other people on the PNG side, including the PMV operators who charge a fee on each item. Customs officers charge a tax on the more expensive and larger items, such as TV sets, scooters, building materials and rice and flour bales. Even after the tax and fees, the items are cheaper than if purchased in Vanimo or elsewhere in PNG where prices are higher.

On the PNG side, market stalls offer some PNG goods that are in demand across the border, including such PNG products as Ox and Palm tinned meat, Besta tinned fish, betel nuts and souvenirs. However, trading business on this border is mostly one way with Asian-manufactured goods flooding into PNG. There is a bustling betel nut market by West Papuans from Wamena, who are admired by Papua New Guineans for being resourceful and business-minded.

The lack of clear border lines often results in incidents: for example, in November 2011, Wutung villagers disrupted work on the construction of a border monument: villagers disputed the location of the current border marker, claiming that it should be moved further back into Indonesian territory at Tami River. Wutung villages on the PNG side claim ownership of land areas up to the Tami River.

As a spokesperson for the Institute of Papuan Advocacy and Human Rights, Paula Makabory accurately describes the situation, '[t]he land itself is only one land. The peoples there is one people, the culture is also one. So it's like just people trespass and divided your house into two. So for them, "It's my right, I just go on my land, without having any document"' (Pacific Media Watch 2011).

In another incident, early in 2011, the PNG government authorised a controversial joint police and military operation called 'Sunset Merona' to stop illegal activities happening on the PNG border. A group of people displaced by the operation were settlers from Wamena in West Papua, living along the road to Wutung. Their settlement was burnt and the people were said to have been moved to East Awin refugee camps in Western Province. These people have returned after walking through the

jungles for weeks to Vanimo where they have resettled. The Wamena people, like other West Papuans, are generally accepted by PNG people and given land areas to settle. In return, the Wamena people, well known for their farming skills, clear large areas of forest and build large gardens for their hosts. The gardens are well drained and planted with highlands crops such as sweet potatoes and cabbages, which are not grown locally.

Operation Sunset Merona was originally announced as a law and order enforcement exercise to stop the illegal flow of goods across the border from Indonesian military (TNI) sources – including a TNI-owned shopping complex – that were affecting local PNG businesses and to ensure there were no illegal workers within the logging companies from Malaysia and Indonesia operating at the PNG/West Papua border (Chesterfield 2011). The connection between illegal logging in the area and the Indonesian military business interests has been a concern for West Papua analysts, who fear that serious human rights abuses in West Papua could spill over into PNG territory (*ibid.*). Although there is local sympathy towards the plight of West Papuan refugees, there is also a strong history of local business leaders working closely with Indonesian mercantile interests to clear refugees out of this area.

Observers commented how the operation quickly became an ‘offensive against Indonesia’s enemies in PNG’, namely West Papua dissidents/separatists, one commentator arguing that ‘the question PNG people need to have asked is... What kind of Melanesians are we to do Jakarta’s work?’ (*ibid.*). PNG authorities decided rather arbitrarily that anyone found not to be a PNG citizen would be considered an OPM activist and sent to East Awin camp, which is under the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) control. PNG’s acting deputy police commissioner was quoted saying that ‘respect for the sovereignty of Indonesia is more important than the shared ethnicity of people living on either side of the border’ (Pacific Media Watch 2011).

## **Conclusion: a transnational political economy of human displacement**

Globalisation and trade liberalisation promote greater trans-national trade across borders where investment, exploitation of natural resources and economic cooperation can improve bi-national economic infrastructure and trade, even if that means turning a blind eye to human rights abuses and human displacement: there are currently some 12,000 West Papuans living in refugee camps in PNG.

As long as the Pacific Island countries remain supportive of the political status quo, the issue of West Papua will not go beyond local politics (Pacific Media Watch 2006a). National political and economic interests, regional geopolitics and the personal interests of both political leaders and local businesspersons all contribute to keeping the island divided while failing to deal determinedly with human rights abuses. While the United States appears to condemn human rights abuses in West Papua, it also supports Indonesia's efforts against separatism (Antara News 2011).

Geopolitics continues to largely determine the fate of the island of New Guinea. As long as the PNG and Indonesian governments cooperate in economic terms through trade and with the blessing of bodies such as the ADB, a trans-national political economy of human rights is bound to persist (see Hyndman 2001: 45).

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# 4

## Borneo (Including Sebatik)

*Taufiq Tanasaldy*

### Introduction

This chapter examines the political economy of divided borders on the Southeast Asian island of Borneo. First, it considers the origins of the island's division (extending to the smaller but neighbouring island of Sebatik) into three separate political jurisdictions. After examining the governance of the island prior to European colonisation, it evaluates the role of the colonisers, particularly those of the British and Dutch, in drawing more permanent political borders within and across the island. Next, it discusses regional issues and their impact on the partition of the island after the departure of the colonial powers. The crucial matter of the territorial disputes among Brunei, Indonesia and Malaysia is then examined. Finally, this chapter looks at the increasing cross-border activities and their potential social, economic and political impacts.

### Origin of the divisions

Before Western colonisers began to bring it into their sphere of influence and eventual colonisation, the island – later known as Borneo or Kalimantan – was governed by many independent native sultanates; at least 17 on the current Indonesian side alone (Lontaan 1985). Some of the well-known sultanates were Pontianak, Sambas and Sintang in the west, Kutai Kartanegara in the east, Banjar in the south and Brunei (from which the name 'Borneo' is derived) in the north. Sovereignty of these sultanates slowly declined when Europeans started to exert their control from the 19th century onwards. Justification for intervention varied: many were the result of requests by sovereigns for assistance in quelling domestic revolts or solving their internal court

struggles. Binding agreements were signed between the sultans and the Dutch eventually led to full subjugation of the sultanates, sometimes with diminished territory, or their complete abolishment (Cribb 2000: 118–119).

In northern Borneo, a large territory of Brunei was given to James Brooke in 1841 after his role in pacifying local revolts. He then established himself as the king of this territory, known as Sarawak. Another part of Brunei's territory, later known as Sabah, was ceded to the British North Borneo Chartered Company (hereafter North Borneo). The weak Brunei sultanate continued to lose its territories to these two neighbours in a series of agreements until 1905 when further ceding was prohibited by the British (Cribb 2000: 118–119, Leifer 1978: 242, Singh 1986: 169). Meanwhile, by the mid-19th century, other parts of Borneo had fallen under the control of the Dutch, albeit loosely. The Dutch only started to tighten their grip on this region after seeing increasing threats from Sarawak and North Borneo (Black 1985: 287, Cribb 2000: 119, Irwin 1955, Wadley 2001: 627). The whole of Borneo was under British or Dutch control by the end of the 19th century.

Through a series of agreements, including in 1891, 1915 and 1938, the British and Dutch were able to establish the international border in the island as it exists today (see Table 4.1). The agreements also split control over adjacent Sebatik island (Forbes 2003, Haller-Trost 1995: 6–10). Prior to that, political borders among native sultanates were unclear due to non-existent or unsophisticated demarcation (e.g. border agreement between Landak and Pontianak sultanates in Rahman et al. 2000: 130–137). Sultanates in the interior region often claimed a much larger territory than was under their actual control; and so territorial overlapping between sultanates was common (Haller-Trost 1995, Veth 1854: 53).

## **Independence and formation of national identity**

The journeys towards state creation under colonial rule (Anderson 1991), which later moulded the political orientation of the people in Borneo, took different shapes and speeds. Up until 1942, the residents of Dutch Borneo were told that they were part of the Dutch East Indies, with ties to the Netherlands, and gravitated towards Batavia as their regional metropolis. The people of northern Borneo gravitated to different regional centres as they lived in three separate political entities (Sarawak, Brunei and North Borneo). But they shared the protection of, and links with, the British. That political divide was disrupted when the

Table 4.1 Considering the three-way division of Borneo (and including Sebatik)

	West Kalimantan	East Kalimantan	Sarawak	Sabah	Brunei Darussalam
<b>Political Status</b>	Part of Indonesia since 1945 (provincial status since 1956)	Part of Indonesia since 1945 (provincial status since 1956)	State within Federal Malaysia since 1963	State within Federal Malaysia since 1963	Fully sovereign state since 1984
<b>Capital City</b>	Pontianak (province); Jakarta (country)	Samarinda (province); Jakarta (country)	Kuching (state); Kuala Lumpur (country)	Kota Kinabalu (state); Kuala Lumpur (country)	Bandar Seri Begawan
Population (2010)	4,393,239	3,550,586	2,506,500	3,214,200	399,000
Land surface area (km <sup>2</sup> )	147,307	204,534	124,449	73,620	5,765
Resident population density (persons/km <sup>2</sup> )	30	17	20	44	69
% of population that lives in urban areas (2009)	27.72%	55.36%	49.94%	49.34%	76% (2010)
Life expectancy in years (2010)	70.7	73.2	75.6	78	78
% annual population growth (2010)	0.91%	3.81%	1.40%	1.00%	1.79%
Gross regional product (GRP) per capita (US\$) 2009	1,197	3,292	8,613	4,213	48,194 (GDP per capita)

Human development index (2009)	0.702	0.769	0.643	0.692	0.837
% of population below poverty line (2011)	8.60%	6.77%	1.1% (2005)	6.5% (2005)	3.9% (2008)
Adult (15+) Literacy rate (%) (2010)	90%	97%	79% (2006)	82% (2006)	95%
Main language(s) spoken	Indonesian, Chinese dialects, Dayak dialects, Malay	Indonesian, Banjarese, Bugis, Dayak dialects	Malay, Chinese dialect, English, Iban	Malay, Chinese, English, Kadazan	Malay, Chinese, English
Currency (exchange rate as at March 2012)	Rupiah (1US\$ = 9,094 Rupiah)		Ringgit (1US\$ = 3.0 Ringgit)		Dollar Brunei (1US\$ = 1.3 Dollar Brunei)

Japanese occupied the region during the Second World War (hereafter WWII). For the only time in its history, the whole island was unified under one colonial government and all its inhabitants became subjects of the Japanese emperor.

The Japanese occupation redrew some of the regional administrative boundaries, although reminders of earlier divisions still could be seen. British and Dutch Borneo were administered by different military establishments: the former – reorganised into five administrative divisions, each headed by a provincial governor – was administered by the Imperial Japanese Army (Ooi 2007), while the latter was at first also administered by the Army but then transferred to the Imperial Navy (Maekawa 2002: 156–157). Administration of most of the island remained localised and compartmentalised according to previous boundaries. The only exception was Brunei, which was grouped with another part of Sarawak to form a new administrative division (Hussainmiya 2003: 278). Owing to their short-lived occupation, the Japanese were not able to mould a single island identity; however, the prospects of cultural assimilation with a view to create an extension of Japanese settlements similar to those in Manchuria, Korea and Taiwan was thought to be suitable for Dutch Borneo if not for the whole island (Raben 2005: 22).

The Western powers returned to their former colonies after the conclusion of WWII; but the situation on the ground had changed. The Dutch faced strong resistance in trying to re-assert control over their former colony. As a part of their tactics to weaken the newly proclaimed Republic of Indonesia, the Dutch formed more than a dozen pro-Dutch states within the former Dutch East Indies, and shrewdly approached formerly disempowered local power holders such as sultans or kings to head such states. Six of these states – West Kalimantan, East Kalimantan, Dajak Besar, Kota Waringin, Bandjar and Kalimantan Tenggara – were in Borneo (Cribb 2000: 160). Yet, all these statelets were dissolved and became part of the Republic of Indonesia by 1950. In contrast to the Dutch, Britain did not face stiff opposition from the local populace in northern Borneo: Brunei remained a protectorate, while Sarawak and North Borneo became British colonies (Lockard 1967: 114).

The island's relative peace in the 1950s started to shift in the early 1960s. As part of its decolonisation strategy, Britain pushed for the establishment of a federated state of Malaya-Singapore (Subritzky 2000: 209–210). Britain wanted to ensure its continuing military presence in Singapore, and so could not let the island fall into the grip of *Barisan Sosialis*, a growing influential leftist opposition political party (Subritzky 2000: 209–210). At the insistence of Malaya, which had its



own concerns – British Borneo was also included: this move ensured a Malay racial majority in the new federal state, removing the threat posed by a significant Chinese community in Malaya (Chin 1997: 98, Jones 2000: 88). This concession was made even though many of the people of Sarawak and Sabah, their local leaders and even their British governors, initially opposed the idea (Chin 1997: 98, Jones 2000: 89–94, Means 1963: 146–147).

Under constant British pressure, however, and after significant lobbying by the political leaders of Malaya and Singapore (Chin 1997: 98–99), numerous leaders of Sarawak and North Borneo decided to support the new federal state, having secured constitutional safeguards protecting religion, language, education and immigration (Chin 1997: 99–100, Kroef 1963: 176, Milne 1963: 79). Brunei opted out because of disagreements over revenue sharing and the sovereignty of its monarch (Jones 2000: 103, Weatherbee 1983: 726–727). The federation was officially formed in September 1963 despite significant opposition: the Cobbold Commission found that one-third of the local inhabitants in Sabah and Sarawak were completely opposed to their inclusion in the new state (Chin 1997: 99).

Indonesia's President Sukarno, who had positioned himself as the champion of the Third World, saw the federation as a form of a new imperialism by the British and a potential threat to Indonesia. With a government under the strong influence of the Communists, who had voiced their disapproval to the federation idea since its inception, Sukarno launched *Konfrontasi*, a campaign to sabotage the formation of a federal Malaysia (Sutter 1966: 526–531). Indonesia started to train volunteers, including from northern Borneo as well as West and East Kalimantan, to sabotage the British plan. Border areas in Borneo soon became the main arena of violent incursion and raids (Sutter 1966: 527–528). The tension on the border had a profound impact on cementing the national identity of those who lived there. *Konfrontasi* taught them the importance of the political demarcation that differentiated them from their kin on the other side of the border (Amster and Lindquist 2005: 5–6). (The Malaysia–Singapore federation would eventually collapse, Singapore becoming its own sovereign state in 1965.)

## Territorial disputes and cooperation

From September 1963, Borneo was transformed into three separate political entities: Brunei (still a British protectorate), Indonesia and Malaysia. Border issues between Brunei and Sarawak/Sabah (which had been hitherto unaffected when they were under the same British flag)

started to surface. Although Brunei had lost a significant part of its territories to Sarawak and North Borneo, it only disputed Limbang, which according to Brunei was unlawfully incorporated into Sarawak (Crisswell 1971: 224–226, Weatherbee 1983: 724). This was an ongoing issue until 2009, when Brunei agreed to drop its claims over Limbang after gaining two oil-rich maritime blocks in the South China Sea from Malaysia (Leong 2010).

Malaysia and Indonesia started to work on their border in Borneo after normalising relations in 1966. Although the Dutch and British had imposed detailed demarcations along the Borneo border, there remained considerable scope for ambiguity (Forbes 2003: 58). One issue is the extensive use of temporary markers for the terrestrial border, such as the use of watersheds, instead of precise latitude and longitude coordinates; another is the lack of details relating to maritime boundaries, and which affect the status of islets off the main island.

There are ten outstanding border issues between Indonesia and Malaysia in Kalimantan (Aju 2011, Habibu 2011). An important one relates to the oil-rich Ambalat block, close to Sebatik Island, and which, at times, has brought bilateral tensions to the brink of war (Shari 2007, Storey 2009: 54, Suhartono 2009, Zulfakar 2005). Both countries had also hotly contested Sipadan and Ligitan, two islets not far from Ambalat. This dispute was resolved after both countries referred the case to the International Court of Justice, which ruled in December 2002 that they belonged to Malaysia (Ong 1999: 403, Tan 2002).

Claims that the Malaysian government or companies have encroached Indonesian Borneo frequently appear in Indonesia's newspapers. A report in October 2011 accused Malaysia of having appropriated some 1,400 hectares of Indonesian territory in Camar Bulan village and 80,000 square metres in Tanjung Datu, both in Sambas, West Kalimantan (Khoir 2011). Such reports are usually met with some strong nationalist rhetoric by politicians (Harian Joglo Semar 2011, Swara Sulut 2011), who may try to exploit the issues for their own political gains. For the people on the border, however, such claims are viewed differently. In their eyes, nationalism should not negatively affect their livelihood, which depends on peaceful and fluid cross-border relations (Equator 2011a, Hidayat 2009, Vinco 2011).

## **Cross-border activities**

The international border in Borneo was drawn by its former colonisers without adhering to ethnic boundaries, a common colonial practice

(Jackson and Rosberg 1982: 14). Thus, groups who shared similar ethnic backgrounds and had been in contact for centuries in interior Borneo suddenly found themselves divided into different political entities. Often unaware of the existence and consequence of the demarcation, locals continued their nomadic lifestyle and daily activities (such as hunting, fishing and shifting cultivation), which often involved crossing the international border. These social and cultural ties were important preludes for cross-border activities (King 1976: 85, Thien 2004).

Non-existent or ineffective control of movements across the long and porous political boundaries facilitated cross-border activities (Ishikawa 2008: 118, Lindquist 2009: 24, Wadley 2001: 629–630). The length of international land borders on the island is more than 2,000 km; 1,782 km between Malaysia–Indonesia, and 381 km between Malaysia and Brunei (Singh 2005: 184). With the exception of the land surrounding border control posts, the majority of the border is open (i.e. unfenced) and under minimum surveillance. The sprawling Indonesia–Malaysian border is monitored by just 50 check-points (Wakker 2006: 4) and eight joint-border posts (six in Sarawak and two in Sabah) (The Star 2011).

Most of today's cross-border activities are economically driven. Within Malaysia, the network of roads in Sarawak and Sabah remains the worst within the country; yet, it remains comparatively better than those within the Indonesian side of Borneo. Thus for Indonesians in both West and East Kalimantan, travelling to neighbouring Sarawak or Sabah towns and villages is easier and more practical. For example, the distance from West Kalimantan's Badau to Sarawak's town of Lubok Antu is only 10 km with a smooth road on Malaysia's side of the border, while access from Badau to the nearest Indonesian town of Lanjak and Nanga Kantuk is at least three times longer and impassable during the rainy season. Its distance to the district capital of Putussibau is 175 km with similar difficulties (Petebang 2009, Vinco 2011). Ironically, sometimes it is more efficient to travel between Indonesian towns in the border areas through Malaysia: for example, it takes ten hours to travel from Pontianak to Badau via Kuching and Lubok Antu in Sarawak; but 22 hours if through Putussibau (Petebang 2009). The Malaysian and Indonesian governments agreed to open 13 border check-points after the disappearance of the Chinese trading network in the interior of West Kalimantan as a result of an anti-Chinese programme in 1967. This allows people in the interior of West Kalimantan to officially obtain their daily necessities in Sarawak (Kroef 1968: 256).

These access issues have led to unstable supplies, and more expensive goods and services in Indonesia's border region. In East Kalimantan, for example, fuel was dispatched twice weekly by air transport to the three border districts. Owing to infrequent and costly transport, the cost of fuel in the border area skyrocketed to Rp 50,000 (US\$5.80) per litre, while fuel purchased from Malaysia cost only half as much (Kaltim Post 2011). Similarly, Indonesians on the border tend to seek medical treatments in Sabah's and Sarawak's hospitals (Borneo Tribune 2010, Pontianak Post 2010, Tribun Kaltim 2011). Sourcing similar goods and services from Malaysia is more practical, and is often cheaper: some essential items, such as gas, fuel, sugar and flour, are subsidised by the Malaysian government (The Borneo Post 2011b).

Economic disparities and price differentials between the two countries make border trading a lucrative business. There is a now growing trend for Bruneians to buy cigarettes from across the Sarawak border since the cost is several times cheaper than inside Brunei (Amiruddin 2010). Non-Muslim Bruneians have to travel into Sarawak's border in order to purchase liquor, since the sale of alcohol within Brunei, a Moslem state, is prohibited (Too 2008). As explained later, many Bruneians also frequently travel to Sarawak for shopping due to, among other reasons, cheaper prices. Similarly, Sarawakians make short trips to the Indonesian border to buy cheaper goods (The Brunei Times 2011b). From a producer's perspective, selling produce – such as rice – to markets in Sabah and Sarawak (rather than domestic markets) is a rational choice: it pays better, and the markets are also more easily accessed (Gunawan and Supriyanto 2011, Kompas 2001, Matanews 2008).

This ease of access is in part a function of administrative initiatives that have made the border more porous: Malaysia and Indonesia have agreed that borderland people are only required to present a travel document known as PLB or *Pas Lintas Batas* (Border Crossing Pass) when requested during the border crossing. This PLB can be obtained at a local crossing point, unlike passports that require travel to one of four immigration offices in the province (Entikong, Pontianak, Sambas and Sanggau) to obtain. Travel between Brunei and Sarawak has also been streamlined with the implementation of a Frequent Traveller Facility (FTF) scheme (Piri 2011b). In addition, the Malaysian government has for many years implemented a special passport for Sarawakians and Sabahans who want to travel to Brunei. This type of passport has the same length as the regular passport, but is six times cheaper (The Borneo Post 2010, 2011a). Such cross-border arrangements are important to both countries. Bruneians travel frequently to Sarawak, while people

from Sabah and from the Limbang and Lawas regions of Sarawak will need to pass four to eight border check-points if they want to visit Kuching, and vice versa.

## **Illegal activities**

Yet, official measures do not tell the whole story. One implication of porous borders and profits is thriving smuggling activities. Of course, smuggling is not new in the region: it has existed at least since the international border was established by the Dutch and British in Kalimantan (Ishikawa 2008: 122–123, Kroef 1968: 254–255, Obidzinski et al. 2006: 5, Wadley 2001: 627).

Of the two borders, the Malaysia–Brunei border is less problematic. The number of illegal crossings generally poses no serious concern for both countries, though the smuggling of goods does. Two of the main items that often find their way into Brunei from Sarawak are cigarettes and alcohol, for reasons already explained (Ya’akub 2011). Items such as fuel, livestock and illicit drugs are also occasionally reported (Piri 2011a, The Brunei Times 2008, 2011a).

Smuggling activities along the longer border between Indonesia and Malaysia are more intense and on a much larger scale. A minimum of 50 tons of sugar, 30–45 tons of flour were being smuggled from Sarawak to West Kalimantan daily in 2003 (Kompas 2003); Malaysian-subsidised liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) also finds its way easily across the Indonesian border (Luberto 2011, Wahyuni 2011). From the other direction, 200 tons of West Kalimantan’s rice found itself across the border daily in 2001 (Kompas 2001); about four million cubic metres of timber from Indonesian Kalimantan was smuggled into East Malaysia in 2002 (Obidzinski et al. 2006: 25). An operation of this magnitude occurs not merely because of the different prices that fetch across the border. First, there are contrasting living standards: the per capita income of Indonesians in Kalimantan was less than US\$300 in 2011, much lower than that of their Malaysian neighbours, which is between US\$4,000 and US\$7,000 (Pidani 2011). Second, the high population numbers along the border: the number of Indonesian residents in the West Kalimantan sub-district that borders Sarawak was about 160,000 in 2000; for East Kalimantan, the number was 143,000 (Badan Pusat Statistik 2000). Third, there is the existence of numerous traditional routes: in West Kalimantan alone, there were 52 documented traditional routes linking 55 villages in Indonesia and 32 kampung in Sarawak (Sinar Harapan 2011a). There were hundreds of such unofficial routes

from East Kalimantan to Sabah and Sarawak (Idrus 2010). The number of these unofficial routes may be increasing partly because of logging and palm-oil plantation activities (Abdillah 2011, Obidzinski et al. 2006: 10). Finally, there is a lack of law enforcement, and a facilitation of cross-border dynamics by various local and regional intermediaries and power brokers, as well as corrupt local officials (for example Obidzinski et al. 2006). Forbes (2003: 48) claims that governments often tolerate illicit trade as it is generally beneficial to both sides.

### **Integration of the Borneo borderland**

Border activities bind people from both sides of the political border closer together and create some levels of interdependence between them. Owing to this linkage, any disruption of cross-border flow will negatively impact on the livelihood of communities in the region. Many Indonesians in the interior region have relied for their livelihood (consumption, income and other daily activities) on the other side of the border. In 2011, 5,000 people in three sub-districts of interior East Kalimantan suffered because their access to Tapak Mega Camp in Sabah was closed for almost two months (Koran Kaltim 2011a, 2011b); although reports suggest that these people eventually found other ways of continuing to shop there (Koran Kaltim 2011a). The regional economy is also hurt if the flow of people is restricted, because visitors spend money during their visits. On the basis of 2007 data, Sarawak would potentially lose revenue of RM280 million (US\$81 million), the money spent by 1.4 million Brunei visitors annually (Bahrum 2009). It also will forgo significant revenue derived from Indonesian visitors. From Indonesian visitors through Entikong and Jagoi Babang crossings alone, Sarawak may lose annually RM83 million (US\$24 million) in revenue: annually, some 418,000 people cross the border from both posts (Equator 2011b, Tempo Interaktif 2010b). Its economy can also expect some shocks if the Malaysian government implements a drastic measure to curb migrant workers (legal or illegal) from Indonesia.

Malaysia has been a favourite destination for Indonesian migrant workers, known in Indonesian as *Tenaga Kerja Indonesia* (TKI). Indonesia has been the major supplier of labour (both legal and illegal) to Malaysia. In 2009, around half of some two million foreign workers in Malaysia came from Indonesia (International Organization for Migration 2010: 39); and as many as 70 per cent of Malaysia's 700,000 illegal workers came from Indonesia in 2006 (International Organization for Migration 2010: 41). Economic disparities, geography proximity, the presence of

network of worker agencies, linguistic similarities and social and cultural affinity between the two are some of the reasons (International Organisation for Migration 2010: 39). The prospect of 'better' paid jobs and high demand for workers in the so-called 3D (dirty, dangerous, demeaning) sectors, such as in plantations, logging, and construction, domestic work in Malaysia, and easy access to East Malaysia, are other contributors. One source estimates that the number of Indonesian workers in Sarawak in 2011 has reached 204,000 (Kompas 2011) and in Sabah about 600,000 (Suara Pembaruan 2011). The proportion of illegal workers was not known but, based on previous reports, it could easily exceed half of those numbers: of 450,000 plus Indonesian workers in Sabah in 2009, about 318,000 were illegal (Saju 2010); and another report claims that, at the end of the 1990s, more than half of 46,900 Indonesian workers in Sarawak were illegal (Agustiar 2000: 235).

Malaysia has, on several occasions, deported illegal migrants; but its policies have not been successful in reducing their numbers, due to the various aforementioned factors. Another policy more acceptable to business sectors in Malaysia is the regularisation of the workers. Through this strategy, businesses are able to keep their workers and the business process continues uninterrupted. In 1993, about 500,000 illegal TKI were regularised and in 1996 another 300,000 benefitted from the same policy (International Organisation for Migration 2010: 42). Similar efforts in 2011 would benefit 1.2 million illegal TKI (Suara Pembaruan 2011). The Malaysian government is even considering the option of accepting the employment of illegal migrants due to the continued demand for low-wage labour (The Brunei Times 2010) and large numbers of illegal migrants in the country.

There is evidence that suggests that the linkages on the island have reached beyond the immediate border areas, at least between West Kalimantan and Sarawak. The number of medical visits from other parts of West Kalimantan to Sarawak hospitals has been notable. It is estimated that the four daily flights from Pontianak to Kuching bring about a hundred medical tourists to Sarawak daily. The visitors seek more comprehensive and better medical treatment offered by the hospitals in Kuching (Munandar 2011). Tertiary education provided by institutions in East Malaysia is another indicator of such a link. In 1998, Indonesian students constituted 82 per cent of foreign students in Sarawak (Fariastuti 2002: 101). A representative of Malaysia's Inti College in Indonesia estimated that, in 2000, some 200 of its 500 Indonesian students in Sarawak were from West Kalimantan (interview). From my observations until 2005, middle- and high-income families in

West Kalimantan are attracted to Sarawak's tertiary education due to the proximity of Sarawak, its higher quality education, tuition fees that are markedly cheaper than those in other advanced countries, the combination of instruction in both English and Malay and the presence of a large Chinese community. Moreover, tuition fees for postgraduate study in Malaysia for Indonesian students may be even cheaper than they would have to pay should they have decided to stay at home (Kusuma 2010).

Cross-border activities on Sebatik Island mirror closely those in Borneo's borderland. Population and economic movements within the island are not constrained by political boundaries. Many Indonesians live on the Malaysian side of the border (Kukuh 2010), some deliberately building their residence on the border (Noveria 2006: 21). Surprisingly, the Malaysian government allows and even facilitates Indonesians living in the Malaysian part of Sebatik by providing them with houses that could be occupied with cheaper rent payments (Kukuh 2010); and, in the 1980s, an easy access to Malaysia's identity card (Noveria 2006: 51). The smuggling of goods and people can also be found here (Daily Express 2011a, 2011b, New Sabah Times 2010).

The Indonesian part of Sebatik is much dependent on Tawau of Sabah, which is the main market for Sebatik's fresh produce. Tawau attracts people who seek medical treatment because this is both cheaper and offered from better facilities when compared with other Indonesian towns close by. Better employment opportunities and existing social ties with people also result in frequent travel between Indonesia's Sebatik and Tawau (Noveria 2006: 48–49). Malaysian products, easily found in Indonesia's Sebatik, are shipped from Tawau (Tempo Interaktif 2010a).

### **Underdevelopment and nationalism inside Indonesian border**

Nationalism in Borneo borderland is more of an issue within Indonesian Kalimantan, than inside Malaysia or Brunei. A package consisting of better education and health facilities, higher accessibility, more jobs and better pay, reliable supplies of electricity, clean water and a constant supply of basic goods in East Malaysia is undeniably attractive to the borderland Indonesians. Products and services from Malaysia are perceived as being of a better quality than those from inside Indonesia (e.g. Luberto 2011, Wahyuni 2011). The Malaysian ringgit is considered a better currency in border transactions and is in common usage even on the Indonesian side of the border (Gunawan and Supriyanto 2011, Iskandar 2010 ). Many interior people cannot receive any Indonesian radio or



television channels other than Malaysian. Owing to the frequent contacts and flow of information from the other side, they are more aware of issues and developments in Sarawak and/or Sabah than of those in their own province (Bintoro 2010, Eilenberg 2005, Koran Kaltim 2011c, Republika 2011, Yurnaldi 2009). Indonesians in the borderland recognise the large discrepancies between the two sides of the border and are naturally disappointed with the Indonesian government. How can their kin on the other side of the border live better? It is not surprising to find frustrated borderland Indonesians threatening to switch nationality if the government does not improve their conditions immediately (Nur 2011, Unjianto 2011). Changing nationality or having dual nationalities for Indonesians on the border has occurred for decades, but has been underreported (Equator 2011c, Radar Tarakan 2010).

The Indonesian government has implemented several strategies to counter the rise of Malaysian nationalism among its borderland population. These range from implementing a national school curriculum to inculcate national ideals (Eilenberg 2005: 166–169), re-settling people from Java and Bali to help to create a feeling of being part of Indonesia's multi-ethnic nation among the border population and introducing economic opportunities through logging and plantation activities.

Unfortunately, the development of the borderland has not been significant. Centralised development policies in the past have tended to ignore the borderland, perhaps even intentionally so as not to encourage a communist mobilisation at the border (Eilenberg and Wadley 2009: 61). No state bodies and policies were expressly designed to tackle underdevelopment and poverty in the borderland. Furthermore, corrupt practices caused the already meagre funding from the central state to shrink even further when they reached the local region, resulting in low-quality infrastructure (such as roads and school buildings).

The borderland started to feature more prominently in local and national newspapers after 1998. Local NGOs and politicians took advantage of a new political freedom to start voicing their concerns. The process of *pemekaran* (redistricting), often a result of efforts to redress the imbalance of regional development and improve access of local government, also often touched on border issues.

In 2010, the government finally established *Badan Nasional Pengelola Perbatasan* (National Agency for Border Management) to specifically tackle the issue of underdevelopment in the borderland. The government pledged Rp 5 trillion (US\$550 million) to road infrastructure in order to open up the region, as well as addressing other concerns related to improving services and welfare (Fajar 2011). Since then,

significant road building and upgrading activities in the borderland have been underway in East and West Kalimantan (Bun 2011, Sinar Harapan 2011b). The government also launched a strategy to contain the influence of foreign media in the borderland. In West Kalimantan, for example, the government has established 24 *Desa Informasi* (Information-enabled Villages) where villagers now have access to telephone, internet, community radio and television channels (Equator 2010, Republika 2011). Other efforts include purchasing electricity from Sarawak to serve residents in the West Kalimantan borderland. Such developments have had an immediate effect, but registering an overall improvement in people's welfare will take some years. Until then, cross-border activities will continue and the integration of the region will continue to bind people from all sides of the border closer together.

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# 5

## Timor

*Anthony Soares*

### Introduction

More than nine years after independence, and twelve after the withdrawal of the occupying Indonesian forces from its territory, the East Timorese foreign minister was able to inform the press in 2011 that Timor-Leste and Indonesia were in the final phases of their negotiations over the borders between the neighbouring countries – the terrestrial ones that is, as negotiations over the maritime borders had not yet begun in earnest. This may seem like a long time to define the territorial limits of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste and those of the Indonesian province of East Nusa Tenggara (*Nusa Tenggara Timur*); but it pales into insignificance compared with the more than three centuries that it took Portugal and the Netherlands to agree the same thing – although, of course, the boundaries in this case would separate Portuguese Timor from Dutch West Timor. As discussed elsewhere (Soares 2011: 186–187), however, the border separating East from West on the island of Timor has not always overcome its artificiality as those living on either side of the line have continually attested to its invisibility. In fact, it is not one line that we must consider here, but two since, apart from the smaller neighbouring islands of Ataúro and Jaco, the territorial limits of Timor-Leste includes the enclave of Oecusse within Indonesian West Timor. Nevertheless, demarcation of the island of Timor by external powers underlined the colonial projects of the Dutch, Portuguese and Indonesians, while final agreement on where the West ends and East begins (or vice versa) will firmly place the hyphen into post-colonial Timor-Leste (see Table 5.1).

As has so often been the case, the territorial lines drawn by the Dutch and Portuguese colonial powers paid scant attention to the lands

*Table 5.1* Comparing West Timor (Indonesia) and Timor-Leste

	West Timor	Timor-Leste
Political Status	Part of Nusa Tenggara Timur province, of the Republic of Indonesia	Sovereign state since 2002
Capital City	Kupang (provincial capital)	Dili
Population (2010)	1,600,000	1,120,000
Land surface area (km <sup>2</sup> )	15,850	15,007
Resident population density (persons/km <sup>2</sup> )	100.9 (2010)	76.2 (2009)
% of population that lives in Urban Areas (2010)	21%	28%
Life expectancy in Years	65.8 (2010)	62 (2009)
% annual population growth (2010)	+ 2.3%	+ 3.4%
GNP per capita (US\$)	340 (2009)	2,220 (2010)
Standing on human development index (2010)	124th out of 182 countries (Indonesia)	147th out of 182 countries
% of population below poverty line (2009)	67.3%	41%
Adult (15+) Literacy rate (%)	71% (2009)	51% (2007)
Main language(s) spoken	Bahasa Indonesia, Uab Meto and Tetum	Tetum and Portuguese (official languages), Fataluku, Kemak, Makassae and Galoli (with about another ten lesser spoken indigenous languages), and Bahasa Indonesia (a working language, alongside English)
Currency (exchange rate as at January 2012)	Rupiah (1 Indonesian Rupiah = 0.00011 US\$)	US\$

inhabited by different ethno-linguistic groups, or to the relationships that may have existed between them. It would be wrong to imagine that, when the Portuguese first set foot on the island of Timor – the easternmost of the Lesser Sunda islands – early in the 16th century, they were stumbling upon an ‘island-nation’. Bearing in mind the colonial eyes that gave rise to these distinctions, one can note the absence of a

homogeneous community laying claim to the entire island, as Douglas Kammen notes: 'the Portuguese and Dutch viewed Timor as being divided into two provinces: Servião in the west, which was comprised of about 16 kingdoms, and Belos in the east, with about 50 different named polities' (2010: 246). All these polities had their own territories; but any boundaries were especially permeable in times of peace. So, when the Portuguese created their first administrative settlement in Lifau on the north-western coast of the island (in what is now the enclave of Oecusse, a rich source of sandalwood), there was no sense of an island-wide *Timorese* identity. Timorese 'kingdoms were neither unified nor centrifugal, combin[ing] loosely-knit localized territorial groups in a general hierarchy of clans' (Taylor 1991: 2).

The absence of an island-wide identity did not impede the creation of links that went beyond individual communities. While the island's mountainous terrain made communication difficult between different groups, this did not entail complete isolation. Coastal Timorese 'kingdoms' had been engaged in trade (mainly in valuable Timorese sandalwood, as well as beeswax) with peoples from East Java, the Celebes, India and China, long before the arrival of Europeans (Dunn 2003: 3, Gunn 2001: 5, Molnar 2010: 26, Taylor 1991: 1). The importance of these coastal kingdoms in their contact with the 'outside' world, trading local products for imported goods, which would in turn be exchanged for goods from groups living in the interior, means that the more significant axis of communication and power is not east-west, but interior-exterior. With varying degrees of difference, those groups located on the coast were viewed as more worldly, while those from the interior were seen as having special ritual powers, and exchange obligations linked different groups into complex political alliances that often crossed ethno-linguistic as much as physical boundaries (Traube 1995: 44).

The colonial division of the island into two halves along an east-west axis makes little sense, then, in a social context oriented on the notion of inside-outside, with groups from what would become Portuguese Timor having ritual links to others in what would become Dutch Timor. Moreover, the mercantilist nature that for centuries characterised the Portuguese and Dutch presences on the island did not unduly impact on existing indigenous modes of trading relations, nor did it create a distinctive separation between East and West Timor. The mercantilist form of colonialism practised until the end of the 19th century was structured on 'the desire of the core imperial powers to secure a trade surplus [...] and required their export-dependent colonies to play the role of

sources of cheap raw materials as well as captive markets for manufacturing exports originating from the centre' (Seccareccia 2007: 3). Thus, one can begin to understand how Timorese trading practices could map onto this structure without a marked degree of change. Broadly speaking, as long as the colonial powers restricted themselves to the external trade in goods, leaving a complex network of alliances and forms of ritual tribute linking different native communities undisturbed, then the inside–outside economic structures prevalent in Timor would not be dramatically altered, even if some of the dividends would now be diverted to the Dutch and Portuguese.

### Early (non)colonialism

Before the full-scale arrival of the Dutch East Indies Company (*Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie* – VOC) in the region in the early 17th century the Portuguese had largely been content to directly trade with Timor from their base on the island of Solor. The Portuguese presence in Timor was largely sub-contracted to the Topasses; descended from Portuguese and natives mainly of Solor. In 1642, however, and to some extent reacting to Holland's increasing presence, the Portuguese decided to attempt 'to extend their influence beyond the coast to control the island's internal trade' (Taylor 1991: 4). The Dutch VOC meanwhile behaved no differently in terms of its own insertion into the political economy of the western region of Timor. The Dutch did defeat the Portuguese garrison of Kupang, forcing them to flee to their base in Lifau, in 1653; but the VOC's attempts to control Timorese trade had a negligible effect on local networks of exchange. Both the Portuguese and Dutch simply either replaced or positioned themselves above Timorese rulers to whom their subjects paid tribute in the form of produce and labour. Beneath these higher hierarchical strata, the Timorese political and economic structures were barely touched, since lower-ranking rulers continued to receive tributes from their own local subjects, while making tribute to those immediately above them, as well as continuing to exert their political influence through the arrangement of marriages that would either cement existing alliances or create new ones.

What may be viewed from a Westernised perspective as the spread of a Wallersteinian capitalist world-system into the eastern Sunda islands did not present itself as such to many Timorese in the 17th and 18th centuries. 'What, in other societies, might have produced fundamental structural changes' as Taylor remarks, 'resulted paradoxically in the strengthening of basic aspects of Timorese society' (1991: 9). For

the Dutch, Portuguese and Topasses, control of Timorese trade meant increasing rivalry, which the Timorese could exploit, without significantly altering their economic structures. Following their conquest of Kupang, for example, the Dutch attempt to consolidate their position in western Timor through a significant military campaign in 1656 was thwarted by local rulers, aided by Topasses-supplied weaponry, leading the Dutch to retreat to the island of Roti. Timorese kingdoms in the east also frequently rose in revolt against both the Topasses and the Portuguese, but would unite with both groups in order to halt Dutch advances. In 1749, in what would effectively split the island in two – at least from the colonisers' point of view – a joint invasion by the Topasses and Portuguese of Dutch areas in the western regions was definitively repelled in the battle of Penfui, asserting Dutch control of the west (except for Lifau, which would become the enclave of Oecusse). This event also marks the demise of Topasses' power in the east, which was left in the hands of the Portuguese. The latter effectively abandoned Lifau to Topasses control in 1769, moving their base of operations to Dili on the north-eastern coast.

### Dutch and Portuguese semi-peripheral colonialism

A formal binding resolution of the boundaries between Dutch West Timor and Portuguese East Timor would have to wait until 1914, but the effective division of the island dates back to the battle of Penfui. Still, the 'line' separating Dutch from Portuguese Timor was nothing more than a foreign fiction with little real impact on the Timorese. Groups whose languages were spoken on both sides of the colonial divide did not cease to affirm their loyalty to each other through marriage alliances, which implied the largely unimpeded continuation of the exchange of goods over a 'foreign' border. It was principally in attempts to control Timorese *external* trade that Dutch and Portuguese influence could be felt.

In Portugal's case, this is not surprising if one accepts Boaventura de Sousa Santos's characterisation of its position within the international political economy: 'Portugal is and has been since the seventeenth century a semiperipheral country in the modern capitalist world system' (2002: 9). This position was mainly an outcome of two interconnected factors: first is the almost total absence of a domestic industrial base, resulting in a minimal amount of home-produced manufactured goods, most of which had to be imported from other nations including the Netherlands and, later, Britain; second is a reliance on the trade of mainly raw materials between the periphery and the core of the world

system in order to obtain revenue to pay for Portugal's importation of manufactured goods – goods that may have used raw materials from Portuguese overseas possessions, including Timor. To engage in this type of activity, the Portuguese did not see the need to exert any significant control that went beyond guaranteeing sufficient access to the trade in the raw materials available in their territories. Although principally referring to Portugal's presence in Africa, Boaventura de Sousa Santos's characterisation of the nature of the colonialism that results from these practices is applicable to the Portuguese presence in South-east Asia as well: 'the Portuguese engaged in trade in the region were colonizers without a colonial state and therefore forced to practise a kind of colonial self-government' (2002: 26).

Dutch relations with Timorese rulers within their sphere of influence were, as in the Portuguese case, not always denotative of the assured imposition of European political power. Dutch insertion into the Timorese political economy through agreements with local leaders, according to Steven Farram, enabled the latter 'to exercise influence greater than that which their Dutch masters had probably intended' (2004: 2). Viewed from a specifically Timorese context, therefore, it would have been difficult to note the passing of the Portuguese into the semi-periphery of a world system in whose core they were replaced by the Dutch; there was no notable difference in their respective abilities to exert their influence in the island. Importantly, however, Dutch insertion into the core is both a product and a cause of their increasing dominance in the region, which would eventually restrict semi-peripheral Portugal's presence to its half of the island of Timor, while the western half was part of the much larger space formed by the Dutch East Indies. The importance of this becomes increasingly significant in the transition from a mercantilist colonialism to high imperialism, and eventually to the struggle for Indonesian independence from the Dutch.

Until then, however, both powers' limitations on the island of Timor were most visible not only along the borders that separated their colonial possessions, but also along those that marked the frequently contested territorial limits of individual Timorese kingdoms within Dutch and Portuguese Timor. Disputes over territory or resources between rival Timorese kingdoms whose rulers had declared their loyalty to one or other of the colonising powers would oblige the Dutch or Portuguese to intervene; and also underlined the absence of any significant belief among Timorese leaders in either a Dutch or Portuguese Timor to which they all belonged. Instead of the Dutch flag in the West and the Portuguese flag in the East representing a supreme authority, which

those from each side of the island needed to respect at all times, individual Timorese rulers repeatedly obliged their supposed colonial masters to expend energy and revenue in restoring order within their remote possessions.

On the Dutch side of the island, the beginning of the 19th century coincided with the colonial power's recognition of the failure to impose its rule through the VOC and the need for the national government to take direct control of its overseas possessions. Characterised by corruption and mismanagement, the actions of VOC personnel within the Netherlands Indies in general and Timor in particular were increasingly seen as undermining the image of Dutch rule. By the beginning of 1800, the VOC had been disbanded and its territories became the property of the Dutch government. However, what may be seen as a Dutch attempt to centralise political and economic power within the hands of the state did not bring about significant change on the ground until the beginning of the 20th century. Until then, practices inherited from the VOC continued with little significant change, with limited trade of sandalwood and beeswax, allied to the granting of concessions for tax collection (mainly to Chinese) making Dutch Timor an unprofitable enterprise (Farram 2007: 467), mirroring the situation found on the Portuguese side of the island.

Wracked by internal political turmoil for much of the 19th century, Portugal had no real power or desire to develop its remote Timorese territory. In 1822, with Brazil's declaration of independence, it lost its most important and profitable colony; and in 1851 Portugal ceded its claims to Flores and other islands near Timor to the Dutch. Instead, Africa became the central focus of Portuguese imperial designs, where it was hoped that a 'new Brazil' could be built to restore Portugal's economic fortunes as well as its national pride. However, dreams of creating an African colony that stretched from Angola on the Atlantic coast to Mozambique on the Indian Ocean were irrevocably shattered following Britain's ultimatum in 1890, which required the Portuguese government to withdraw all its personnel from the central African regions both imperial nations coveted. Forced to return to the confines of its existing colonies, Portugal was confronted with the stark limitations of its politico-imperial power and obliged to recognise the might of a nation whose 'Empire was based on a dynamic balance between colonialism and capitalism' (Santos 2002: 11) – something that had not been achieved within the Portuguese imperial sphere. The consequences of this enforced confrontation with reality were the eventual downfall of the Portuguese monarchy (seen as largely responsible for

Portugal's capitulation to British demands) and the implantation of the first Republic in 1910.

### The 'civilising' mission: 1900–1941

The beginning of the 20th century saw the introduction of the Dutch 'Ethical Policy', aimed at repaying what the jurist Conrad van Deventer had termed 'a debt of honour' in an 1899 article of the same title (*Een eerschuld*). An increase in educational and health provision by the Dutch (some of which was seen in West Timor) was now part of a moral project enacted by a liberal colonial power, even if, 'All of this [...] brought as many benefits to Dutch commercial interests as it did to the Indonesians themselves and depended to a great extent on the growing demand for colonial products in world markets' (Carey 2001: 1063; my translation from Portuguese). Indeed, the veil of morality would not endure the vagaries of global economic forces, and when, at the start of the 1920s, the prices for colonial products fell, Dutch conservatives began to criticise the 'ethical policy', and its principles were firmly abandoned.

The same 'global' financial downturn would also claim the downfall of Portugal's liberal republic; its inability to solve the nation's increasing economic difficulties and its reliance on foreign credit left it defenceless in the face of a military coup in 1926. However, it would be the Coimbra University economics professor brought in by the generals to solve Portugal's economic difficulties who would lead the country's political life for the next four decades, and also reaffirm its imperial identity. Rather than seeing Portugal's colonial possessions as an unnecessary drain on the country's paltry economic resources, António de Oliveira Salazar (1889–1970) cemented them within its political identity through the *Acto Colonial* (Colonial Act), which became part of his dictatorial *Estado Novo's* (New State's) original 1930 constitution. This renewed colonising zeal, however, would not really reach Portuguese Timor until the end of the Second World War.

Added to a lack of 'development', Portuguese Timor's relative isolation in terms of its distance from other parts of Portugal's empire meant that the eastern half of the island of Timor was in some ways reliant on the Dutch territories to the West (Schouten 2001: 205). Portuguese Timor's relative economic insignificance in regional terms is reflected in the fact that the 'rupiah (guilder) was the passable currency rather than the [Portuguese] *pataca*, the official tender', leading to 'the smuggling of valuable commodities such as sandalwood and [...] coffee to



West Timor' in order to obtain the more sought after guilders (*ibid.*). However, the greater value of the Dutch guilder relative to the *pataca* is adduced from a *regional* context – *not*, in my view, specifically from within the local context of the island of Timor where both currencies were at times interchangeable, especially along the border separating Dutch from Portuguese Timor. Thus, for example, the administrator of Dutch West Timor 'reported in 1938 that copper and silver coins used in Portuguese Timor were in general circulation in [Dutch] Belu', but 'advised against any action against it as it was only the result of the lively cross-border trade that existed in the area' (Farram 2004: 150). It can be presumed, however, that a similarly benign attitude was not adopted by the colonial authorities on either side of the border as their increasingly concerted efforts to collect taxes in the early 20th century were continually flouted by Timorese who 'crossed the borders repeatedly to avoid paying taxes or performing corvée' (Farram 2004: 101).

As these cross-border evasions partly attest to, even as the colonising efforts of the Dutch and Portuguese gathered renewed vigour, there is little evidence of Timorese loyalty to either colonising power's flag or any sense of a discrete identity on either side of the island in the first decades of the 20th century. By the 1920s, the colonial political economies in operation in both West and East Timor differed little in their overall nature. The degree of intensity with which they were applied by each colonising power may have varied at different times, leading some Timorese to vote with their feet as to which regime they wished to live under. And yet, none of this signifies that the Timorese had in any real sense begun to believe that they shared an identity commensurable with the geographic limits of the island of Timor, or even with those of their own halves of the island – any more than they had when the Portuguese and Dutch had first arrived.

Instead, and as an unintended consequence of the Dutch 'Ethical Policy', what begins to emerge is the idea of an *Indonesian* identity – one which will eventually encompass the Western half of Timor. Whereas educational opportunities would remain almost non-existent in Portuguese Timor until 1941, the Dutch Indies experienced a significant and coordinated expansion in educational provision in the first years of the 20th century but one that, instead of creating loyal and productive natives, fomented anti-colonial and nationalist sentiments. Not only did the highly centralised and uniform Dutch school system offer its native students 'a self-contained, coherent universe of experience' (Anderson 2006: 121), its geographic spread 'gave the maps of the colony which they studied (always coloured differently from British

Malaya or the American Philippines [or Portuguese Timor?]) a territorially specific imagined reality which was every day confirmed by the accents and physiognomies of their classmates' (Anderson 2006: 122, also Almeida 2004: 97).

The fragility of the Indonesian nationalist project, however, becomes clearly visible in Dutch West Timor where 'the educated elite had few members from the Atoni or Tetun, who were native to the island' (Farram 2004: 119). Consequently, the local leaders of the nationalist movement tended *not* to be local, and could be met with suspicion from the Timorese who distrusted 'outsiders' brought in by the Dutch colonialists to take up positions of authority that were not readily available to 'insiders'. Nationalism did not readily appear to redress what many in Dutch Timor saw as the neglect to which the territory's indigenous population had been all too often condemned to as their colonial masters privileged the western parts of its East Indies empire, particularly Java. The political organisations that emerged in West Timor between the 1920s and the outbreak of the Second World War and the Japanese occupation of the island of Timor (1941–1945) presented a variety of platforms and demands, but none seemed to have firmly captured the imagination of the Timorese beyond sections of the inhabitants of Kupang. Nevertheless, such political activity would be unthinkable across the border in Portuguese Timor, since Salazar's dictatorial regime used every means possible to identify and crush dissent in the colonies, as it did in Portugal itself.

## The Second World War and aftermath

The brutal Japanese occupation of Timor (arguably, the only time during which the island was governed as a single geographical entity) and of the entire Dutch East Indies accelerated the drive for Indonesian independence and the desire to be free of Dutch colonialism. Once again, though, what took place in other parts of the Dutch East Indies was not always replicated in West Timor. Whereas 'the Japanese did little to popularise the notion of Indonesian independence in West Timor', following the end of hostilities and Japan's surrender, 'in western Indonesia the Allied occupation forces were faced with an organised independence movement' (Farram 2004: 219). After Sukarno, the Javanese leader of the anti-colonial struggle, declared the independence of the Republic of Indonesia on 17 August 1945, the returning Dutch were met by armed Indonesian resistance in the central and western regions of the archipelago. The Dutch met no similar resistance in West Timor.

Instead, both the Dutch and many Timorese looked upon Javanese in the territory with suspicion: the former because they saw them as active in an Indonesian revolution that sought to bring an end to their colonial rule; the latter because they regarded the success of the revolution as not only bringing with it Javanese political and economic domination, but also the rise of Islam, threatening the continued existence of a substantial Catholic population. Although the Dutch attempted to delay the inevitable with the creation of 'autonomous' states (including *Negara Indonesia Timur* – the State of East Indonesia – which included West Timor) to rival the Republic of Indonesia, the formal independence of the Republic was recognised on 1 January 1949; by August 1950, all remaining 'autonomous' states had joined the Republic, with *Negara Indonesia Timur* and the state of East Sumatra being the last to do so (Farram 2004: 252–253).

Such dramatic events appeared to have resulted in a distinguishing split on the island of Timor: the western half now belonging to a large, archipelagic independent postcolonial nation, and the eastern half remaining as the remote possession of a dictatorial colonial regime. The end of global conflict in 1945 did not give rise to any identifiable anti-colonial or nationalist movements in Portuguese Timor, and the post-war years saw the most significant developments (comparatively speaking) in terms of the construction (and reconstruction) of infrastructure, agricultural production for export and provision for education. Underlying this burst of colonial activity are two principal factors: first, and as occurred on the other side of the island, the need to address the destruction left by the Japanese; and, second, a desire by Portuguese authorities to quickly re-assert themselves as the territory's colonial rulers. The latter was facilitated by the lack of a significant native elite that could have spearheaded any nationalist movement (Dunn 2003: 18–19, Gunn 2001: 11) and by West Timor's own apparent reluctance to participate with the same vigour as other parts of Indonesia in the struggle against the Dutch. West Timor's unintended role as a buffer against the more radical Indonesian nationalist movements originating further west, and East Timor's own distance from any other Portuguese colony where an anti-colonial struggle may have arisen, left unfertile ground for an East Timorese resistance to emerge.

In the intervening years between the end of the Second World War and the fall of the Sukarno regime in 1965, however, and despite the apparent ideological divide between an Indonesian postcolonial state antipathetic towards the 'West' and an anti-Communist Portuguese dictatorship, the flow of goods and people (both legally and illegally)

across the border in Timor resumed after the disruption caused by the Japanese occupation. Traditional kinship ties that traversed the frontier continued to be affirmed, while small-scale (and largely unsanctioned) commercial activities allowed for the sale and purchase of commodities not readily available on one or other side of the border.

At an official level as well, relations were generally cordial enough to resolve isolated problems along the border, such as the Timorese man from the Portuguese enclave of Oecusse who in 1961 crossed the border and fired at two West Timorese, and who was then 'pursued into Portuguese Timor, decapitated and his head carried back to [...] West Timor' (Farram 2004: 337). Official cross-border cooperation at other times, such as the repatriation of suspected criminals (which had also occurred during the period of Dutch rule), ensured sufficient goodwill between the Indonesian and Portuguese authorities to overcome specific instances of potential discord. Portuguese fears over Sukarno's possible designs on East Timor were also sufficiently allayed to enable a relatively harmonious co-existence on the island. Various public statements made by the Indonesian leader and his government's official position recognised Portugal's sovereignty over East Timor and that Indonesia had no claims on the territory, 'using as a pretext the fact that it had never been part of the Dutch East Indies' (Fernandes 2006: 273; my translation).

### **The Suharto regime and the occupation of East Timor: Cold War logic?**

It was only weeks before his downfall that, on 17 August 1965, Sukarno called for the liberation of Portuguese Timor, a 'desperate political act' aimed at diverting attention from Indonesia's increasingly desperate economic situation – a situation felt more keenly in West Timor than in most regions of Indonesia (Fernandes 2006: 273). Although the violent ousting of Sukarno by General Suharto would temporarily put a stop to such plans, East Timor's integration into its giant neighbour was already being pondered by leading Western nations, with 'both London and Washington consider[ing] Portuguese Timor too small, backwards and isolated to survive on its own and resign[ing] themselves as a matter of policy to its eventual absorption by Indonesia' (Simpson 2005: 284). This would be a mantra repeated many times over the following decades, and one that both ignored colonialism's responsibility for Timorese 'backwardness', and served to obscure the West's geopolitical and economic self-interest.

Nevertheless, the mid-1960s saw the beginnings of East Timorese anti-colonial sentiment. Those who would be at the forefront of East Timorese nationalism (as well as those who would ultimately find themselves in opposition to it) were products of Portugal's belated efforts to create an educated native elite capable of working in the lower echelons of the colonial administration (Almeida 2004: 94, Carrascalão 2006: 25–32, Gusmão 1994: 9–12); although, unlike their Indonesian neighbours or those in Portuguese Africa, their increasingly critical stance towards Portugal's presence did not lead to armed resistance. Indeed, even after the April 1974 revolution in Portugal that overthrew Marcelo Caetano – Salazar's successor – and which led to the process of decolonisation and the formation of political parties in East Timor, the East Timorese nationalist leadership appeared to share some of the concerns of the Western powers in relation to the territory's readiness for independence (Gusmão 1994: 11, Pouyé 2005: 10–12). Very clear as to Portugal's blame for the situation, their anxieties were principally related to the lack of East Timorese personnel with the necessary skills to govern an independent nation, although they were also conscious of the uphill struggle they would face in gaining international support. As a result, apart from a small minority represented by APODETI (*Associação Popular Democrática Timorense*, Timorese Popular Democratic Association) who were in favour of integration with Indonesia, the two largest political parties – FRETILIN (*Frente Revolucionária do Timor-Leste Independente*, Revolutionary Front of Independent Timor-Leste) and the UDT (*União Democrática Timorense*, Timorese Democratic Union) – initially called for a transitional period of several years before East Timorese independence. FRETILIN, however, would soon change its position in favour of immediate self-determination (Niner 2001: 16).

During 1974–1975, the border between East and West Timor was busy. Much of the two-way traffic may have been the customary (legal and illegal) crossing of people and goods; but some of it was consequent to the political situation. Indonesian agents crossed into the East to supply logistical and financial support to APODETI and, when it became clear to the Suharto regime that this party had little popular support, to infiltrate the UDT and convince its leadership of the Communist threat posed by FRETILIN: this was a party that had spent considerable energy in spreading its nationalist message in rural areas, making it the most significant political force in the territory by 1975. APODETI and UDT leaders also crossed into West Timor and travelled to Jakarta, consulting with Indonesian officials on the evolving political landscape in East Timor.

Events took a violent turn in the summer of 1975 as Indonesian warnings of an impending Communist coup by FRETILIN led the UDT to launch a pre-emptive grab for power, provoking a short but bloody civil war from which FRETILIN emerged victorious, with UDT members and their sympathisers fleeing across the border into West Timor. Over the following weeks, in the opposite direction, with evermore frequency and destructive power, came Indonesian military, attacking East Timorese border villages and towns (Nevins 2005: 51). The full Indonesian invasion would arrive on 7 December 1975, shortly after FRETILIN's unilateral declaration of East Timorese independence on 28 November, marking the beginning of 24 years of a brutal occupation that would cut off East Timor from the rest of the world – finally effecting the isolation that had been seen as an obstacle by Western powers to East Timorese self-determination and a reason for integration into Indonesia. Paradoxically, now that the East had become by force a part of the West, the border between East and West Timor that had been so permeable before would become a stern barrier.

Cold War logic has frequently been used both by East Timorese (Duarte 1988: 56, Gusmão 1994: 55–57) and outsiders (Hull 1999: 62, International Crisis Group 2006: 1–2, Philpott 2006: 135) to explain Indonesia's invasion. The possibility of what was characterised as a Marxist FRETILIN-led independent Timor-Leste emerging in the region could not be entertained by an anti-Communist Indonesian regime supported by a Western Capitalist bloc still coming to terms with recent events in Vietnam. As Brad Simpson notes, 'Such concerns partially explain the subordination of East Timor's fate to the perceived imperative of maintaining friendly relations with the Suharto regime, whose growing importance in the regional political economy overshadowed its defiance of international law' (2005: 282). From an external perspective, allied to geopolitical considerations, were the repeated concerns regarding East Timor's size and state of 'development', seeing it as 'too small and too primitive to merit self-determination' (Simpson 2005: 282). But, as Indonesian forces entered the territory equipped with US-supplied weaponry, significant economic factors were also at play.

Having 'long sought to dominate the region, given its immense mineral wealth and vast commercial opportunities' (Nevins 2005: 48), the end of the Second World War and the subsequent demise of European colonial rule in Southeast Asia gave the United States greater freedom to achieve its objectives. For successive US administrations, not only was Suharto's Indonesia viewed as 'a bastion of anti-Communism and stability', it was also 'a crucial source of resources and one of the fastest

growing sites in the world for US private investment' (Simpson 2005: 283). Condemned by the United Nations, Indonesia's invasion and subsequent annexation of East Timor as its 27th province in 1976 was given *de facto* recognition by the United States and other countries with similar interests in the region generally and in Indonesia specifically: such as the United Kingdom, Japan and New Zealand. Australia even went one step further by giving *de jure* recognition to East Timorese integration into Indonesia, erasing not only the land borders between the two territories but, more importantly, also the maritime ones. Canberra's 'de jure recognition in January 1979 of Indonesia's annexation of East Timor' was 'a necessary step to enter into negotiations with Jakarta over the rights to the seabed of oil and natural gas deposits between northern Australia and the south coast of East Timor' (Nevins 2005: 63, also Cleary 2007: 13–32).

Indonesian military and political circles were also perhaps more attentive to the economics rather than the politics in their decision to occupy East Timor. While 'the rise in oil prices [...] made the territory's potentially vast undersea oilfields a tempting target' (Simpson 2005: 286), the Indonesian generals who oversaw the invasion owned a Chinese-managed company, PT Batara Indra, whose activities in occupied East Timor would bring them significant wealth through its monopoly on the export of coffee and sandalwood, and the extraction of marble, among other concerns (Carey 2001: 1065). The 'development' afforded by Indonesia drained East Timor of raw materials, appropriated land for migrants from other parts of the archipelago and, through its expansion of educational provision (or 'Indonesianization'), left a generation of young educated East Timorese with little or no access to jobs taken by those from Java and elsewhere in Indonesia – a situation similar to that found in the other half of the island of Timor, which continued to be one of the poorest Indonesian regions.

Western capitals were able to support and profit from the fiction of an Indonesian economic miracle they did much to create; meanwhile, the suffering necessary to maintain East Timor within the Asian republic was deliberately ignored. Nevertheless, the East Timorese were determined to bring about the creation of a border that would mark their independence. To achieve this objective, from the early 1980s onwards, the East Timorese resistance continually attested to its ability to overcome East Timor's Indonesian-enforced isolation by mounting an external campaign that employed a human rights discourse, or a strategy of 'publicised victimhood' (Pouyé 2005: 29). From the outset, East Timorese nationalists targeted the Suharto regime as the object of

their enmity, not an Indonesian population they regarded as equally victimised (Araújo 1977: 58). Such an outlook enabled young East Timorese students to traverse the border ostensibly to further their education, but in reality to forge relationships with young Indonesian activists who would take up the East Timorese cause (Jannisa 1997: 295–297, Wigglesworth 2007: 56). Their actions in turn formed part of the wider external front of the East Timorese resistance that would ultimately result in an independent Timor-Leste that is at least partly ‘a product of roving citizenship’ (Pureza 2004: 412; my translation) – a citizenship that not only crossed terrestrial borders in order to define its own national boundaries, but also employed technological developments to ‘claim independence in cyberspace’ (Hill 2002: 26).

### **East Timorese independence: the border as the troubled post-colonial hyphen**

Ultimately, however, the catalyst for change would come from within Indonesia. As the Suharto regime fell in 1998 under the weight of its own corruption, no longer capable of withstanding the anger of its own citizens or the wider Asian economic downturn, the incoming government surprised Western powers (and displeased the Indonesian military) with a radical announcement. It would offer the East Timorese the opportunity to vote on their territory’s future status: whether to become an autonomous region of the Republic of Indonesia or an independent state. For Indonesia’s political and economic establishment, such an announcement represented a dangerous fillip: in places such as Aceh and Irian Jaya, the Indonesian regime had long been resisting secessionist tendencies whose defeat was seen as essential for the survival of the world’s largest archipelagic state, and East Timorese independence would only make this task harder (repeating arguments made in favour of the original invasion of East Timor). Nevertheless, the possibility of finally achieving an internationally recognised border separating an independent Timor-Leste from the rest of the island to which it belongs geographically was strengthened by the deliberate re-casting of the East Timorese political economy. ‘In the case of FRETILIN, the party that had started with a Marxist wing in 1975 had, by 1999, embraced the free market as an economic principle’ (Kingsbury 2007a: 20); stark ideological differences between East Timorese political formations had also been set aside in order to form an umbrella organisation incorporating all nationalist parties. It was as a result of a confluence of such circumstances that a UN-sponsored referendum on the status of Timor-Leste



was held in August 1999 that confirmed what most both within and outside the territory had been claiming for so long: 78.5 per cent of the population voted in favour of independence and against the proposed autonomy within Indonesia.

In the run-up to the referendum, however, and particularly once the results were announced, the border between East and West Timor became the source of heightened danger. Once the East Timorese had opted for independence, weaponry and personnel crossed the border in order to give Indonesian-sponsored militias the means to wreak a terrible vengeance on East Timor's population for having rejected the offer of autonomy. Tens of thousands of East Timorese were forcibly moved into West Timor by militias and Indonesian military personnel, to be housed in 'refugee' camps. Even after the reality of the outcome could no longer be denied, 'militia leaders [...] claimed [...] that the two western-most districts of Bobonaro in the north and Covalima to the south should be ceded to Indonesia – regardless of the fact that the two districts overwhelmingly voted in favour of independence' (Kingsbury 2007b: 87). As the threat of violent incursions dissipated over the following years, the border became a site of economic danger, as smuggling 'denied badly needed revenue to the [East Timorese] government', and 'had the capacity to subvert the legitimate economy' (Kingsbury 2007b: 94). East Timor's best chance for avoiding failed state status was 'if its institutions functioned at a relatively competent level, [...] if its rule of law applied fully and consistently up to the limits of its borders, and if its territorial and economic integrity was not undermined, especially from beyond its borders' (Kingsbury 2007b: 88).

Borders are certainly a major concern in the East Timorese government's 2006 strategic defence policy document, *Força 2020*. Crucially, however, the borders it considers are not limited to those that separate East from West Timor. Instead, *Força 2020* underlines the fact that the 'geo-strategic situation of Timor-Leste [lies] between the two great regional powers', with Indonesia offering 'high human potential', and Australia 'high economic potential, the maritime frontier with which is still disputed' (RDTL 2006: 7) What this and similar comments demonstrate is an awareness of the position of Timor-Leste as a constituent part of an island, as well as of the island's situation within a much larger geopolitical context. This factor shapes East Timorese perceptions not only of what lies on the other side of its border to the West, but also of what lies beyond the sea to the South.

Nevertheless, the same document is clear on how its land border is 'the principal factor of vulnerability' (RDTL 2006: 18), with an

increasing disparity between economic prospects in West and East Timor becoming the possible cause of cross-border instability. Whereas economic neglect of the whole island of Timor under Dutch and Portuguese colonial rule could be said to have smothered east and west under similar levels of poverty and lack of opportunities, East Timorese independence has brought into sharp focus the situation in West Timor. The inherent ability since 2002 for Timor-Leste to exploit what are now (arguably) its own resources makes it an attractive destination for those living in West Timor, part of one of two provinces with the lowest *per capita* income in Indonesia – the other being Maluku, a group of neighbouring islands (*ibid.*). Yet, it is not the possibility of migration from West to East Timor that is seen as the principal threat to East Timorese interests, but rather that ‘poverty is a factor that produces impacts on the stability of the political environment in the immediate neighbouring regions’ (*ibid.*). Migration from west to east, in this perspective, is not the cause of instability, but rather the *effect*. Thus, what is needed to safeguard stability within Timor-Leste is a healthy Indonesian economy capable both of satisfying the needs of its citizens, and of assuring the supply of imported goods into Timor-Leste.

It was perhaps in part to address economic concerns, and particularly the higher levels of poverty affecting districts on both sides of the West/East Timor border, that in 2003 East Timorese political circles began to discuss the creation of a free-trade zone along the frontier. This plan, which has yet to come to fruition, has not been met with universal acclaim in Timor-Leste, as many within its fledgling business community fear an eventual Indonesian domination of local trade. Echoing fears that surfaced intermittently in the past, in West as well as East Timor, a free-trade zone has been seen as a gateway for more economically powerful forces from Java and elsewhere in Indonesia, rather than a means of bringing much sought-after prosperity to the border region. As one young East Timorese businessman told me in 2007, a free-trade zone would see a few East Timorese kiosks appearing in West Timor, and large Indonesian enterprises overwhelming a limited business class in Timor-Leste (e.g. Moxham 2005). Much of the proceeds from such a free-trade zone, according to this view, would not stay in either East or West Timor, but would find their way to what are already the more prosperous regions of Indonesia, further north and west.

The border, however, cannot be seen purely as an economic zone, but also as a site of political concern that, from an East Timorese perspective, is always connected to the centre of Indonesian government. Although the threat of armed incursions from West into East

Timor by militia members has receded over time, their continued presence along the border, and doubts as to the ability and/or willingness of the Indonesian government and military to control them, are sources of anxiety in Timor-Leste. Continuing links between members of the Indonesian armed forces and Timorese militia groups responsible for much of the violence in 1999 are no longer aimed at reversing Timor-Leste's sovereign status, despite incidents such as the raising of the Indonesian flag by soldiers crossing into Oecusse in May 2010. Instead, they are 'motivated primarily by material incentives, [...] dedicat[ing] themselves to theft, illegal trafficking or making localised demands, provoking instability in certain border regions' (República Democrática de Timor-Leste 2006: 22). Indeed, the enclave of Oecusse, due to its isolation from the rest of Timor-Leste, has presented a significant challenge to the political demarcation represented by the border. As the International Crisis Group remarks, 'though the enclave has remained politically distinct for several hundred years, links remain strong between families divided by the border [...] crossing regularly for marriages and funerals', and even farming land in the other country (2010: 1). The 67,000 inhabitants of Oecusse remain heavily reliant on cheap goods from Indonesia, and 'informal arrangements have served to facilitate movement of goods and people' (International Crisis Group 2010: 1). However, attempts by both central governments to formalise these arrangements by definitively demarcating the border have highlighted the inextricable links between politics and economics. Disputes over the right to land and resources separated from their presumed owners by the frontier have frequently sought to question the limits of either Indonesian or East Timorese sovereignty, raising fears that the violence seen in 1999 could recur, especially when members of Indonesia's military cross into Oecusse – something to be avoided at all costs.

Conscious of the fragility of the post-Suharto Indonesian political landscape, particularly in relation to the armed forces' capacity to avoid interfering in democratic processes or seeking to protect its own economic assets, post-independence East Timorese governments have appeared anxious to avoid providing any cause for political instability in the neighbouring country that would do little to solve problems at the border. This has been especially visible in the apparent desire of some of Timor-Leste's leading political figures to draw a line under the past, or their 'lack of political will [...] to hold accountable those responsible for the [Indonesian] systemisation of repressive violence' during the occupation (Philpott 2006: 148). There is a palpable fear that, by insisting on the prosecution of leading members of the Indonesian security forces

and their allies involved in human rights abuses in Timor-Leste, further instability in the border regions would result, adding to the threat of the return to a more hard-line regime in Jakarta.

Consider the case of Maternus Bere. A leader of the Laksaur militia group, he stood accused of orchestrating an attack on a church in the East Timorese town of Suai in the immediate aftermath of the 1999 referendum, in which three priests and dozens of people were killed. Despite being indicted by the United Nations Serious Crimes Unit, Bere crossed from West into East Timor in July 2009 to attend a family funeral in the grounds of the same church in Suai, where he was then arrested by East Timorese police. However, Bere, an Indonesian citizen and a minor government official in West Timor, was released from prison and transferred to the Indonesian embassy in Dili, the East Timorese capital, as Timor-Leste was celebrating the tenth anniversary of its independence referendum. Both the president and prime minister of Timor-Leste justified their interference in their own nation's judicial processes by claiming that Bere's release – who returned to West Timor – should be seen in the context of normalising relations with Indonesia. It should also be added that Indonesia's support was being sought to secure Timor-Leste's membership of Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN); an objective that, at the time of writing, has yet to be fulfilled.

## Conclusion

It is the means by which Timor-Leste has been integrated into a 'global' political economy following its independence in 2002 that represents a threat to its integrity, and not so much what lies on the other side of its terrestrial border. 'The first World Bank mission into post-conflict East Timor in November 1999 treated the territory in its working documents as a kind of social *terra nullius* where all institutions would have to be rebuilt along the lines of an international model', regardless of existing East Timorese social structures (Gunn 2007: 95). That 'international' model itself, however, becomes evidence of the way in which rival nations compete for the opportunities that Timor-Leste represents, where Timor-Leste is regarded – once again – as a territory to be exploited. With reference to the actions of foreign bilateral agencies in post-colonial Timor-Leste, 'each of their objectives and *modi operandi* is substantially different from each other, reflecting the various economic and geopolitical agendas of the nations involved' (Shepherd 2004: 112). It is also to safeguard the United States' own geopolitical agenda in the region, and perhaps to be within reach of the oil that lies in the

Timor Sea, that in November 2011 US president Obama announced in the Australian city of Darwin the expansion of its military presence in the capital of the Northern Territory. Given China's strengthening regional economic and political relations, including Timor-Leste, Obama's announcement does not surprise. Nevertheless, it represents one more threat to the long-fought for territorial, economic and political integrity of Timor-Leste that does not originate from the West of Timor. The extent to which the island of Timor will be able to develop productive and peaceful relationships between its two jurisdictions – ones that in some ways could reproduce those that existed for centuries before East Timorese independence – will be shaped by the degree to which external agents resist the temptation to interfere in order to advance their own self-interests. Wishful thinking?

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# 6

## Cyprus

*Ahmet Sözen*

### Introduction

The island of Cyprus was geographically divided into two in 1974 after a Turkish military operation that sought to prevent a Greek coup, which attempted to unite the island with Greece. Following a population exchange agreement in 1975, the population of the northern part of the island ethnic-wise became even more predominantly Turkish Cypriot, while the south became even more solidly Greek Cypriot.

The first signs of the physical division of the island can be traced back to the second half of the 1950s when Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities were engaged in violent clashes against one another. It was after violent inter-ethnic clashes following the December 1963 constitutional crises that a 'green line' – a buffer zone – between the two communities was first installed in 1964 by British Major-General Peter Young, who was then in charge of a 'peacekeeping force' that would soon become the United Nations Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP 2012). Today, the green line refers to the some 180-km-long UN-controlled buffer zone that divides the Turkish Cypriot north from the Greek Cypriot south. It is today also an accidental wildlife sanctuary (Simonsen 2009) (see Table 6.1).

Inter-communal negotiations between the island's two communities originally started in 1968 with the aim of re-designing the 1960 constitution. They have continued on and off since. The 1977 and 1979 High Level Agreements between the two communities have constituted the basis of all subsequent inter-communal negotiations, including the current round of peace talks. These negotiations, which have taken place under the aegis of the UN, have sought to find a lasting and comprehensive settlement to the Cyprus conflict. Their basis has, so far, been



*Table 6.1* Comparing the Republic of Cyprus with Turkish Cyprus (but excluding the British Sovereign Bases which are *sui generis*)

	Republic of Cyprus	Turkish Cyprus
Political Status	Sovereign State since 1960 (whole island except British sovereign bases)	Occupied by Turkey since 1974. Sovereign State since 1983 (but only recognised by Turkey)
Capital City	Nicosia	Nicosia
Population (2011)	1,120,500	294,900 (includes settlers/immigrants from Turkey)
Land surface area (km <sup>2</sup> )	9,240	3,355
Resident population density (persons/km <sup>2</sup> )	116	82
% of population that lives in Urban Areas	69%	70%
Life expectancy in years (2009)	79	78
% annual population growth	+1.2%	+1.3%
GNP per capita (US\$)	24,800 (2011)	13,930 (2009)
Standing on human development index (2009)	31st out of 182 countries	92nd out of 187 countries
% of population below poverty line	Not available	Not available
Adult (15+) Literacy rate (%)	97.9% (2011)	Reported as 99% (2010)
Main language(s) spoken	Greek	Turkish
Currency (exchange rate as at November 2011)	Euro (1US\$ = 0.76€)	Turkish Lira (1US\$ = 1.752TRY)

that of establishing a federal republic based on a suitable power-sharing formula between the two communities.

The Cyprus issue has been occupying the agenda of the international community since the 1950s. It has been largely approached by the international community as an attempt at 'unifying' the two sides; but the general sense is that, after four decades of trying, the matter has come to a critical turning point. The comprehensive peace plan cobbled together by UN under the leadership of Secretary-General Kofi Annan was scuppered by the heavy 'no' vote (76%) of Greek Cypriots, and despite the 65 per cent support of Turkish Cypriots (BBC News 2004). This outcome

most likely dealt a mortal blow to the idea of (re-)establishing a federal solution: one based on power sharing between the two communities in Cyprus, in the spirit of the 1960 Constitution. There is a widespread perception today that the failure of the current round of the peace negotiations would effectively mean the end of the federal (unifying) solution model in Cyprus. In such a case, alternative solution models that are more 'divorce'-oriented would most likely come into play.

### **Early division(s)**

A mental division between the Greek and Turkish communities on the island of Cyprus – the 3rd largest island in the Mediterranean Sea – can be traced back to the time of the Ottoman rule in Cyprus (1571–1878). According to the Ottoman Empire's 'millet' system, each religious community was autonomous in its domestic affairs. In other words, each community was accorded freedom in its religious practices, education and even tax collection within its own religious community (Purcell 1968). There was then no geographical division between the two communities on the island – indeed, there were many examples of 'mixed' Greek and Turkish villages – nonetheless, very few inter-communal (inter-faith) marriages between Christian Orthodox Greeks and Moslem Turks took place. There was therefore no real integration between the two communities; instead, there was a mental, linguistic, religious and psychological divide: an imaginary wall started taking form between these two island communities from the late 16th century, with each community living in its own religious domain, or enclave, quite independently from the 'other'.

Greek nationalism became prominent in the 19th century, expressed in initiatives to seek independence from the Ottoman Empire. The rise of Turkish nationalism followed in the 20th century. Both these waves had a dramatic impact on the respective communities in Cyprus (e.g. Nevzat and Hatay 2009). Hence, in the 20th century, the already existing religious division between the two communities was compounded with the addition of nationalism into the inter-communal mix. While administered by Britain since 1878, and annexed as a British colony in 1914, each of the two island communities aspired to become part of the bigger 'nation-state' that it naturally identified itself with.

The 1950s was a period when the nation-state paradigm was at its peak in Cyprus. It was clear that, just like elsewhere, the colonial power would withdraw from Cyprus in the near future. There was one burning question: Once the British withdrew from the island, who would govern

Cyprus and how? The Greek Cypriots established their underground organisation – EOKA (*Ethniki Organosis Kyprion Agoniston* – National Organization of Cypriot Fighters) – in 1955 to carry out an ‘independence’ struggle against the British. The idea was to force the British out of Cyprus and ‘unite the island’ – *Enosis* – with what the Greek Cypriots regarded then as their ‘motherland’ Greece. They were not really interested in establishing an independent state in Cyprus, which was more common in other independence movements elsewhere. As a reaction to EOKA, and fearing the implications of Greek irredentism on their own rights and prospects, the Turkish Cypriots responded by establishing their own underground organisation – TMT (*Türk Mukavemet Teşkilatı* – Turkish Resistance Organization) – in 1958: its main aim was the prevention of *Enosis* and instead the implementation of the ‘partitioning of the island’ – or *Taksim* (division) – between the two respective motherlands, Turkey and Greece. *Taksim* was a policy that envisaged the union of Turkish Cypriots with the bigger nation state, Turkey. Hence, in 1958, the two Cypriot communities were deeply embroiled in inter-communal violence and were quite adamant in pursuing their respective ultimate and contradictory national objectives of *Enosis* and *Taksim*. The worsening state of inter-communal life in the context of this deteriorating political situation becomes clear when one looks at the dramatic decrease in the number of mixed villages in Cyprus. Census data report 230 mixed villages in 1911, 221 in 1921 and 162 in 1946. In 1958, Turkish Cypriots abandoned 33 mixed villages and sought refuge in ‘pure’ Turkish Cypriot regions (Anastasiou 2008, PRIO Cyprus Centre 2011).

### Contextual rumblings

To fully understand political developments in Cyprus in the 1950s, one has to especially appreciate two key global political trends of the time and how these interplayed with the more local and regional issues in Cyprus. These were decolonisation and the Cold War.

In the 1950s, events in Cyprus were also influenced by the global anti-colonial movements and struggles taking place in Africa and Asia. However, unlike other ‘national’ movements of independence elsewhere, the anti-colonial movement in Cyprus had remained by and large a Greek Cypriot initiative. Moreover, the Greek Cypriots were not interested in independence *per se*. While their initial intent was the removal of the British colonial presence, this was just a necessary step prior to the annexation of Cyprus to the Greek motherland. EOKA launched various

violent attacks against the British colonial administration and, to a lesser extent, also against the Turkish Cypriot community (as well as some Greek Cypriots) who adamantly opposed to the idea of *Enosis*, dreading the implications of what would happen if Cyprus were to become a colony or satellite of Athens (Borowiec 2000).

Meanwhile, the Cold War superpower competition had already divided the world into two ideologically distinct camps. The two superpowers were very sensitive to the potential political developments anywhere in the world that could tilt the current balance of power. Hence, both camps were closely observing the developments in Cyprus, which were perceived as having a high disruptive potential. The US and the UK were especially concerned with how the inter-communal violence in Cyprus had the potential to escalate into a war between the two respective motherlands – Greece and Turkey, who were embarrassingly both North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) members and responsible for guarding the organisation's south-eastern European flank. It was common sense that during the Cold War, a conflict – with a potential for a full-scale war – between the two notional NATO allies would not be tolerated; for the other members of NATO, a conflict between Turkey and Greece over Cyprus was to be pre-empted at all costs. Hence, a Cyprus solution that would exclude both *Enosis* and *Taksim* options – and so very unpopular with the Cypriots themselves – was the only formula conceivable at the time that could at least temporarily prevent an armed clash between the two Cypriot communities and the Aegean conflict that could very easily follow (Camp 1980).

### **Neither nation state nor unitary state**

This is the difficult background to the creation, in 1960, of the Republic of Cyprus (RoC). This came to pass with the coming into force of three international treaties: a Treaty of Establishment, a Treaty of Guarantee and a Treaty of Alliance. The RoC was put together by the UK, Turkey and Greece – who became the three guarantor states that have the right as well as the responsibility to guarantee the security, independence, territorial integrity and the constitutional order that was created by the three treaties in 1960. The RoC was thus born as a semi-independent, bi-communal federation based on consociational democracy (Theophanous 2010).

The RoC was neither a nation state nor a unitary state. It was (in principle) a functional response to a crisis that was tearing the island apart. It was conceived as a bi-communal federation based on

consociationalism, in the sense that the functions and the competences of the state were divided and shared between the two communities. For example, in the executive branch, the president would be a Greek Cypriot and the vice-president a Turkish Cypriot, each of whom would be elected separately by their respective communities. The president and the vice-president would have veto power on laws or decisions concerning foreign affairs, security and finance. There was a 7:3 Greek Cypriot to Turkish Cypriot ratio, both in the Cabinet of Ministers as well as in the legislative branch; although certain legislative decisions required separate majority voting from the MPs representing each respective community. In the judiciary branch, the Supreme Constitutional Court had one Turkish Cypriot, one Greek Cypriot and one neutral (non-Cypriot) president. Hence, the RoC was based on a delicate power-sharing arrangement between the two Cypriot communities, with some sense of proportionality based on the demographic distribution: the 1960 census reported a resident population made up of 80 per cent Greek Cypriots and 18 per cent Turkish Cypriots (Coufoudakis 1976).

Although there was no geographical division between the two societies, there was nonetheless a clear division between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities in terms of the powers and the functions of the state. The effective functioning of the state naturally necessitated the renunciation of the idea and aspiration of joining one's own nation state by each of the two communities (*Enosis* and *Taksim*) as well as required their active cooperation to succeed. Moreover, there was never any intent to promote the development of an island-wide, specifically *Cypriot* identity and nationalism; indeed, the division contributed to the maintenance and reinforcement of ethnic cleavages (Joseph 2009).

The RoC was also only a semi-independent state: the founding international treaties clearly prohibited both *Enosis* and *Taksim*, hypothetically even in case of bi-communal consensus on the issue; it also accepted the right of intervention in the internal affairs of Cyprus to the three guarantor states. The banning of any activity that would foster *Enosis* and *Taksim*, or even the independence of constituent parts of Cyprus, was enshrined in Article 22 of the 1960 Constitution, having been transferred from the Treaty of Establishment: that could not be altered under any circumstance. The Treaty of Guarantee, moreover, gave the right and responsibility to the three guarantor powers to prevent *Enosis* and *Taksim*, in addition to the right of intervention under certain provisions.

There was more: while the island was not to be divided, 3 per cent of the island's land area was designated British sovereign territory. According to Article 1 of the Treaty of Establishment, two military sovereign base areas (SBAs) were created: Akrotiri and Dhekelia. These were fully sovereign and completely outside the jurisdiction of the RoC. These bases were also expressly excluded when the RoC acceded to the European Union in 2004 (Constantinou 2005, Souter 1984). Some 3,000 British troops are stationed there at any time; the SBAs cover a land area of 250 km<sup>2</sup>, almost equally divided between Akrotiri and Dhekelia.

For the majority of the Greek Cypriot political elite, the RoC was an unwanted and half-baked development; the RoC was an unfair imposition of Cold War politics on the Greek Cypriot majority, who were forced to share their island state with the Turkish Cypriot minority. The leader of the *Enosis* struggle, Archbishop Makarios III, became the first president of the RoC; but he treated the RoC as a stepping stone to *Enosis*. Hence, according to Makarios, as a first step, the unfair constitutional burdens imposed on the RoC required modification. With that in mind, Makarios proposed 13 points to change in the constitution to the Turkish Cypriots. The proposed changes would have reduced the Turkish Cypriot co-founder of the republic to a minority ripped off from presidential veto power, separate majority voting and other protective measures. The proposed changes would have turned the bi-communal RoC into a Greek Cypriot unitary state. Not surprisingly, these changes were rejected by Dr Fazıl Küçük, the Turkish Cypriot vice-president, and the Turkish Cypriot political elites. This led the Greek Cypriot establishment to resort to force in order to implement what were felt to be necessary constitutional changes. As a result, inter-communal fighting resumed in December 1963; in 1964, this led first to the withdrawal of the Turkish Cypriots from state machinery, and then to the stationing of the UNFICYP peacekeeping force to form a buffer zone between the two tense Cypriot communities. As of 1964, just four years after it was set up, the RoC became a *de facto* Greek Cypriot state in the absence of the Turkish Cypriots from all levels of the state. Today, what is known as the government of the RoC is a purely Greek Cypriot one. However, the Turkish Cypriots had no other option but to form their own governing organisations separate from the RoC. In 1967 after renewed ethnic clashes, the Turkish Cypriots established the Provisional Turkish Cypriot Administration; this became the Autonomous Turkish Cypriot Administration in 1974; the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus in 1975; and finally the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) in 1983.

Inter-communal negotiations between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot interlocutors finally began in 1968, first in Lebanon and then in Nicosia, the Cypriot capital. In these negotiations, the idea was to re-negotiate the 1960 constitution and design a new structure of power sharing between the two communities where the Turkish Cypriots would be given more regional autonomy (local government) in return for fewer competences in the central government. These inter-communal peace talks that started between the Greek Cypriot interlocutor Glafkos Clerides and the Turkish Cypriot interlocutor Rauf Denktash went on and off until they were interrupted by a coup on 15 July 1974 organised by the Greek Military Junta (the Colonels' Regime 1967–1974) and supported by EOKA B and the Cyprus National Guard, toppled the Makarios government and sought to implement *Enosis*. Narrowly escaping an attempt on his life, Makarios was flown out of Cyprus from the Akrotiri base to London.

### The (big) division

But this was not to be. On 20 July 1974, just five days after the coup, Turkey sent troops into Cyprus to thwart the Greek Junta's plans to annex the island to Greece, citing its rights and responsibilities as a guarantor state under the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee. A few days later, a cease-fire was issued and negotiations to resolve the Cyprus issue began in Geneva, with the participation of all three guarantor powers. However, an inability to reach a settlement in Geneva, along with the continuation of bloodshed on the island, prompted Turkey to resume its military operation and advance into Cyprus on 14 August. Within a few days, as a result of the military advance, 37 per cent of the island fell under Turkish control. Faced with this Cyprus turn-around, the Greek junta collapsed.

In 1975, the two communities participated in a few rounds of talks under the UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim's aegis in Vienna. During the third round of the Vienna Talks, the communities reached their first 'Agreement on Voluntary Regrouping of Populations', also popularly known as the 'population exchange agreement'. By the end of 1975, the large majority of Turkish Cypriots who were still resident in the southern part of Cyprus crossed the Green Line to take up residence into the northern part under the Turkish army's control; while most of the Greek Cypriots still residing in the northern part of the island crossed to take up residence in the southern part, then under the control of the Greek Cypriot National Guard. This marks the big

division of the island into two, by and large distinct, ethnically homogeneous zones, separated by the UN-patrolled Green Line. This protracted division continues today.

For 28 years – between 1975 and 2003 – crossing from one side to the other across the Green Line was extremely difficult, if not impossible. It could only be done following the granting of special permission from the authorities of the two administrations in Cyprus. This meant that, during this period of more than a quarter century, there was almost no contact between the two communities. Meanwhile, a new generation of people growing up on both sides of the UN divide have done so within their own ‘nation state’, without direct contact and communication with the other community, growing up in its own ‘nation state’ on the other side of the UN buffer zone.

The 1977 and the 1979 High Level Agreements between the leaders of the two communities laid down the basic parameters of a future Cyprus settlement: at least on paper. The two communities agreed to establish a federation, which would be a single sovereign entity and have one international personality; it would be bi-zonal with regard to its territorial aspects and bi-communal with regard to its constitutional aspects; and there would be political equality between the two constituting communities. In other words, a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation based on political equality with single sovereignty was put forward as the basis for a UN-brokered solution to what became known as ‘the Cyprus problem’ (e.g. Kyriacou 2000). Although the two sides have agreed on the broad parameters of a future settlement, when it comes to the details, the two sides have so far failed to reach the final comprehensive solution and the island continues to be divided having two *de facto* political administrations – one internationally recognised, and the other not.

Meanwhile, with barbed wire, border guards and UN peacekeepers patrolling the whole length of the 180-km Green Line – which varies in width from 20 metres to 7 kilometres, and includes four villages – cross-border incursions were rare but violent, both sides accusing each other of excessive use of force and inciting militancy.

There is, however, also another story to be told. Economics can trump nationalism, it seems. During 1974–2003, there was some negligible inter-border trade, mostly involving small-time smuggling of Greek Cypriot brandy, guns or automobile parts to the Turkish side (e.g. Hellenic Resources Network 1998, 1999). It was usually a handful of Turkish Cypriots who worked at the British Sovereign Base in Dhekelia who were most able to cross to the Greek side *through* the base – there was no checkpoint there. The British base at Dhekelia was one of the few



places in Cyprus, along with the 'mixed' village of Pyla close by, where a handful of Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots continued to meet and work together.

The establishment of the 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus' by the Turkish Cypriots in 1983 – recognised as a sovereign state only by Turkey – and the EU membership of the RoC in May 2004 mark two important developments in the story of the division of the island. These two dynamics, if used wisely, could perhaps have fostered the unification of the island. Instead, as things have turned out so far, both episodes appear to have contributed to maintaining, if not even exacerbating, the existing divisions.

During the early 1980s when the inter-communal negotiations were faltering and there was hardly any optimism about negotiating a lasting and acceptable solution, the Turkish Cypriots unilaterally declared independence (UDI) and established the TRNC. The Turkish Cypriots included a clause in the declaration, stating that they would continue inter-communal negotiations aimed at creating a united federal republic in Cyprus. Various observers initially believed that the Turkish Cypriots' UDI would bring the Greek Cypriots back to the negotiation table and accept a compromise on the basis of a federal solution. And yet, though the Greek Cypriot side initially returned to the UN-sponsored inter-communal negotiations, it nevertheless held on to its preferred strategy of internationalising the Cyprus problem through the internationally recognised status of the RoC and its diplomatic reach and influence. The Greek Cypriots expected the international community to apply pressure on Turkey such that it would make those concessions on Cyprus that would lead to a solution acceptable to the Greek Cypriot side. Meanwhile, of course, this was the perfect pretext for the Turkish Cypriot separatist nationalist elites to popularise the claim that this was 1960 all over again: the Greek Cypriots were not interested in power sharing with the Turkish Cypriots at all; and that they rather just wanted to get rid of Turkey and dominate the Turkish Cypriots as a minority in Cyprus. Today, a considerable part of the Turkish Cypriot community has come to accept that a divided Cyprus is here to stay and that the TRNC is the best guarantor of the rights of Turkish Cypriots, even though it would be a significant obstacle to a negotiated federal solution. Hopes for any federal formula are quickly ebbing: according to a *Cyprus 2015* poll, 23 per cent of Turkish Cypriots say that, in a potential future referendum for a federal solution, they would either almost certainly (14%) or likely (9%) vote no; within the Greek Cypriot community, there are even more detractors, with 31 per cent almost certainly and 11 per cent likely to vote against (Christou et al. 2011).

The accession of the RoC to the EU as a member state had been a very controversial issue (Yeşilada and Sözen 2002). Many EU political elites believed that the prospects and run-up to EU membership would be a positive motivation for both Cypriot communities to solve the Cyprus conflict. This could have been an accurate assessment, if the membership were conditioned on the solution of the problem. Had the EU made the solution of the problem a prerequisite for the EU membership of a united Cyprus, then, EU membership would have been a very important prize and incentive for both communities to work harder, make the necessary concessions and reach a comprehensive solution. However, the EU – naively or short-sightedly, but certainly surprised by the overwhelming rejection of the Annan Plan by the Greek Cypriots in the April 2004 referendum – allowed a still-divided Cyprus to enter the EU; perhaps Brussels continues to hope that the conflict would someday, somehow, go away. Owing to the lingering division of the island, the EU suspended its *acquis communautaire* from ‘those areas of the Republic of Cyprus in which the Government of the Republic of Cyprus does not exercise effective control’ (Protocol 10, Treaty of Accession 2003). In this way, the EU suspended its body of laws and regulations in the ‘TRNC’ – the region/territory/country that the EU diplomatically describes in 21 words. Despite the decision of the EU Council of Ministers on 26 April 2004 to lift the isolation of Turkish Cypriots and bring them closer to the European Union as a reward for the Turkish Cypriots’ support for the UN’s re-unification plan, the EU by and large failed to keep its promises and succumbed to the veto of the (Greek Cypriot) RoC, which has become a member of the EU since 1 May 2004. In a way, the EU membership of the RoC, where the EU laws and regulations are applied in the southern part and where they are suspended in the northern part, has made the division of the island that much more tangible and palpable since the RoC’s EU membership in 2004 (Hoffmeister 2006).

### **Current political economy of the Green Line**

On 23 April 2003, the Turkish Cypriot authorities unilaterally lifted the restrictions on the crossings to the southern part of the island. ‘All of a sudden, the impossible was happening’ (Morgan 2003). The Greek Cypriot authorities reciprocated by allowing ‘Cypriots’ to cross from the north to the south. Mobility across the Green Line was thus allowed for the first time in 28 years, as long as the members of both communities

returned home at the end of each day. Then, as of 1 May 2004, the Greek Cypriots, now part of the EU, were obliged to accept the 'Green Line Regulation', allowing free movement even to other (non-Cypriot) EU nationals who may have wanted to cross over to the southern part of Cyprus from the north. These concessions contrasted with the policy line that the Greek Cypriot Government had maintained since 1974: since the northern part of their sovereign state was 'under occupation', anyone who entered the island from any port in the northern part of Cyprus was considered as an illegal entrant into the island and would not be allowed to cross to the southern part (Council Regulation (EC), No 866/2004 of 29 April 2004). There is now an uninhibited contact and freedom of communication between the peoples on the two sides.

But over 400 years of communal tensions do not disappear overnight. While there has been some volume of traffic – of persons, goods and services – in line with the Green Line Regulation, human crossings and the volume of trade have remained rather insignificant and cannot be considered as any definitive sign of a real thaw in relations and of some integration of the two Cypriot communities. Following the initial euphoria, crossings of Greek Cypriots into the North have decreased after 2005; and those of Turkish Cypriots (which are higher) are also down and were back almost to 2003 levels by 2009 (UNDP 2011).

In spite of these crossings across the buffer zone since 2003, the levels of contact and trust between the two Cypriot communities have been quite low. An inter-communal survey of public opinion in 2007, organised by the UNFICYP, reports that 90 per cent of Turkish Cypriots claim to have no contact at all with the Greek side; 7 per cent have personal contacts; and just 3 per cent have professional contacts. Among Greek Cypriots, 87 per cent claim to have no contact at all with the Turkish side; 8 per cent have personal contacts; and 5 per cent have professional contacts (UNFICYP 2007).

Cypriots are skeptical of having friends, colleagues, and neighbours from the other community, or of allowing their children to attend mixed schools. Both communities are opposed to having a leader or a boss from the other community, and to bi-communal marriages.

(Jarraud et al. 2010: n.p.)

A similar poll take two years later, in 2009, notes some improvements in inter-communal communications and relationship building; but still a long way to go: 76 per cent of Greek Cypriots and 62 per cent of Turkish Cypriots still had no contact at all with 'the other side' (CYMAR 2009).

The amount of expenditure of the two communities through the Green Line trade is also rather limited. This low volume shows how the two economies are quite independent and almost completely disintegrated with one another. The less economically developed Turkish side is keener to trade with its more developed Greek counterpart: the volume of Turkish Cypriot trade with/in the RoC has grown from €0.5 million in 2004 to €7.2 million in 2008; then back to €6 million after the 2008 financial crisis. Greek Cypriot trade with its poorer Turkish Cypriot neighbour is more subdued: a peak of just €1.4 million was reached in 2008 (UNDP 2011).

Since the 2004 implementation of the Green Line Regulation, there are greater opportunities for the crossing of people, goods and services across the Green Line. The most important factor in economic interdependence is the movement of people across the Green Line. This accounts for 75 per cent of total intra-island expenditures, the rest being contributed by Green Line trade, employment of some 2,400 Turkish Cypriots in the RoC, social insurance and health provision. 3.8 million crossings across the Green Line were registered in 2008, falling to 3.2 million in 2009 (UNDP 2011: 6). However, unfortunately, there remains hardly any indications for a future *integration* or *unification* of the two communities. Rather, it appears that the *division* between the two communities is the order of the day, certainly for the foreseeable future. It may also become the basis for a lasting agreement between the two sides.

### **Power sharing: come again?**

The crux of the matter in the Cyprus conflict was clearly stated by the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan after the failure of the 2004 referenda, in his 28 May 2004 report to the UN Security Council:

[...] the sheer size of the 'No' vote raises even more fundamental questions. This is the first time that the Greek Cypriot public has been asked to vote on a bicomunal, bizonal federal solution of the Cyprus problem. Such a solution means not just two constituent states, but also political equality and the sharing of power... If the Greek Cypriots are ready to share power and prosperity with the Turkish Cypriots in a federal structure based on political equality, this needs to be demonstrated, not just by word, but by action.

(UNSG Report 2004: para. 85–86)

Obsession with embracing one's unitary 'nation-state', rather than learning to share power with the other community in a consociational

democracy, has dominated the recent political history of the two Cypriot communities since the collapse of the constitutional order of the RoC in 1963. The majority of the Greek Cypriot political establishment has always considered the Turkish Cypriots as a minority on the island. In that regard, for them, the RoC can only be a unitary Hellenic-Greek Cypriot nation state where Turkish Cypriots would be just any other citizens on a 'one person, one vote' basis, with no special rights or guarantees. As a reaction to that, of course, the majority of the Turkish Cypriot elite believes that there is no other way but to have a unitary Turkish Cypriot nation state in Cyprus to protect the Turkish Cypriot community from the larger Greek Cypriot population. An island-wide sample poll of 2,000 respondents in 2009 tested preferences between five options among the two communities: (1) a single unitary state, (2) a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation, (3) a continuation of the status quo, (4) a confederation of two sovereign states and (5) two separate and internationally recognised states. A Greek Cypriot nation state remains the most popular support among Greek Cypriot respondents (with 93% support), federation comes next, and is still acceptable to a majority (79% support). In contrast, the first preference for Turkish Cypriots is the two recognised sovereign states solution (90% support). However, many are also prepared to accept federation as a workable option (76% support) (Sözen et al. 2009). In this particular historical experience of almost half of a century, the politics of division between the two communities has been the dominant narrative in the political space on both sides. However, inter-communal negotiations may have come to a critical juncture; one where the current UN Secretary General has stated that 'the talks have moved into the final phase' (UN 2012). There remain three particularly difficult issues to resolve: the election of the executive, property and citizenship. Another failure of the current peace process similar to the 2004 failed referenda would probably mean the end of the search for a federal solution model to the Cyprus conflict and, hence, the rise of alternative, division-oriented solution templates.

## Recent developments

There are currently important external factors that make a solution of 'the Cyprus problem' an urgent one. Rich hydrocarbon resources, particularly gas, have been discovered in Cyprus' exclusive economic zone in 2011. For the peaceful exploitation of these resources, a solution to the Cyprus conflict is a valuable prerequisite, as seen in recent diplomatic exchanges between the RoC and Turkey (BBC News 2011, Champion 2001). In addition, the non-resolution of the Cyprus affair

poses an important obstacle in front of Turkey's own accession bid to the European Union, not to mention the lingering matter of a healthy institutional co-operation between the EU and NATO where the (Greek Cypriot) RoC and Turkey are members, respectively, and where they can wield their veto power to block any decision affecting important developments in international relations in this volatile region. There is a *de facto* freeze on Turkey's accession negotiations as a direct outcome of the Cyprus impasse. Nevertheless, recent political developments in Turkey point to its emerging confidence as the regional power, reducing Ankara's incentive to secure what it could interpret as a non-favourable resolution to the Cyprus problem.

The continuing division of the island also jeopardises the levels of co-operation required for the two communities to deal effectively with the fight against drug trafficking, illegal arms trade, human trafficking and money laundering. Whether a comprehensive settlement is eventually secured or not, both sides need to learn to co-operate better in Cyprus.

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# 7

## Ireland

*Stephen A. Royle*

### Introduction

'Islands constitute natural unities; sea channels constitute natural divisions'. So wrote Kevin Howard (2006: 9) with particular reference to the two largest islands of the British Isles: Great Britain and Ireland. However, at the time of writing, the political unity of Great Britain is being called into question, while Ireland has been divided since the 1920s. Part of the island of Ireland is united not with the rest of the island, but with Great Britain across the other side of the 'natural division' that is the Irish Sea, for Ireland's history, development and political structures have long been moulded by Great Britain. The journey to this 'unnatural' unity and the associated division of Ireland forms the material for this chapter.

Ireland is not a small island; at 84,421 km<sup>2</sup>, it is the world's 20th largest island by area, 19th by population size. However, it is small compared with Great Britain as close as 21 km to its east whose 209,331 km<sup>2</sup> makes it the 9th largest island by area while it is third in population behind only Java and Honshu. Great Britain is in some ways itself also divided. There are three constituent parts – England, Wales and Scotland – the last two having their own sub-national legislatures. Internationally, this division is marked principally by the fact that Great Britain fields three separate national football teams, but there are pressures for formal political secession, especially from Scotland (see Chapter 13, this volume). Scotland was only brought into political union with the rest of Great Britain in 1707 and, at the time of writing, the Scottish parliament is controlled by the Scottish National Party, which has announced that a referendum on the union will be held. At present, Great Britain, dominated numerically, economically

Table 7.1 Comparing the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland

	Republic of Ireland	Northern Ireland
Political Status	British Dominion (as the Irish Free State) 1922–1937; Sovereign State since 1937	Part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland since 1922
Capital City	Dublin	Belfast
Population (2011)	4,581,269	1,799,392 (2010 est)
Land surface area (km <sup>2</sup> )	70,273	13,843
Resident population density (persons/km <sup>2</sup> )	65.2	130.0
% of population that lives in Urban Areas	60% (2005)	65.1% (2001)
Life expectancy in years (2009)	80.2 (2011)	76.4 (M); 81.3 (F) (2008)
% annual population growth	+1.1% (2011)	+0.6% (2010)
GNP per capita (US\$)	32,740	36,580 (UK) (Northern Ireland c. 75% of UK = 27,435)
Standing on human development index (2009)	5th out of 182 countries	21st out of 182 countries (UK)
% of population below poverty line	5.5%	14% (UK)
Adult (15+) Literacy rate (%)	99%	99%
Main language(s) spoken	English, Irish	English
Currency (exchange rate as at January 2012)	Euro (1US\$ = 0.77 Euro)	Pound (1US\$ = 0.64 GBP)

and politically by England, forms part of what is usually called for short the UK. The full name of this state is the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Northern Ireland, note, for one significant outcome of Ireland’s relations with and domination by Great Britain, is a constituent part of the UK being situated on the divided island of Ireland (see Table 7.1).

**Irish history to 1801: a condensed version**

Irish history is a long and complex affair (see, for example, Foster’s *Oxford history of Ireland* 1992), much tied in with colonialism from Britain (Montaño 2011). In 1171 the Anglo-Norman king of England, Henry II, great-grandson of William the Conqueror, the Norman lord

who had invaded England in 1066, himself invaded eastern Ireland. This followed a smaller incursion two years earlier and was an attempt by Henry to bring stability to Ireland and protect the west coast of Britain. The Anglo-Normans never succeeded in gaining control of all of Ireland; as the nationalist Irish historian, Alice Stopford Green, put it 'there remained Irish kingdoms and the remnants of old chiefdoms, unconquered, resolute and wealthy' (1911: 105). The English position was weakened by an invasion from Scotland by Edward the Bruce in 1315 and catastrophes such as the Black Death in the late 1340s and the Wars of the Roses, a civil war between rival branches of the English ruling house, in the following century. By the late-15th century the English area of control in Ireland had been reduced to an area around Dublin known as the Pale, within which sat the Irish parliament, whose writ extended *de facto* only to its boundaries. In 1542, this parliament declared Henry VIII of England to be also King of Ireland. Previously, the English king had been Lord of Ireland, delegating local rule to powerful Norman (by then termed Hiberno-Norman) clans whose loyalty had proved unreliable. As a kingdom, Ireland offered these lords royal protection in return for their recognition of the central government in which they were entitled to serve. Although the Pale extended once more after this change, there were risings against English rule with its imposition of foreign customs and cultures, including the English language. The English responded with repressive strategies to subdue Ireland such as martial law and increased military presence. A longer-term policy called the 'plantation' was to settle Ireland with people from England and, later, Scotland. This was first employed under Queen Mary in the 1550s, when Queen's County (now County Laois) was planted (Loeber 1991). Plantation reached its peak in the northeast of Ireland, the province of Ulster, after Hugh O'Neill, the Earl of Tyrone, had become involved on the Spanish side in the war between Spain and England and had his lands confiscated in 1603. He was offered his lands back, but not wishing to live under the English, he and other lords left for the continent in 1607, a movement called the Flight of the Earls. Much land was re-issued to settlers from Great Britain in the Plantation of Ulster to try to forestall further rebellion. This movement of thousands of Protestants, both Anglicans and Presbyterians, into what had been a largely Catholic island set up ethnic divisions that were certainly a factor in the later political division (Graham 1997). This plantation did not affect the two eastern Ulster counties of Antrim and Down, which were settled privately, largely with migrants from Scotland. One notable County Antrim settlement from the early 17th century was

Belfast, founded in 1603 (chartered 1613) on the land granted to Sir Arthur Chichester, Lord Deputy of Ireland. Belfast was laid out within earthen ramparts for a migrant Protestant population, local Catholics being required to reside outside the defences (Gillespie 2007).

Like other strategies, plantation failed to bring peace to Ireland and there was a serious rebellion in 1641 by Irish Catholic gentry, which saw the English lose control over much of the island, their rulers being distracted by the build-up to the English Civil War that broke out the following year. However, in 1649 following the execution of King Charles I, the English parliament sent Oliver Cromwell, later the Lord Protector, to invade Ireland and reverse the Catholic gentry's gains, an earlier invasion of 1647 having been unsuccessful. Cromwell's New Model Army won after a brutal campaign and almost all land owned by Catholics was confiscated. It was not returned following the restoration of the monarchy in England in 1660. Things might have improved for Irish Catholics after 1685 under the English King James II, who was Catholic himself, but he was removed from power in the Glorious Revolution of 1688 when William III and Mary II become rulers of England, the former being of the House of Orange in the Netherlands. Irish Catholics attempted to restore King James in the Jacobite Rebellions, which saw the former king come into Ireland with French assistance. He was opposed by King William in person at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690, following which the defeated James fled and the rebellion in Ireland (though not in Scotland) ended in 1691 with the Battle of Aughrim and the Treaty of Limerick (Simms 1969). The Battle of the Boyne became a great symbol of Protestant triumphalism in Ireland and is celebrated with marches and bonfires every year on 12 July in areas of the northern part of the now divided island. Following their defeat in the 1690s, the Irish Catholic landed classes were never able to organise effective resistance again, partly through the effect of the Penal Laws that prevented them from inheriting property. Instead, Ireland became dominated politically and economically by the Protestant Ascendancy. Resistance came largely through the activities of secret societies such as the Whiteboys, operating mainly in the countryside. Day to day the Lord Lieutenant in Dublin Castle ruled, although the Irish parliament did meet regularly. That this parliament could only pass laws approved in England denotes the limits of power within the island. This regulation, known as Poyning's Law, had actually been in place since 1495 and was rescinded only in 1782 when the Ascendancy, identifying themselves increasingly as Irish, sought more independent control. Trade restrictions were also liberalised then, ushering in an

era of prosperity, still reflected in some handsome streets and public buildings in Dublin.

The late-18th century was an era of radicalism with pressure for freedom and rights in Europe and North America, and this was seen also in Ireland, from letters to the press to armed rebellion. For example, in 1780 the *Belfast News Letter* published a letter from a miller in which he stated 'it's truly a hard case that Ireland, which has as good a right to be free as any country under the sun, should be so racked and ruined by the haughty Englishmen and hindered from making an honest livelihood'. Organised protest came especially through the United Irishmen, a society founded in Belfast, many leaders and members of which were Protestant, especially Presbyterians who had also suffered discrimination under the Penal Laws. They campaigned for Catholic rights and the establishment of a non-sectarian Irish republic inspired by publications such as Thomas Paine's *Rights of man* (1791) and their own leader Wolfe Tone's *An argument on behalf of the Catholics of Ireland* (1791). The United Irishmen were behind much unrest, including an attempted French invasion in 1796, which was set aside only through bad weather, and a full-scale rebellion in 1798. This was suppressed with brutality. Tone, himself an Anglican, the group best served by Ireland's political system, before committing suicide to 'cheat the hangman', wrote: 'From my earliest youth I have regarded the connection between Ireland and Great Britain as the curse of the Irish nation' (see Moody et al. 2009).

## The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland

After the 1798 rebellion, the British abolished the Irish parliament, imposing a form of direct rule through the 1801 Act of Union, which established the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. Alice Stopford Green characterised the aftermath of the 1798 rising as a 'dark time', claiming that only seven of the members of the legislature who voted in favour had not been bribed. Irish members were elected to the unified parliament at Westminster, but 'a hundred members would be lost in the British parliament' (1911: 219).

This United Kingdom was not a union of equals. The Irish were second class, a reserve labour force for Britain's needs: they built the railways as they had earlier dug the canals; they served disproportionately in the armed forces; they migrated seasonally to gather the harvest or permanently to take up construction or factory work. Being Irish was not seen to confer an advantage in life. Arthur Wellesley, First Duke of Wellington, victor at Waterloo against Napoleon, twice prime minister

of the UK, an iconic, heroic figure in British history, was actually Irish. He was born – probably in Dublin – in 1769 and raised in Ireland but thoroughly resented his Irish pedigree and is famously supposed to have remarked: ‘Being born in a stable does not make you a horse’. Anti-Irish prejudice was rife, characterised for us today through the stereotypical, racist images of the Irish portrayed in cartoons in the humorous magazine, *Punch* (de Nie 2004). Relationships were not helped by the failure of the mainstay of Irish peasant life, the potato, in the Great Famine (*an Gorta Mór*) of 1844–1849 when the Irish resented the clumsy and ill-run attempts at relief from Britain, to which Ireland had continued to export food, while the British for their part resented having to pay for relief for their Irish fellow countrymen. An 1849 *Punch* cartoon entitled ‘The English Labourer’s Burden’ depicts a stalwart English yeoman carrying on his back one of the racist, monkey-like depictions of a ragged Irishman.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland was united only in name; in 1803, within two years of union, there was a rebellion against it led by some of the people involved in the 1798 rising. Later, a barrister, Daniel O’Connell, known as the Liberator, established the mass-membership Repeal Association. One success was Catholic emancipation in 1829, following which Catholics could be elected to the UK parliament – as O’Connell himself was – but the organisation’s principal demand – the repeal of the 1801 Act of Union – was unsuccessful at that time. Repeal was opposed by most of Ireland’s Protestants, who dominated Ulster following the Plantation and the migration streams into Counties Antrim and Down. Parts of the province, especially in and around Belfast and Londonderry (or Derry; its very name is contested), prospered during the 19th century due to industrialisation (shipbuilding and linen manufacture together with other industries such as chemicals, engineering and rope-making drove growth in Belfast and shirt-making led the way in Londonderry) while large parts of rural and Catholic Ireland suffered economically. The availability of work in Belfast had drawn tens of thousands of people into the town (city from 1888) from all over Ireland giving it a substantial Catholic minority, but the Protestants and Catholics lived in separate districts and did not bond. There was usually trouble on 12 July when the Orange Order (a Protestant organisation founded in 1795) paraded to celebrate the victory of William of Orange at the Battle of the Boyne – *The London Review* summed up Belfast’s 12 July festivities generally as a ‘saturnalia of bigotry and ruffianism’ (1865: 82). There were also serious outbreaks of violence when some catalyst caused the underlying

sectarian hatreds to flare up as in 1864, 1872, 1880, 1884 and 1886 (Royle 2011). Catholic–Protestant rivalries became caught up in pressures for Irish ‘Home Rule’ in the late 19th century. There were usually about 80 Irish MPs in favour and Home Rule was supported by William Gladstone, the British Liberal prime minister, who had little patience with unionist Protestants from Ulster. After one meeting with a group of Belfast industrialists who thought Home Rule would cause ‘confusion and disaster’, Sir Edward Harland, the founder of the massive Belfast shipbuilding company of Harland and Wolff and then a unionist Belfast MP, wrote that ‘Mr Gladstone’s hand [was] pressing, with all gentleness, yet firmly on the throttle-valve of free speech deliverance’ (Chamber of Commerce 1893: 4). There were Home Rule bills in 1886 and 1893 but both were rejected; the second in the British parliament’s upper chamber, the House of Lords, which was dominated by Conservatives and Unionists and could, at that time, dismiss government legislation. Pressure continued, island autonomy being compelling to some such as Alice Stopford Green who ended her 1911 *Irish identity* thus: ‘The natural union approaches of the Irish nation – the union of all her children that are born under the breadth of her skies, fed by the fatness of her fields and nourished by the civilisation of her dead’ (254). That year the Parliament Act reduced the House of Lords’ powers to delaying legislation only, which would ensure an easier passage for another Home Rule bill and in 1912 the Liberal government introduced a third such bill. This was resisted by the opposition in Westminster, with Sir Edward Carson, a Dublin-born barrister, unionist MP for Trinity College Dublin, in the vanguard. This bill would not have given Ireland full independence; rather devolution, with Ireland retaining MPs at Westminster. It had not been passed by 1914 when the outbreak of the Great War led to it being suspended.

## 1916 and its aftermath

Two events in 1916 made the partition of Ireland inevitable. The first was the Easter Rising, an armed insurrection in Dublin led by Pádraig (Patrick) Pearse and his Irish Volunteers and James Connolly with his Irish Citizen Army, united as the Irish Republican Brotherhood. On Easter Monday, 24 April, Pearse and his followers occupied a number of buildings in central Dublin including some on Sackville Street (now called O’Connell Street in tribute to the Liberator). At the Central Post Office the existence of an Irish Republic was proclaimed. A plaque on that building displays the text: ‘We declare the right of the people of

Ireland to the ownership of Ireland, and to the unfettered control of Irish destinies, to be sovereign and indefeisable... We hereby proclaim the Irish Republic as a sovereign independent state'.

The rebels were relatively few in number, perhaps 1,250. After successes on the first day when the British were surprised, soon they were considerably outnumbered by British forces under orders from the prime minister, Herbert Asquith, to put down the rebellion quickly, without restraint being placed upon their actions. The British acted harshly: a gunboat on the River Liffey was employed as part of the shelling; there was no aversion to destroying buildings or shooting people in civilian clothing. On 29 April, Pearse surrendered. The casualty figures were 64 deaths among the rebels; 132 British troops and police were killed (32 being themselves Irish) and 264 civilians died. Over 3,000 people were arrested, mainly members of Sinn Féin, a republican organisation that had not played a role in the rising. Most were released but almost 1,500 were interned. Sixteen men were executed, though one of the leaders, Éamon de Valera, was not hanged and went on to become a long-serving *taoiseach* (prime minister), then president of Ireland.

The Easter Rising was not universally applauded by the Irish people, given the death and destruction, while the fact that it took place during the war was felt by some to be inappropriate. However, the rising made the British less popular with many, given the severity of their reaction. The fact that the British tried to impose conscription on Ireland in 1918 was another factor in their growing unpopularity. These events helped lead to a Sinn Féin landslide at the post-war election of 1918, and in 1919 at the Mansion House in Dublin an independent Ireland was declared once more, ratifying the proclamation of 1916. This was not recognised by the British or internationally and with there being no movement on the Home Rule bill in Westminster, elements of the nationalist movement formed the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and began a campaign of violence, the War of Independence. The British countered this through the use of police and former soldiers, a rather ill-disciplined force known without affection as the Black (the police) and Tans (the soldiers). Both the British and the IRA were responsible for controversial deaths, the British most notoriously when in November 1920 they killed 14 people by shooting into a crowd attending a Gaelic football match at Croke Park, Dublin after several British intelligence officers had been assassinated earlier that day.

Finally, the UK parliament passed the fourth Home Rule bill, the *Government of Ireland Act* in 1920, but the IRA under Michael Collins continued to press for a greater measure of independence and carried



on the armed struggle. A truce was signed in July, the Anglo-Irish Treaty, under which a parliament was created giving dominion status to the Irish Free State, a step short of a full republic. The status was similar to that of Canada, with the British monarch as head of state; Irish parliamentarians would have to swear an oath of allegiance to the monarch and the new country would have joined the British Commonwealth. Moreover, three strategic 'Treaty Ports' were to be retained for the use of the British navy. These conditions were too much for some nationalists, including de Valera, and a bitter civil war ensued among those who accepted the treaty, who made up the government and those who rejected it. There was fighting in Dublin with over 300 dead, mainly civilians, before pro-treaty forces secured the city, as they then did the other major towns. Unrest and atrocities, including executions of people held by both sides continued for months but gradually anti-treaty forces lost ground, not helped by the Catholic Church declaring for the pro-treaty side. Éamon de Valera's anti-treaty forces eventually declared a cease-fire in May 1923. De Valera went on to found the Fianna Fáil party and he re-joined Irish parliamentary politics. He gained power in 1932 and abolished most of what he regarded as objectionable in the Anglo-Irish Treaty such as the Oath of Allegiance. An Irish president became head of state from 1937 (de Valera himself was to hold the office from 1959 to 1973); the Treaty Ports were returned in 1938; ten years later membership of the British Commonwealth was abandoned and the Irish Free State became the Republic of Ireland. A pro-treaty party, Fine Gael, had also been formed and these two parties founded in bloodshed have dominated Irish politics for decades afterwards.

## The divided island

Although the 1937 constitution of Ireland stated under Article 2 that: 'The national territory consists of the whole island of Ireland, its islands and the territorial seas', this was an aspiration rather than a statement of the reality on the ground. The Irish Free State, which had come into being in December 1922, was not coterminous with the island of Ireland. Ireland had been partitioned, had become a divided island. To understand why, one must recall the 17th-century plantations and migrations that had led to a Protestant majority in Ulster and also consider another event in 1916, the Battle of the Somme. In 1912, Protestants in the north of Ireland, led by Edward Carson and James Craig, formed a militia to resist Home Rule by force if necessary.

In September that year almost a quarter of a million men with the support of almost as many women had signed the Ulster Covenant, pledging to use 'all means which may be found necessary to defeat the present conspiracy to set up a Home Rule Parliament in Ireland'. The following year, 100,000 signatories between the ages of 17 and 65 were formed into the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF), which saw the foundation of the Irish Volunteers in opposition (Stewart 1967). On the outbreak of the Great War most men in the UVF volunteered for the British Army, mainly serving in the 36th (Ulster) Division, a unit that suffered tremendous casualties on the first day of the Battle of the Somme on 1 July 1916. The author's own grandfather was in a unit that relieved the front and wrote: 'What a sight the battlefield was. I cannot speak of it; it would be treading on sacred ground. I can see our brave boys lying there now' (Royle 1985: 40). The sacrifices of the UVF and other volunteers from Ulster who died for the UK in their thousands during the Great War as well as the expectation that there would be massive, armed resistance if much of Ulster was to be forced into an independent Ireland necessitated partition. Even in the deliberations on the pre-war third Home Rule bill, there had been discussion that an area to be called Northern Ireland might be excluded. The 1920 *Government of Ireland Act* allowed Northern Ireland to secede from the Irish Free State, which promptly it did. Unicameral parliaments were established in Northern Ireland as well as the Irish Free State; there was also to be a Council of Ireland, but this never met. Northern Ireland, with its sub-national legislature, remained within the UK, an international border, a land boundary, separating the Irish Free State from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Under the 1920 Act, a provisional border had been drawn around six of the nine counties of Ulster – Antrim, Armagh, Down, Fermanagh, Londonderry and Tyrone – delineating a region that, because of its Protestant majority, could be guaranteed to deliver a unionist government for Northern Ireland. A boundary commission was to refine the area but the Irish Civil War delayed its operation until 1924. Northern Ireland itself was wary of this body, fearing that some of its territory might be lost in its deliberations, and the local legislature refused to appoint a delegate to it so the British appointed the representative for Northern Ireland. There was also unease in Dublin about the Free State losing territory from its three Ulster counties of Cavan, Donegal and Monaghan to Northern Ireland; indeed, the Free State expected to make considerable territorial gains. In the event, a map from the Boundary Commission was leaked prematurely and published in the *Morning Post*.

This showed part of County Donegal being ceded to Northern Ireland and only modest amounts of territory coming into the Free State, which caused embarrassment to Dublin and the border agreement was swept into a wider discussion on financial matters including the Free State's share of the old UK's national debt. The 1920 provisional border around the six counties was accepted as a compromise by all sides. It became the international border formally in 1925 and remains so today. The Boundary Commission's report was kept a secret and was not published until 1969 (Hand 1969). Because no adjustments to the provisional border were made, tens of thousands of Catholics in the five Northern Ireland counties along the border (all but County Antrim) found themselves on the 'wrong' side, as did about one-third of the population of Belfast, although they, like Catholics in the rest of County Antrim, could never have been placed within the Free State. Some people so affected were prepared to struggle to have their situation altered. In addition, there was much discontent among nationalists everywhere that Ireland had been divided and the British still ruled in one corner of the island. In short: 'the Northern state as created in the early 1920s was a nineteenth century answer that proved inadequate to tackle twentieth century problems' (Martin 1999: 57).

There were violent IRA campaigns within Northern Ireland demanding Irish unity in the 1920s, 1930s and 1950s and then came the 'Troubles', a mild name for almost 30 years of violence, bloodshed, bombs and murder from the late 1960s when over 3,500 people were killed. The Troubles began as a civil rights movement not dissimilar to those elsewhere in Europe at the period, with the Northern Catholics being recognised as the underclass. Concern for Catholic rights transmuted into a wider, renewed and violent campaign for Irish unity with nationalist paramilitary groups such as the IRA being countered by others set up on the unionist side such as a re-launched Ulster Volunteer Force. During the Troubles the sub-national government of Northern Ireland was suspended for long periods and replaced by direct rule from Westminster. The advent of the peace process, which can be traced back to the late 1980s, after many setbacks eventually led to the Good Friday or Belfast Agreement of 1998. One effect of this was to see an amendment to the 1937 Irish constitution, Article 2 of which was altered in 1999 to a recognition that 'a united Ireland shall be brought about only by peaceful means with the consent of a majority of the people, democratically expressed, in both jurisdictions in the island'. Under the agreement, paramilitary groups disarmed and committed themselves to political measures to achieve their aims. The demands of the political

movement associated with the IRA, Sinn Féin (which is Irish for 'ourselves alone') have not changed: the party still writes on its website of Ireland being regarded as 'a single national unit throughout its history' and a map of the whole island of Ireland without the border is prominently displayed at the bottom of every web page ([www.sinnfein.ie/history](http://www.sinnfein.ie/history)).

North-south and British-Irish bodies were set up under the Belfast Agreement, cynics would say simply to add window-dressing to ensure that the agreement could be passed by seeming to offer the Irish some wider participation in governance. The North-South Ministerial Council deals with 12 'areas for co-operation' within Ireland such as transport, tourism and the environment. The British-Irish Council has representation from all the polities in the islands, including the devolved administrations of the UK and those of the three Crown Dependencies of Guernsey, Jersey and the Isle of Man. Its 17th meeting took place in January 2012 when youth unemployment and drugs were the matters principally discussed and the establishment of a permanent secretariat based in Edinburgh was welcomed. The leader of the Northern Ireland delegation, the First Minister, Peter Robinson, took the opportunity 'as a unionist and as an Ulster-Scot' to warn against the danger of Scotland leaving the United Kingdom (*Belfast Telegraph*, 13 January 2012). Finally, the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference deals with matters that have not been devolved to the local administration in Northern Ireland. This last body has seemingly been inactive and has not met since 2007. What is more important on a day-to-day basis for the people of Northern Ireland was the restoration of a devolved administration, the Northern Ireland Assembly, which operates with powers rather like those in Wales, if under a system that requires a cumbersome permanent coalition between nationalists and unionists.

## **The Irish border**

At times the Irish border has had considerable physicality. It has been guarded and fortified; during the height of the Troubles crossing points were reduced, unapproved roads blocked and watchtowers were erected. Despite this, the border was 'fuzzy' even in those troubled times, for being nothing more than a series of county boundaries it has its idiosyncrasies. The main road running south west from Monaghan town is the N54 in County Monaghan, becomes the A3 for about 4 km as it crosses a pendulous piece of County Tyrone, reverts to being the N54 in Co Monaghan for about 5 km, becomes again the A3 for 3 km as it

returns to the north before entering the Republic of Ireland once more as County Cavan's N54 – a driver crosses the Irish border four times within a few minutes. The road to Belcoo in County Fermanagh from rest of that county to the southeast, because of the way County Cavan's border runs up to the shore of Lough Macnean, perforce runs through Blacklion in the Republic of Ireland. There is an official 'concession' or courtesy that allows northern travellers unimpeded passage as long as they proceed directly back across the border. Other border crossings could have customs posts, at least until 1993 when they were replaced by mobile checkpoints. These were on 'approved' roads, such approval relating to fiscal rather than security issues. Posts in Northern Ireland were sometimes targeted during the Troubles, an easy target indeed as they were often in isolated, rural locations. That on the A1, the main road between Belfast and Dublin, at Killeen, County Armagh, is a doleful example. It was first attacked in 1971, two people employed by the customs being killed by shots fired from inside the Republic of Ireland; in 1975 the IRA shot dead three civilians; the same year two IRA men died there when the bomb they were transporting went off prematurely; ten years later four northern policemen were blown up in their patrol car by a remote-controlled bomb; in 1987 the Lord Justice of Appeal in Northern Ireland, Sir Maurice Gibson and Lady Gibson were killed by another remote-controlled device; the following year three civilians including a boy of six were blown up when their vehicle was mistaken for one carrying another judge; in 1990 a soldier was killed at the checkpoint by a van bomb. Killeen was abandoned and the post moved to the urban area of Newry further into Northern Ireland where it could be more easily protected. This area of South Armagh was known to the British security forces entirely without affection as 'Bandit Country' and some of the largest British military bases, perhaps holding 3,000 troops at their peak, were on the border there, often supplied by helicopter to avoid the dangers of travel along roads that might have been mined.

Other crossings were 'unapproved' and some were left open for the benefit of locals with the possibility of mobile patrols operating, although many such routes were blown up or barricaded. Shortly after moving to Northern Ireland in 1976 the author, his wife and dog visited County Tyrone and, with the curiosity of a geographer, he took them along a country road to see the border. It was picked out by a concrete barrier of a size sufficient to have held back a tank but retaining a lively dog proved more difficult and the animal took an unauthorised trip into County Monaghan, returning to its anxious Northern Ireland-bound

owners ten minutes later from an entirely different direction. Local people could also manage to cross these roads unofficially, as Irish travel writer Dervla Murphy discovered when she toured parts of the border region on a bicycle in 1976 as research for her book about Northern Ireland, *A place apart*. She asked a farming family in County Cavan how to cross the border into County Fermanagh:

The women came out to the road to give me precise instructions. They didn't think the stepping stones would be above water today – and they were right. Round the next corner a concrete roadblock supported a NO ROAD sign. Then I saw a river lined with willows and alders... Standing on the remains of the old narrow bridge... I looked down at the rusty carcass of a bus filled with boulders; the locals' attempt – plus those submerged stepping stones – to replace the bridge.

(1978: 52)

Smugglers have also used such crossings to profit from different prices and fiscal regimes on either side of the border. Cattle have commonly been taken on illicit journeys, fuel too. In the 1930s, people would come north to buy clothes and avoid tax and there are stories of them wearing multiple layers on their return journey, their new shoes hastily scuffed to present a patina of age. Shoppers continue to make cross-border movements in a (usually) legal fashion for financial reasons, the direction of travel depending on currency fluctuations and, especially, differing rates of value added tax.

There always was some co-operation across the border: regarding fisheries in divided sea loughs, water courses, railway connections: the 'Enterprise' is the neutral name for the Belfast–Dublin railway service jointly operated by Northern Ireland Railways and Iarnród Éireann. On some occasions, the border seems particularly porous: wealthy unionists from Northern Ireland might well have a cottage in County Donegal, that scenic Ulster county of the South, much of which lies further north than Northern Ireland. To people living in the east of County Donegal, what they call 'Derry' is their local central place. Regarding sport, while in football the team labelled 'Ireland' represents the South and sometimes competes with another international side called 'Northern Ireland', the border does not exist during rugby internationals for 'Ireland' represents the whole island of Ireland. The Royal Irish Academy is another institution to operate on an all-Ireland basis, the author, though having only a British passport, is proud to have been elected

as a Member. The Queen's University Belfast historian David Harkness concluded that:

Ireland has proved too small to be divided. Though their country was partitioned in 1920, the peoples of Ireland have rarely allowed this to interfere with daily life in practice. Even after seventy-five years of separate statehood they are, by and large, unwilling to regard as their stamping ground anything less than the whole island.

(1996: 115)

At present, post-Troubles, on the ground there is little to see of the Irish border. The watchtowers and the army bases have been dismantled and blocked roads re-opened. Movement across the border has never required passports to be shown and today one probably does not notice the border has been crossed until observing that the road signage has changed, distances are marked in kilometres in the South, in miles in the North.

This is not to say that there are not real divisions across the Irish border. It is significant in socio-economic terms on which side a person lives for, as with the legal and educational systems, the economies are not united. Northern Ireland had little benefit from the Celtic Tiger that brought such great but so ephemeral wealth to the South but nor is it suffering from the consequences of that beast's death. The UK, always an unenthusiastic partner with Europe, unlike the Republic of Ireland never took up the Euro and although troubled by debt and economic problems at the time of writing, at least it has its own currency with the possibilities of establishing independent fiscal policies to deal with the problems. Further, David Harkness's perspective has been challenged, he being characterised as reflecting views typical of a Northerner for Anderson and Bort wrote: 'Few Southerners have regarded the North as anything less than a "place apart" (in Dervla Murphy's famous phrase)' (1999: 27). They presented what they termed a 'less reassuring' alternative to Harkness:

The Border [authors' capitalisation] [is] a fundamental feature of the Irish political landscape which has a determining influence over the nature of the political regimes north and south of it: deeply etched in the political cultures of the population, it is a crucial political instrument in the hands of the authorities in both halves of Ireland, used for both symbolic and practical effect.

(1999: 15)

## Conclusion: an island question

Ireland's partition came about following a long and bitter history between the neighbouring islands of Ireland and Great Britain. There was colonialism, colonisation, land grabs and migration streams, forced population movements and ethnic cleansing. There were regular rebellions and quotidian sectarianism wherever the competing groups of Catholics and Protestants faced their fellow-Christian (and despite the *Punch* cartoons) physically indistinguishable Other. Such history has had its impacts. In Anderson and Bort's edited book, there is a chapter by Steve Bruce based on research into Protestant evangelicals in Northern Ireland in which he concluded that 'For most Unionists, the south has not only been a distant country but also a hostile one' (1999: 134). Furthermore, in his major publication on the Irish border (1962) a Dutch geographer, Marcus Heslinga, postulated that the border marked an earlier cultural divide; that the north of Ireland was already distinct through its links with Scotland before the Plantation, a distinction then reinforced by it being settled by Scots. Heslinga's thesis has been criticised for being deterministic (Howard 2006), but at least it can be seen to have a long heritage, part of a 'two nations' theory that sees the north of Ireland as forming a distinct nation on the island of Ireland. The concept of two nations sharing the island has been traced to the late 19th century and was one of the justifications for partition, however geographically illogical such a sundering might appear, to revisit the quote from Kevin Howard with which this chapter opened: 'islands constitute natural entities'. Other landmasses have also been seen as natural entities such as with the USA's 'manifest destiny' to stretch 'from sea to shining sea'. By contrast, continental areas less impacted by recent overwhelmingly dominant migration streams than the USA might seem to be naturally divided. Europe with its mosaic of different languages and cultures has spent most of its recorded history driven by warfare; the European Union is only a recent political construct and is anyway presently under threat from internal contradictions. At the sub-continental scale, are island landmasses a natural unit or are there circumstances where it is division not unity that is natural? Regarding Ireland, this island displays characteristics of both traits: the two-nations thesis and the sectarian divisions on the one hand versus on the other a universal desire for Ireland to beat other teams at rugby as just one manifestation of many aspects of a shared culture not sundered by the border. The answer then must be nuanced; it must accept that Ireland has characteristics of both



'natural' island unity and 'natural' island division. Nuanced opinions on Ireland, however, are often not encountered for there are many who hold or did hold simple views on this issue – favouring unity or, alternatively, division – of such strength that they have been prepared to kill or be killed for them throughout the centuries of Ireland's bloody history.

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# 8

## Usedom/Uznam

Maciej Jędrusik

### Introduction

The island of Usedom (Polish: *Uznam*) is situated off the south-western shore of the Baltic Sea. It is separated from the continent by the shallow coastal Szczecin Lagoon (German: *Stettiner Haff*) and the Peene Strait (German: *Peenestrom*; Polish: *Piana*), supplied also by waters from a river of the same name. To the east, Usedom is separated from the neighbouring island of Wolin by the Swine Strait (German: *Swine*; Polish: *Świna*). This small archipelago (apart from Usedom and Wolin, there are several small uninhabited or sparsely populated islands) was further segmented by human activity: in the second half of the 19th century, the Piast Canal (*Kaiserfahrt*; *Kanał Piastowski*) was constructed in the south-western part of Usedom, transferring what had hitherto been a peninsula into Karsibór (*Kaseburg*) island.

The total area of Usedom is 445 km<sup>2</sup>, divided quite unequally between Germany (373 km<sup>2</sup>) and Poland (72 km<sup>2</sup>). The estimated total population of the island amounts to some 67,500. The German part has nearly 31,500 people scattered in over 70 towns and districts. The largest town on the island, however, is Świnoujście (German: *Swinemünde*) located on the Polish side, with over 40,000 inhabitants (as of 31.12.2010) spread over Uznam, Wolin and Karsibór islands. Uznam's population is about 35,700 residents (as of 31.12.2010) (*Świnoujście w liczbach* 2010) (see Table 8.1).

In this chapter, the whole island is referred to as Usedom; but otherwise reference is made to Usedom if dealing with the German side, and Uznam if dealing with the Polish side. The Polish name *Uznam* was introduced in 1949 by a decree of the Polish authorities. The Slavic name

Table 8.1 Comparing German Usedom and Polish Uznam

	Usedom	Uznam
Political Status	Includes the town of Heringsdorf ( <i>amtsfreie Gemeinde</i> ) as well as the two <i>amts</i> (administrative divisions): Usedom-Nord and Usedom-Süd, all part of <i>landkreis</i> (administrative district) of Vorpommern-Greifswald	Świnoujście is a city <i>poviat</i> (county), part of the voivodeship ( <i>województwo</i> or region) of West Pomerania
Capital City	Berlin (Germany)	Warsaw (Poland)
Population (2010)	31,500	35,712
Land surface area (km <sup>2</sup> )	373	72
Resident population density (persons/km <sup>2</sup> )	84	497
% of population that lives in Urban Areas (2010)	approx. 70%	100%
Life expectancy in years	82.1	79.8
% annual population growth (2010)	−0.3% (estimate)	−0.1%
GDP per capita (US\$) (2011)	33,600 (for Germany)	13,100 (for Poland)
Standing on human development index (2010)	9th out of 179 countries (Germany)	39th out of 179 countries (Poland)
% of population below poverty line (2009)	15.5%	17%
Adult (15+) literacy rate (%)	99%	100%
Main language(s) spoken	German	Polish
Currency (exchange rate as at January 2012)	Euro (1US\$ = 0.77 Euro)	Zloty (PLN) (1US\$ = 3.21 PLN)

*Uznoimia* was already being used in the 12th century by Bishop Otto of Bamberg.

## History and geopolitical relations until the Second World War

Usedom has been inhabited for at least 5,000 years; archaeological excavations suggest that there was already a dense resident population by the second millennium BC. The area was originally inhabited by the

Germanic people, followed by the Slavs in the 5th century AD. In the 12th century, the region was ruled by Pomeranian tribes, presumably the Wolinians. In 1128, Wartislaw I, Duke of Pomerania, was baptised by Bishop Otto, leading first to the foundation of monasteries, and eventual occupation of the entire island by monks. It was only at the time of the Reformation that the Dukes of Pomerania managed to regain their dominance over Usedom. As a consequence of the 1630 invasion of the Swedish ruler Gustav Adolph, during the Thirty Years' War, Usedom became part of the Swedish empire for almost a century (Biermann 2006).

In 1720, the island was sold to the Prussian sovereign Frederick William I. The Swedes, however, still controlled both the sailing on the Peene and the seaport in Wolgast at its southern coasts, imposing high trade duties, which were only revoked as late as 1815 (*Historia Kanahu Piastowskiego* n/a). It obliged Prussia to search for a new trade route to the Baltic. The Swine Strait was chosen, which led to the decision to develop a small seaport in Swinemünde. The settlement was granted a town charter in 1765. Slowly but surely, Swinemünde became the trade centre of Usedom and neighbouring Wolin. In 1815, an independent administrative unit named *Kreis Usedom-Wollin*, with Swinemünde as its capital, was established (*ibid.*). Steam ships unable to navigate the rather shallow and winding Swine River were obliged to unload at this seaport, contributing to the town's prosperity. In 1851–1856, during the Crimean War, practically all of Russia's trade with the West took place through Swinemünde (*Historia Świnoujścia* 2008). The existing communications infrastructure was however insufficient. Plans to construct a 7.5-km canal were made in 1862, and construction on the *Kaiserfahrt* (now the Piast Canal) started in 1875, completed by 1880, and had its watercourse deepened to 7 m by 1900. In 1911, the Piast Canal was extended by digging the 4-km-long Mieliński Canal (*Mellin Fahrt*) through the centre of Swinemünde, offering what remains today a vital sea link to Szczecin, a large city with a developed shipbuilding industry (*Historia Kanahu Piastowskiego* n/a).

Swinemünde has been an attractive spa and bathing resort at least since 1824. In 1826, 613 patients were reported to have come to Swinemünde whereas, just over a century later, in 1936, there were as many as 48,260 (Lesiński 1973). Other towns, situated along the northern coasts of the island, also became holiday resorts or spas. A naturally favourable microclimate, extensive beaches and relatively warm waters (for the Baltic Sea) made various towns on Usedom attractive to visitors, although Swinemünde remained the most sought after (Hinz 1996). The

island was also only a short train journey away from Berlin; so much so that, by the end of the 19th century, Swinemünde was known as 'Berlin's bathtub' (*Historia Świnoujścia* 2008). Usedom airport was built in the 1920s, receiving its first flights from Berlin in 1927 (Faligowski 2002).

At the same time, municipal infrastructure on the island was greatly improved. Faligowski (2002: 13) reports:

As the capital city of the *powiat* [an administrative unit], Swinemünde has developed and changed its character most quickly. A theatre, a few schools, regional museum, municipal hospital, post office and gasworks were established. In 1869, gas lighting of the main roads was introduced, which in 1885 was replaced by electricity. In 1910, water and sewerage facilities were developed. Retail markets and crafts focused on appealing to the numerous visitors. Small businesses hiring up to 50 workers were common.

An extension of the railway service was also spurred by military interests and the development of the military industry. Fortifications in Świnoujście had been built in the mid-19th century in order to better protect the port, a vital haven for the Prussian Emperor's fleet. This military function was intensified during the time of Nazi Germany. There was a German submarine base near Karsibór Island; a motor torpedo boat base for the Kriegsmarine in Szczecin; and a torpedo missile base (*Wyspa Karsibór* 2011). Swinemünde was the largest sea base for the German war fleet, from where battleships of all kinds could operate. But, perhaps most notorious of all, was the establishment in 1937 in Peenemünde, near the western border of Usedom, of the Military Research Institute (*Heeresversuchsanstalt*). In two separate locations on the island, research was conducted on both the unmanned missile planes V-1, as well as on vertical take-off rockets V-2, under the overall direction of Werner von Braun. More than 2,000 prisoners were kept here, assembling these rockets. The first flights of these machines took place during the Second World War. This research was also fruitful in other areas: the very first industrial television and radar systems for night navigation were invented here. After 1943, all these facilities were heavily bombed by the Allies (Meyer and Valentine 1999).

Thus, three significant economic functions – pertaining to health tourism, seaport services and military interests – backed by very good transport facilities (by rail, canal and road), and by its short distance from Berlin, were the pillars for Usedom's development during two

centuries of German dominance. All this was to change abruptly at the end of the Second World War.

## **Genesis of division and separation**

After April 1945, Western Pomerania, including the island of Usedom, was occupied by the Soviet army, accompanied by the Polish army. At the close of hostilities, Swinemünde had been considerably damaged by air-raids; many buildings, including three railway stations, had been destroyed.

The decision to merge Swinemünde with Poland, and hence to politically divide Usedom, was proposed during the Yalta Conference (February 1945), and confirmed during the post-war Potsdam Conference (17 July–2 August 1945), in accordance with the position of the Polish Provisional Government of National Unity. This government argued strongly for war reparations, including territorial concessions and the resettling people from the densely inhabited regions of Central and Eastern Poland. The takeover of hitherto German land was justified by appealing to the Polish origins of the western lands and the reaffirmation of Polish historic rights:

The history of Poland since the 10th century shows that Poland extended up to the Oder river ... and every now and then went considerably beyond these borders. As late as the 13th century, Poland started losing its western borders in the face of German aggression.

(Kozub-Ciembroniewicz and Majchrowski 1993: 8)

As a result of the Potsdam Conference, Poland received substantial areas in the west and in the north, including Szczecin and a significant part of the Szczecin Lagoon. Almost the whole of the Oder River was now within Polish borders: an important, canalised inland navigation track. The harbour in Szczecin became, along with Gdańsk – set up as Gdynia in the 1920s, and which was also reclaimed from Germany – the most important Polish seaport. As noted above, the harbour in Szczecin, however, could not function without Swinemünde.

According to historians, Joseph Stalin primarily planned the border near Szczecin, around 10 km further west from today's border. However, the Potsdam Summit determined that the post-war Polish–German border should lie directly west from Szczecin and Swinemünde (now known in Polish as Świnoujście), specifically 'by the Oder estuary, marked by a straight line linking the middle of the bridge over the Oder in Gryfin

with the church tower in Ahlbeck' (Podgórski 1989: 39). The border was actually delimited in autumn, after the Polish–Soviet border committee meetings in September 1945. The work was done rather carelessly and in the absence of S. Leszczycki, the Polish geographer who had been nominated as the expert for the Polish government. As a result, some changes were made to the location of the border; on Usedom, these meant that the supply of drinking water for Świnoujście was left on the German side. Within the next six years, potable water for the town had to be imported from west - German part of island.

The Polish government officially took over the Usedom–Wolin administrative region on 4–6 October 1945. The rest of Usedom remained part of the Soviet occupation zone until October 1949, when the German Democratic Republic (GDR, or East Germany) came into existence.

The island's division and the fact that the biggest city was on the Polish side made its remaining German residents flee west. These migrations were encouraged by various acts of violence, including some 40 murders, on the Germans (Prauser and Rees 2004). Research suggests that various riots were inspired by Polish officials: police officers known as the Civic Militia, and other security services (*Historia Świnoujścia* 2008). The deserted city of Świnoujście was quickly populated by settlers from other parts of Poland. According to the 1946 Census, there were 5,770 inhabitants, compared with 26,500 in 1939 (*Ludność Świnoujścia* 2011). Over the following years, the population grew steadily, after an initial decline, and has recently stabilised: 5,440 in 1950; 9,300 in 1955; 17,000 in 1960; 41,500 in 2002 (*ibid.*). The destruction of the city and of the seaport, the uncertainty of the border's future shape, as well as the continuous presence of the Soviet army (until as late as 1993) were considerable barriers to civilian settlement and thwarted initiatives for the rebuilding of the civil infrastructure. The uncertainty concerning the future was strengthened, for example, by the corrections to the border. The Polish–German border was formalised by the 1950 Treaty of Zgorzelec between the Polish government and the GDR. Article 1 of the Treaty states:

The Parties to this Treaty unanimously claim that the established and existing border going from the Baltic Sea along the line to the west to Świnoujście and further on, along the Lusatian Neisse to the Czech–Slovak border, constitutes the national border between Poland and Germany.

However, inter-governmental negotiations led to a 1951 land swap, providing access to drinking water and water treatment stations to



Świnoujście, in lieu of 76.5 hectares of land in the south-west, ceded to the GDR.

The Federal Republic of Germany (FRG, or West Germany, created in 1949), however, respected the international borders as in existence at the time of Nazi Germany, back in 1937 (and largely unchanged since 1918). It disagreed with the annexation of part of Usedom by Poland until 1970, when another treaty normalised relations. Yet, in spite of its ratification by the German Bundestag in 1972, a statement by the Federal Constitutional Court of Germany states that this did not lead to the FRG's formal acknowledgement of the Oder–Neisse border; only to the FRG's acceptance of the status quo and its declaration not to threaten it by any armed hostilities. The full respect of the new border was an outcome of another Polish–German border treaty, signed in November 1990, ratified by Poland in November 1991, and by Germany in December 1991. It came into force in January 1992 (Traktat 1990).

Equally unstable was the situation on the German side of the island. The period just after the war was marked by the looting of estates, other acts of violence and the inflow of a considerable number of refugees from areas taken over by the Soviet army. In addition, and in line with denazification and the introduction of a socialist economy, all land and industrial facilities were nationalised in 1945–1946.

Thus, Usedom entered a new era in its history as a run-down and divided island, with a disorganised infrastructure, two sets of new and tense inhabitants and truncated communication systems. Each of its two parts had started to gravitate towards a different political and economic pole.

## Political and economic dualism

In principle, the two neighbouring regimes on Usedom had much in common. Poland and the GDR were both members of the same political and military pact (codified as the Warsaw Pact as from 1955) and economic alliance (Comecon as from 1949), both dominated and controlled by the Soviet Union, and notionally promoting a pact of 'friendship, cooperation and mutual help' between these neighbouring countries. Yet, history is not easily forgotten; nor was there any shared vision of a sustainable future.

## Developments on the Polish side

For Uznam, yet another destabilising factor was the Soviet presence that transformed Świnoujście into one of its major naval bases. The Russians

controlled the entire town, especially the seaside district, granting the civilians some freedom only in the central district, a situation that was not very attractive to tourists. Regardless of the efforts made, the restoration of the health resort industry proved impossible. Only after 1957 did the Soviet Navy leave the seaside district, although it continued to occupy other parts of the town, especially those close to the East German border. This allowed some of the recreational and health functions of the town to be restored. Entry visas to Usedom and Wolin – which had been required even for the Polish population – were abolished in 1957, facilitating traffic to and from Uznam. The official status of a health resort was granted to the town in July 1959.

Meanwhile, there were plenty of communication barriers. Within Poland, Świnoujście was a marginal settlement, with no fixed connection to the rest of the country. The only bridge to the mainland on Uznam – the Piast Bridge, 370 m long and just 4.2 m wide – was only constructed in 1966, connecting Usedom with Karsibór Island over the Piast Canal. To reach Uznam from mainland Poland, one had to make a ferry crossing. One could arrive in Świnoujście on passenger ships and hydrofoils departing from Szczecin on the Oder. It was a relatively quick and convenient connection, operating annually from April to November. More than five million passengers made use of this popular route in 1970 (Faligowski 2002). The connection, as a tourist attraction, was reactivated in 2008. In the high season, in order to cross by car, one may have to wait several hours.

Even today, trains coming from central Poland do not go beyond the Świnoujście Port railway station, located on Wolin Island. Since 1964, when seasonal ferry connections with Ystad in Southern Sweden were re-established, and new ferry routes (including one to Copenhagen) were started, Świnoujście became an important passenger seaport. Admittedly, at least until 1970, travel to Uznam from the rest of Poland was limited: there were highly restrictive passport politics in place, lifted temporarily during a short period of liberalisation connected with the rise of the Polish trade union movement Solidarity (*Solidarność*) in 1980–1981.

These communication bottlenecks were acknowledged by the Polish authorities, but somewhat half-heartedly. In the 1970s, during an intensive industrialisation programme, a plan to build a huge harbour, a city and a spa on the western boarder of Poland was conceived, but never realised. Usedom was supposed to be connected by means of a dyke through Szczecin Lagoon with Nowe Warpno town, and under the Swine there was to be a tunnel. None of these projects came to pass.

There were also administrative changes in progress. The Polish state was re-organised and the Usedom–Wolin administrative district set up in September 1945. In October, mayors, village-mayors in communes and village administrators were nominated, whereas in May 1946 a *powiat* (comprising Wolin, Usedom, Karsibór) was established with Świnoujście as its capital (Lipiec n.d.). After administrative reforms in 1975, the Świnoujście commune, along with Międzyzdroje and a few villages on Wolin Island, was hived off as an independent administrative unit. Międzyzdroje itself was hived off in 1999, thus transforming Świnoujście into a separate city with *powiat* rights.

Meanwhile, the reduction and departure of the Soviet garrison from the most attractive parts of the city led to an economic growth in Świnoujście. Industrial facilities were built, mostly on the right bank of the Swine, on Wolin Island. Some of these did not survive the wave of liberalisation that accompanied the opening to the free market after 1990. The Uznam part of Świnoujście has largely remained a health resort and spa. There are more than 100 hotels and sanatoriums. In July 2000, the official accommodation facilities were estimated at just over 9,000 beds (Faligowski 2002). In addition, there is a 'grey zone', comprising unregistered facilities, that is hard to estimate. In 2010, there were 1,520 beds in sanatoriums (Przybyłowski and Tamowicz 2011), to some extent used by the foreigners coming over as health tourists. The Germans constituted a considerable number of visitors, benefiting from the geographical closeness and substantially lower prices when compared to German health resorts.

### Developments on the German side

Unlike Uznam, the communications system on the German part of Usedom was a carry-over from the pre-war period. This part of the island has long enjoyed a road connection to the mainland, whereas the Polish one did not. Since 2000, Usedom is connected by a national road and a highway (*Ostseeautobahn*) to Berlin, Rostock, Lübeck, Schwerin, Hamburg and the European highway network. After Poland joined Germany in the Schengen Area in 2007, border controls within the EU were abolished. The road connections on Usedom were thus re-integrated after 62 years, and it is now easier to access the European continent by road from the German side, even for Polish residents.

Various rail connections that connected Usedom to the rest of Germany had been destroyed during the Second World War. The coastal railway was, however, rebuilt: connecting Ahlbeck to Wolgast, now just a swing-bridge away from Usedom. Increased pedestrian traffic on

Usedom speeded up the decision to rebuild the Wolgast fixed link in 1950; but, for nearly 40 years, a railway trip to Usedom involved walking 1 km along the bridge over the Peene River in Wolgast. In the 1980s, some 400,000 holiday-makers (including some 70,000 children) travelled in this manner (*Historia kolei na wyspie Uznam* 2009). Economic growth and change after German reunification in 1990 led to increases in the number of private vehicles in the country, suggesting that the appeal of rail travel was over. It was proposed to liquidate the Usedom railway in 1992; however, the company was recapitalised in 1993 and re-launched as *Usedomer Bäderbahn* (UBB). Today, this is the most efficient and inexpensive means of transport to the island – since 2008 serving as far as to the centre of Świnoujście. A rail connection now exists to the local Heringsdorf airport, at Garz, which had been used by the Soviet Army until 1996. The re-building of the pre-war rail connection through Karnin to Ducherow and Berlin is planned; this would shorten the rail journey from Berlin to Usedom to two hours.

Administratively, German Usedom was initially part of the Soviet occupation zone. In January 1947, Usedom became part of the new state (German: *land*) of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. This state became part of the GDR when this country came into being in 1949. It was incorporated into the FRG on the basis of the German reunification treaty in 1990, and part of the district (*landkreis*) of Ostvorpommern, with its seat in Anklam, since June 1994. In September 2011, following further reform, Ostvorpommern was incorporated into the new district of Vorpommern-Greifswald. Within this district, there are on the island a commune Heringsdorf and two offices: Usedom Nord and Usedom Süd.

During the Cold War, when the Warsaw Pact was a given and the Soviet presence on Usedom limited, the natural advantages of the island's coast were exploited for economic use. The German part of the island started rebuilding its holiday and spa facilities, soon becoming one of the most significant areas of this type in the country. Heringsdorf became the main health resort, even though its development was hindered by various government-imposed restrictions, including a ban on running private accommodation, and a ban on recreational sailing in the Baltic Sea. National holiday centres and camping sites were nevertheless built on the island, generating more tourist traffic. German reunification abolished these restrictions, and significant investments were made in public infrastructure and in the quality of tourist accommodation, which became almost entirely privatised. In 1996–1997, various island towns were awarded the official status of bathing resort (Bansin, Koserow, Loddin, Trassenheide, Ückeritz, Zempin, Zinnowitz),

holiday resort (Karlshagen) and health resort (Ahlbeck, Heringsdorf). In 2001, the total capacity of German Usedom's tourist accommodation was estimated at nearly 44,000 beds (Faligowski 2002).

Tourism continues to dominate the island's economy as its 'single remaining resource' (Greverus 1997: 13). Inshore fishing and farming – there are some 2,000 hectares of farmland – have been of only marginal importance. Until German reunification, the East German army used the area around Peenemünde as a military base, which made Usedom a world leader in military technology, placing the island 'at the forefront of innovation' (Greverus 1997: 16). The island was then 'anything but periphery' (*ibid.*). No more: since 1992, the base has been open to tourists. 'Economic activity parks' occupy several hectares of the island.

## Rapprochement

Before the end of the Second World War, the island of Usedom constituted an unambiguous spatial, political and economic unity. The decisions of the Allies in 1945 changed that. The two sides – newly constituted politically, administratively and even demographically – scrambled to secure new and contrasting social, political and economic identities. This led to the development of two unrelated and isolated, although parallel, spatial systems. Polish Świnoujście leaned to Szczecin, while the German part of Usedom leaned towards Berlin. Each of these two spatial systems was configured differently. In nearly 50 years, the German side of Usedom became logistically well integrated with the continent, partially due to two bridge crossings. Uznam, meanwhile, remained more of an island, without any permanent mainland connection with the rest of Poland. Theoretically, such a trip was possible via Germany; but there were a few obstacles: the lack of road border crossing, passport clearances, customs limitations and a longer distance that made the trip unaffordable but for a privileged few.

This situation lasted until well into the 1980s. There had been short periods of liberalisation of cross-border traffic in the late 1970s, when identity cards could be used instead of a passport and enabled people to cross the Poland–East Germany border. This ease on restrictions facilitated the growth of informal trade in numerous places around the Polish–German border. Yet, this was not the case on Usedom, where there was only a pedestrian border crossing, not conducive to commercial exchange. In any case, this period of free traffic ended with the rise of *Solidarność* in Poland in 1980: East German officials did not wish such improper, revolutionary ideas to be exported from Poland into their

country; and, the Polish Government imposed martial law in 1981. The Poland–East German border was again closed. Nonetheless, when martial law was lifted in 1983, bilateral exchanges in border traffic resumed with a vengeance.

The game-changing 1989 ‘autumn of Nations’ commenced in Poland and led to the removal of communist regimes in other East European countries. This wave of democratisation also gave a significant stimulus for changes in Usedom. There were sweeping political and economic changes in Poland, including free travel (since 1989) and liberalisation (since 1990). With German reunification and a Polish–German political rapprochement, many opportunities to narrow, if not close, the Usedom–Uznam divide emerged.

The changes that have taken place over the past two decades resemble the phases of development of geographic space as conceptualised by tourism geographers (Liszewski 1995), involving the creation of a space of exploration, penetration, assimilation, colonisation and touristic urbanisation. By analogy, a similar cycle of phases can be glimpsed in the process of Usedom’s ‘unification’.

The exploration phase was short: it was marked by increased pedestrian traffic at the Ahlbeck–Grenze border crossing, as Świnoujście inhabitants were lured to visit the German spa resorts at the western side of Usedom. The situation evolved quickly into one of penetration: pedestrian traffic sky-rocketed and the inter-border zone lent itself to profitable trade. Right at the border in Świnoujście, a market was established. It was so large that it became the city’s second biggest employer, even though many of its structural elements and transactions went beyond officialdom. The Poles would buy alcohol, cosmetics and washing detergent from Germany, while the Germans would buy food and household articles from Poland. Traffic statistics were quite asymmetric: in 2000, the border was crossed more than ten times more often by Germans than by Poles (Faligowski 2002). Meanwhile, some smuggling of goods was undertaken on the coastal ships that operated between the German resorts and Świnoujście. Duty-free sales were started on these vessels, which increased turnover for both ship owners and tradespersons.

The gradual erasure of the border was not just a result of individual actions, but of institutional initiatives at different levels, enabling a transition analogous to assimilation and colonisation. In 1990, common development plans for the island were created; these focused mainly on tourism, the improvement of communications and residential infrastructure, and environmental protection. Commitments included the

building of a sewage treatment plant for the whole island. A project brief was prepared in 1991 and was agreed to by both the Polish and German governments. A joint sewage network for Ahlbeck, Heringsdorf, Bansin and Świnoujście has indeed been in operation since 1993 (*Sewage System Świnoujście* 2002).

First official contacts between the communities on either side of the border (Świnoujście, Ahlbeck and Heringsdorf) took place as a part of a programme of cooperation in spatial planning and environmental protection. The European Union (EU) cross-border cooperation programme Poland and Hungary: Assistance for Restructuring their Economies (PHARE) was also implemented: this source of funding was tapped for the construction of the Świnoujście–Garz road border crossing (PHARE 2003). The more significant institutional project was, however, the creation of a trans-national 'Euro-region', called Pomerania, consisting of almost 100 communes from north-western Poland, a few *landkreis* from northern Germany and more than 30 communes from southern Sweden (Pomerania.net 2008). Usedom is located close to the centre of Pomerania. This trans-border entity seeks to reconstruct and perhaps revitalise the commercial and political connections of the past and to introduce projects that re-established relations, which had been overtaken by the divisions of the latter half of the 20th century.

Usedom had many barriers to overcome. The most difficult of all was probably the lack of a border passing, which virtually prevented the inhabitants of Świnoujście and tourists from coming to the city via Heringsdorf airport, while Germans from the western side of the island could not use the ferry seaport in Świnoujście. In addition, despite relaxed border controls in Ahlbeck, tourists in Świnoujście enjoyed limited access to tourist locales on the (more developed) German side. Nevertheless, there were more than five million border crossings reported in 2000 (Faligowski 2002). The island is well branded as a tourism destination, nationally and internationally (e.g. Williams 2009). In 1997, Germany and Poland agreed to establish a bus connection through the border crossing at Świnoujście–Ahlbeck; such a project was only implemented in 2004. Until 2008, all passengers had to change buses at the border. After August 2010, the circulation of all types of buses has been allowed.

Overcoming obstacles was easier after Poland joined the European Union in May 2004. (Germany had been a founder member of the EU – then the European Economic Community – in 1957.) EU accession, for example, enabled duty-free goods to flow to the island. Poland also became a signatory to the Schengen Agreement in 2007, which removed

border crossing requirements for EU nationals. The most visible effect of this integration was the extension of the railway track UBB to the Świnoujście–Centrum station, connecting this Polish city to the German railway network, as from 2008, and co-financed by the EU via its cross-border Innovation and Environment: Regions of Europe Sharing Solutions (INTERREG) IIIA programme (Municipality of Świnoujście 2011). Abolishing border controls enabled free road traffic through two previous border crossings in Ahlbeck and Garz, which, at least in principle, established Świnoujście's connection with the German road network.

Traffic between the two parts of the island did not decrease after Poland's accession to the EU. Walking or cycling from Świnoujście to the west of Usedom is a favourite tourist pastime: visitors to Poland include a quick walk or cycle to Germany as an extra attraction on their itinerary. Tourists can enjoy carefree walks along the beach and seaside pier: there is a pre-war boulevard that stretches along both sides of the border. International bicycle trails were established around Szczecin Lagoon and the coastal region that formed part of the Hanseatic League in the 13th–17th centuries. They are supported by small-scale, trans-border, local investments, such as the opening of a foot bridge for bicycles and pedestrians over the marsh in May 2010, near Kamminke, close to the airport in Garz. This is part of the trail for pedestrians and bikers, one of the common Polish–German undertakings on Usedom. The EU covered 85 per cent of the costs, via its European Territorial Cooperation Programme (Municipality of Świnoujście 2011).

Border guards report that, in 2006, nearly 4.5 million people used the border crossing at Świnoujście–Ahlbeck, and all crossings in Świnoujście were used by almost six million persons (*Przestępczość graniczna* 2007). Human traffic increased even more after 2007. The Germans visit Świnoujście most of all for commercial reasons, enjoying lower prices, particularly of food and fuel, and hunting for bargains. The individual importation of goods from Germany, so essential until 2004, has lost its value, in the context of a bottoming out of price differentials in the cost of alcohol and cosmetics. The scale of the trade now is, however, relatively low. The goods that are most notably still sought for on the German side by Polish bargain hunters are better quality washing powders.

## United and divided

The reaffirmation of the island's uniting geography is not (yet) accompanied by significant social or political changes, particularly in national discourse. A dual ethnic structure, an outcome of the post-war changes,



persists. Migration movements between the Polish and the German parts of the island are negligible. Calls by Germans for regaining the eastern part of the island, and reuniting Usedom as a German island, are occasionally made but are not very popular (see below). The reason for this is possibly the demographic domination of a very Polish Świnoujście over the rest of the island.

Mutual knowledge of the Polish and German languages is scarce. Just as problematic, yet losing its significance due to the growing popularity of credit card plastic is the operation of different currencies on the two sides of the border: the euro in Germany, the zloty in Poland. Yet, observing the past two decades of change, and in spite of some complicating issues, there is a noticeable current of mutual aspiration towards rapprochement on the local and regional levels. The process is sometimes disturbed by national interests.

One pressing issue relates to Poland's attempts to diversify away from its energy dependence on Russia as its main gas supplier. In 2006, a decision was taken to build a terminal at the Świnoujście seaport where liquefied natural gas (LNG) could be delivered from the Middle East. The terminal is due to start operations in 2014. This investment would negatively impact on the business of Russian company Gazprom and has led to some geo-political tensions between the two states. Russia completed its underwater gas pipeline *Nord Stream* to Germany in 2011, in order to be able to supply its mineral resources independently of both Poland and Belarus, at the same time being able to limit gas deliveries to Central Europe, including Poland. This pipeline route passes through the deeper waters of the bay of Pomerania; but it cuts close enough to the shallow sea-lanes to Świnoujście to irk Polish interests. The fear from Warsaw was that the pipeline could limit the size of ships that could approach the seaport and jeopardise its development (Bosacki 2011, Hydrocarbons-Technology.com 2011, Kublik 2011).

It is also hard to judge the impact of local energy investments on the island's 'unification'. Usedom caught 'oil fever' in 2011 when an oil well was dug near Pudagla, in the German sector of the island; the mineral deposits, known since the time of the GDR, were re-examined. The well may deliver some ten million barrels of oil; environmental groups are however concerned about the possible ecological damage that would accompany its extraction.

Finally, 'unification' may be disturbed by what appear to be small, local events that however are symptomatic of deeply engrained sentiments. The inhabitants of Świnoujście, for example, find it hard to understand the reasons behind the introduction of a local 'health resort tax' in 2011 by officials in Heringsdorf. This tax is common in German

resorts; the revenue is used to cover costs associated with maintaining beach infrastructure, cleanliness and safety. Initially, all tourists who stayed overnight on Usedom (whether in Poland or in Germany) were exempt from this tax; but this waiver was removed following a court decision. And so, even for a short stay in the German side, the Poles now need to buy a *Kurkarte*, which costs €3 per adult, €1.50 per student and €1 per dog (Tvp.Info 2011). Still, such and similar events can serve as excuses to increase support for organisations and political groups that may wish to disturb the current bilateral relations on the island.

The most influential German political party that calls for regaining the territories lost as a result of the Second World War is the right-wing *Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands* (NPD). In the latest Mecklenburg-Vorpommern state elections (September 2011), this party secured nearly 20 per cent of the vote in the main towns of the island, the best result in its history (Diening 2011, *NPD auf Usedom* 2011). This xenophobic party has gained popularity by focusing first of all on the threats resulting from the liberalisation of the border traffic: it has printed posters saying *Polen invasion stoppen* (Stop the Polish invasion); and it is claiming an increase in the German crime rate, including in the number of thefts committed by 'those strangers' from Poland. The relative popularity of the NPD in Usedom is possibly an outcome of a fear that Poles from a dominant Świnoujście 'invade' the much smaller towns on the German side. An aversion to foreigners and their physical abuse is not, however, a behaviour typical of NPD activities on Usedom/Uznam only, but is rather widespread on most of the former East German territories. Yet, in the 2011 NPD campaign, calls for Germany to regain control over the eastern part of Usedom have been rare and did not generate much attention. The most popular German organisation arguing for a revision of the borders, or at least for some financial compensation for expulsions, is the Federation of Expelled Persons (*Bund der Vertriebenen*, or BdV). This organisation, however, does not focus its activities on Usedom/Uznam.

By contrast, the Polish 'threats' focus mainly on German tourists. A brief analysis of the local internet fora reveals a certain fear in north-west Poland of German economic domination and the exploitation of the population of Świnoujście by German tourists. Some Poles believe that the local authorities have built the infrastructure on Uznam – including the rail link with the city centre, bus transport perhaps even an airport – exclusively for German use (*Twoim zdaniem* 2011). Solutions introduced to facilitate transportation bottlenecks are treated as burdens, rather than improvements. As an internet blogger complains:

‘There are hardly any parking spaces, because there are plenty of Germans and every one of them needs to come to Świnoujście’ (*ibid.*). However, there are also other reasonable opinions about the consequences of the German presence in the town. Tourism demand creates jobs; without the German tourist, Polish unemployment rates on Uznam ‘would skyrocket’ (*ibid.*).

Tourism has been a major driver for economic cross-border collaboration: many Poles work on the German side of the border; the number of Germans visiting Polish sanatoriums in Świnoujście was 37,300 in 2009 (up from just 16,000 in 2000) (*Świnoujście w liczbach* 2010); no wonder many of the island residents find it useful to be able to speak or understand both German and Polish. It is hardly surprising that the highly visible German presence arouses some general concerns in Poland over economic dependence, as well as of a territory, only brought into the national fabric some six decades ago, being ‘bought out’ by the neighbours. Is this form of economic domination some kind of German revenge for the loss of political control in 1945? The actual demographic dominance of Świnoujście over the rest of Usedom does, however, suggest evidence to the contrary, and especially when one considers the steady convergence in the quality of life of residents on both sides of the island.

## Conclusion

Usedom belongs to one of the poorest German regions, and with high rates of unemployment, dependent largely on a seasonal tourism economy. The situation on the Polish side is similar, although the quality of life on the German side is arguably better. Located at the respective peripheries of both nations, the island’s citizens can afford to forget national and historical differences when assessing their current economic condition.

Looking ahead, there are two possible future scenarios for the island. The more probable one, on the basis of recent trends, is a scenario of ever closer and deeper union by both sides of Usedom until the island’s eventual re-unification, not as the territory of any particular country, but as a component of a regional (Pomeranian) community, backed by the security and financing of the European Union. These changes are characteristic of the entire ‘continental’ Polish–German borderland. Similar phenomena may be noticed when analysing the operation of border towns, such as Görlitz – Zgorzelec and Frankfurt (Oder) – Słubice. A less likely scenario would see a halt to this unification process, even a return

to the schism of the past, possibly as an outcome of the unravelling of the EU in the wake of the current euro fiscal crisis. In the latter's case, the consequences will be much more serious than just Usedom's division.

Both sets of changes contemplated above are not unduly impacted by Usedom's constitution as a geographical island. Perhaps Usedom/Uznam is situated too close to a continent that is too large and powerful, and with which it has always had close connections, for the island to be characterised by any distinct features. Its current inhabitants are the sons and daughters of recent settlers, and do not readily see themselves as islanders. Usedom is not even a single commune on its German side. In any case, while officially divided between Germany and Poland since 1945, the island's current management on various policy matters – transport, waste control, mobility, tourism, trade... – is integrated and coordinated both internally (within the island, particularly at municipal level), as well as within the regional alliance of the EU in which both Germany and Poland are members. Such integration, however, does not deflect from a general regard of the island – by Berlin, Warsaw and Brussels – as a region in need of economic development. Its former claim to fame, and economic survival, was in its representation as Berlin's bathtub; now it is as the Pomerania Island. And it remains possible to speak of one side of the island as if the other side does not exist, and never did (e.g. Greverus 1997).

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# 9

## Hispaniola

*Marie Redon*

### Introduction

It is surprisingly difficult to come up with an acceptable name for the second largest island in the Caribbean Sea and the 22nd largest island in the world: Should it be called by its colonial (Spanish) name, Hispaniola? Or by the name assigned by its other (French) colonial master, Saint-Domingue? Or by the indigenous (Taino Amerindian) word that remain in usage on either side of the border, Quisqueya? This quandary is revealing of an insular fragmentation, reinforced by economic, social and cultural differences on the ground, which persists on either side of a land border that runs some 300 km along a largely north-south axis.

The Dominican Republic and Haïti are, respectively, the second and third largest countries – by both land area and resident population – in the Caribbean basin; only Cuba is larger. A land border, forged out of a long history, runs across this island with a total land area of some 76,000 km<sup>2</sup>, splitting it into two independent and (along with other, smaller, sub-national islands close by) self-contained states. This unique division – no other island in the world is thus divided so neatly – expresses two types of fractures: that of an island with domestic frontiers, as well as of two states that are in it together, for better or for worse: sharing a common and unique island coastline, a tumultuous past and a future destiny. One must note, for example, that a rebellion secured the independence of the Dominican Republic from Haïti in 1844. Before the war, the whole island of Hispaniola/Quisqueya had been under Haitian rule for 22 years.

After the tragic earthquake that struck Haïti on 12 January 2010, the Dominicans were the first foreigners to respond, providing emergency supplies and other forms of aid by land; the port facilities at Port-au-Prince, the Haitian capital close to the epicentre of the quake, had been largely destroyed. It was the same Dominican government who financed the construction of the new Henri Christophe University campus at Limonade, near Cap Haitien, symbolically inaugurated on 12 January 2012. The university is a gift of the Dominican people to the people of Haïti, and cost US\$50 million. Meanwhile, in November 2011, at the frontier area of Savann Bonm (north of Malpasse), in circumstances yet to be determined, a state of tension has been declared after the confirmed deaths of at least four Haitians in what has been described as an act of Dominican 'reprisal' after the disappearance of two Dominican farmers. The secretary-general of the Organization of American States (OAS) urges the two governments to appeal for calm and to engage in a constructive dialogue to get to the roots of this tension and to discuss any other matters of common interest that relate to the border zone (Caribbean 360 2011, Haïti Libre 2011).

These facts speak to a deep and persisting ambiguity in the relationship between these two countries and their people. Quisqueya is an island forged out of connected yet separate jurisdictions; of two peoples who live together yet apart. This chapter will discuss the enduring political economy of this relationship; in coming to better terms with the nature of the border and its dynamics, one hopes to come to better grips with the island itself.

## **An Island Frontier: between barrier and interface**

### **One island, contrasting realities**

In 1960, the Dominican Republic and Haïti had a comparable gross national product (GNP) *per capita*; however, since then, the GNP of the Dominican Republic has grown, while that of Haïti has contracted in real terms. In four decades, the economy of the Dominican Republic has shown a healthy mean annual rate of growth of 5 per cent, one of the highest in the region; in contrast, Haïti has only managed an annual rate of economic growth of about 1 per cent, the lowest in the region, and has had a deteriorating GNP per capita, even before the devastating earthquake that struck its capital in 2010 (Groupe de travail sur la Compétitivité 2009: 8). Quisqueya is the site of some very sharply contrasting socio-economic situations (see Table 9.1).



Table 9.1 Comparing Haïti and the Dominican Republic

	Haïti	Dominican Republic
Political status	Sovereign state since 1804	Sovereign state since 1844
Capital City	Port-au-Prince	Santo Domingo
Population (2011)	9.7 million	9.9 million
Land surface area (km <sup>2</sup> )	27,750	48,735
Resident population density (persons/km <sup>2</sup> )	350	203
% of population that lives in Urban Areas	52%	69%
Life expectancy in years (2009)	61	73
% annual population growth	+ 0.7%	+ 1.3%
GNP per capita (US\$)	1,100 (2010)	8,900 (2010)
Standing on human development index (2009)	149th out of 182 countries	90th out of 182 countries
% of population below poverty line	77%	50%
Adult (15+) literacy rate (%)	49%	88%
Main language(s) spoken	French, Creole	Spanish
Currency (exchange rate as at November 2011)	Gourde (1US\$ = 40.3 gourdes)	Peso (1US\$ = 38.4 pesos)

How can one plausibly explain these substantial differences? Are they largely accidents of geography, consequences of specific historical episodes or more likely to be the outcomes of public policy and governance practices? An International Monetary Fund (IMF)-sponsored study claims that there are minimal geo-physical differences between the two sovereign states, including the quality and quantity of natural resources, the productivity of the land, the level of public health provision and the access of local products to international markets (Jaramillo and Sancak 2007). Having eliminated this potential explanatory factor, the authors have then looked at whether the widening gap since the 1960s between the two neighbouring states can be explained by historical events or rather as the consequence of decisions taken by their respective political leadership. Their conclusion is that there had been a very poor institutional fabric in both countries up until the start of the 20th century (with a greater level of political instability in the Dominican Republic), but this factor could not plausibly be used to

explain the contemporary cross-state difference. And thus they conclude that it was the unfolding of political practice since 1960 that must have played the most significant role in the divergence of economic growth between the two states.

In looking at common points across the two countries, the radical and rapid transformation of their economies looms large. On the Haitian side, agriculture represented close to 95 per cent of the total economic output in the early years of the 19th century, at the time of this country's emergence as the first ex-slave, post-emancipation state in the New World. In 2009, the primary sector was responsible for just 23 per cent of the gross national product of Haiti. This decline occurred at the same time as the rapid growth of the services sector, retail and wholesale trade in particular, which shot up from about 5 per cent to 60 per cent of GNP in the same period. This tertiary sector growth in Haiti has mainly occurred in the informal and unregulated sectors (Paul et al. 2011). As for the secondary (manufacturing) sector, this accounted for some 17 per cent of GNP in Haiti in 2009 (IHSI 2010), almost half its level of contribution to the economy of the Dominican Republic, where it stood at 32 per cent of GNP in 2009 (Association of Caribbean States 2012).

For long dependent on agricultural exports (especially sugarcane, cocoa, banana and tobacco), the economy of the Dominican Republic shifted in the 1980s towards the development of tourism and free enterprise zones to attract productive investment in manufacturing. The country had been involved in a policy of import-substituting industrialisation since the 1950s, but maintaining a keen interest in attracting foreign investment: manufacturing soon became the country's economic engine. Already at the end of the 19th century, it was thanks to the US and Cuban investments that the first large sugar plantations had been established here, helping to modernise the economy; whereas in Haiti, the world's first black Republic, no such investments were made. The exports of the Dominican Republic progressively branched into other, lucrative sectors (meats, citrus, eggs) and, very often, agricultural labour in the Dominican Republic was composed of Haitian migrant workers. Not only the US but also European, Chinese and Korean investments are today critical to the two key economic sectors of manufacturing (mainly textiles), as well as tourism.

Indeed, the Dominican Republic now receives more than four million visitors annually, the second largest figure for any Caribbean island country (only beaten by Puerto Rico). Tourism, with its associated industries, is today the main source of economic revenue for the country. Tourism arrivals have seen a spectacular increase starting from the

1990s. (Meanwhile, Haiti has seen its tourist numbers fall – Dupont 2009.) The Dominican Republic today attracts some 14 per cent of the gross Caribbean tourism market; its tourist accommodation infrastructure has multiplied by 12 times in 24 years: from some 5,000 beds in 1980 to 60,000 in 2004, with a healthy mean annual bed occupancy rate of 75 per cent, and holding on well in spite of the recent recession (Pattullo 1996, Puerto Rico is the Place 2011).

Industrialisation has led to an exodus from the countryside to the main towns (Saint-Domingue, Santiago and San Pedro de Macoris), so much so that nearly 70 per cent of the Dominican population can now be described as urban dwellers; such an urbanisation has not be anywhere as significant in neighbouring Haiti. Accompanied by the development of tourism and a renewed interest in cultural heritage – the historic centre of Santo Domingo is inscribed as a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Site – has led to a significant improvement in the quality of urban infrastructure; again, a trend not as strongly witnessed across the border, except perhaps in the north, at Cap-Haitien.

Shifting rapidly from a cash crop to an industrialising economy, the Dominican Republic has graduated away from the unenviable status of a 'least developed country'. This change has been confirmed by rapid and sustained economic growth, but with unequal social spillovers, leading to an exodus of migrants (as in Haiti). The two neighbouring countries both benefit from significant transfer of remittances, forthcoming from two impressive diasporas: some 1.3 million Dominicans and some 1.8 million Haitians (of the latter, some 300,000 illegal immigrants) in the United States alone, according to the Haitian minister responsible for Haitians overseas (personal communication, 5 December 2011). The financial flows of these expatriate nationals amount to some US\$3,000 million, and close to 7 per cent of GNP, for the Dominican Republic – as vital a source of revenue as tourism – and the main source of economic revenue for more impoverished Haiti, with US\$1,300 million flowing to the country from abroad in 2006 (Inter-American Development Bank 2011). More than two-thirds of all private remittance transfers to the two countries flow from the United States.

Both countries have a strong economic reliance on the United States. Given its geographical location, and an extensive history of commercial relations, the United States has long been a privileged player in the international relations of both countries. Its main customer as well as its main supplier, the United States was solely responsible for more than 60 per cent of exports to, and 40 per cent of imports

from, the Dominican Republic in 2009 (NationMaster.com 2012); these percentages were even higher some years ago. Both countries registered a trade deficit with the United States after 2005; but the free trade agreement signed between the United States, the Dominican Republic and various Central American countries – called DR–CAFTA (Dominican Republic–Central America United States Free Trade Agreement) – which entered into force in 2007, should go some way to rectify this for the Dominican Republic. A trade gap of almost US\$2,000 million between the United States and the Dominican Republic was registered in 2009 (Embassy of France in the Dominican Republic 2010). As for Haiti, close to 80 per cent of its total exports head to the United States, with the Dominican Republic being its second largest export market (with 7.5 per cent of the value of total exports). Almost half of Haiti's imports in 2007 also came from the United States (ISHI 2010). Haïti's exports to the Dominican Republic were valued officially at some US\$260 million in 2009, but the figure under-estimates cross-border transactions. The goods exported are mainly labour intensive: agricultural products – coffee, mangos, avocados, dates, pigeon peas and some game birds – and construction material (Attali 2011, IHSI 2010, Paul et al. 2011, RESAL 2001). Compare this with US\$462 million of products sold by the Dominican Republic to Haiti in 2010: including wheat flour, sugar, soybean oil, rice, natural water, crackers, pasta, bananas, textiles and clothing (Haiti Startup 2011).

The climate for doing business appears to be improving for the Dominican Republic. It has moved up from 102nd to 86th on the *Doing Business Index* (World Bank 2012). The country's banking sector, reformed after a crisis in 2003 (a result of the bankruptcy of the country's three major commercial banks), now enjoys relatively healthy levels of liquidity and deposits (Embassy of France in the Dominican Republic 2010). As a member of the Caribbean Forum (CARIFORUM), the Dominican Republic is also party to an economic partnership agreement with the European Union, signed in 2008 and involving 14 Caribbean states, meant as a successor to the Cotonou agreement.

In contrast, after the January 2010 earthquake, Haiti's infrastructure was heavily damaged, significantly reducing the opportunities for any economic growth in the short to medium term, and notably so because of the massive loss of life and capital, the destruction of private businesses, the acceleration of unemployment and the severe deterioration in the purchasing power of the people living in the densely populated areas affected by the quake (IHSI 2010). A national development plan has been drafted and presented to international donors in March 2010

with a view to better manage the flow of funds and aid to Haiti; yet, the country's government appears unable to fully and properly coordinate this flow, without ceding some of its authority to foreign interests.

There is thus a clear divergence in the unfolding socio-economic histories of these neighbouring countries after 1960. We now turn to a discussion of the border and its role in the relationship between the two states.

### **An elusive yet tractable frontier**

The land border between Haiti and the Dominican Republic has been in place since 1777 and is not officially contested.

The Spanish had taken possession of the island since the first voyages of Columbus in 1492; but a number of French corsairs had set up their bases on the western side of the island. Their presence and occupation of Western Quisqueya was noted by the French government and, to Spain's dismay, officially recognised by the Treaty of Nimègue of 1678 as belonging to France.

Hispaniola was thus split in two: a French part to the west, referred to as the colony of Saint-Domingue, and a Spanish part to the east. The division was not particularly significant until the extension of colonisation into the interior of the island, where various border incidents started taking place. Various attempts were made in the 18th century to stabilise the border, even if this was never fixed or rendered materially other than a few scattered border guards at the main crossing posts. Exploiting this indeterminacy, various French settlers would foray regularly into Spanish territory. A provisional treaty between the two settlements was agreed to at Saint-Michel de l'Atalaye (in modern-day Haiti) in 1776, and subsequently approved and ratified in Aranjuez, Spain, in 1777. This document was accompanied by a 'pact of good neighbourliness', dealing with what to do with escaped slaves, army deserters and the sale of cattle between the two colonies (Glénisson 2006: 81–85). It also established a border, which was however only fixed in the far north (at the Massacre River) and the far south (at Pedernales or Anse-à-Pitre River). It would stay so for over 100 years.

The border runs across lands that have been won and lost by both sides in the courses of various violent contests, rebellions and incursions. Given its strong symbolic value, one would thus expect the national border to be very systematically laid out and delineated. And yet, the presumed length of this land barrier varies by as much as 30 per cent, depending on which source is consulted: from 276 km (according

to the Consulate for the Dominican Republic in France (La France en République Dominicaine 2012) to 310 km in a geographical information website for the Dominican Republic (ACQ 2012); 360 km in the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) World Factbook (CIA 2012); 375 km (French Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2012); and as much as 391 km, according to a 2005 communiqué by the Secretariat for External Relations of the Dominican Republic (Alter Presse 2005).

There is however a scientific explanation for these discrepancies: the actual figure depends on the scale at which the border is measured. The finer the scale, the more detailed will be the frontier, and its length will increase as a result. Any land frontier is, by its very nature, approximate; and it must therefore always be interpreted or deduced. Most maps must suffer this cartographic discretion, reminding us that there is nothing objective and scientific about land borders. In certain places, the border follows a watercourse, and is therefore liable to natural change, as much as to interpretation. We are dealing really with a porous and sinuous border that zig-zags across territory (*after* Théodat 1998). There is nothing natural about it, reminding us that it is a political, and not a physical, construction.

And yet, this is a very real and visible frontier, one that heightens the differences pertaining to either of its sides; it is a border that can be clearly identified from high-resolution images, taken either from an aerial view or from orbiting satellites. We see before our eyes two contrasting and highly symbolic models of Caribbean development: the hacienda-style, cattle-raising economic model on the west, and the modern, intensive sugarcane plantation on the east. This is a veritable insular division of labour that is laid out onto this island's landscape (Cassa 1992).

Other than its functional purpose, the border appears as a barrier at certain border crossings, where national icons abound, and where strong messages of being inside and outside, of us versus them, prevail. At the border post of Jimani-Malpasé, a white line cuts across the mountain face to materialise the trace of the border. But such demonstrations of nationalism are few and far between at the border itself.

There are two competing 'iconographies' at this Quisqueya island border (Gottmann 1966), and they both provide a net advantage to the Dominican side. One is military, the other is commercial. First of all, there is a net Dominican advantage in military investment: the Dominican army has some 40,000 troops, of which 24,500 regular troops and 15,000 paramilitary personnel (Fuerzas Armadas 2012). In contrast, Haiti has disbanded its army in 1995. The absence

of a Haitian military threat may lead one to argue in favour of demilitarisation of the Dominican side of the border; instead, the opposite has happened. A specialised Border Security Corps (*Cuerpo Especializado de Seguridad Fronteriza Terrestre*, or CESFRONT) was set up in 2006: the very name of this elite force, comprising 500 soldiers and which includes three helicopters amongst its equipment, leaves no doubt as to its intentions (e.g. Dominican Today 2010).

Similar to many other land borders, the Quisqueya borderland is the outcome of a violent, contested and complex history; one can refer to it as a border seared in blood. From the Dominican perspective, it is an artefact that construes the Haitian neighbour in a somewhat bad light (Théodat 2003). A barrier separates these two states – one that is political and historical as well as mental and psychological. And yet, this definitive frontier is also a conduit and spur for economic dynamism. Frontier posts are sites of connection, points at which transit various types of merchandise. Various trucks can be seen daily negotiating the border at Jimani, above and below the bridge at Dajabón, and the control point of Belladère; various individuals in the Artibonite district of western Haiti can be seen wielding bags of flour bought in the Dominican Republic. All signs of an intense traffic in bilateral trade.

### **A border turned inside out**

The borderland is a militarised zone, and those traversing it are fully aware of a strong military presence and of the location of military posts, roads and other communications facilities in the vicinity of the border proper. But these military posts and structures become avenues for village markets, which concretise the commercial exchange that has grown between the two countries since the 1990s. The two countries are not just geographically but also economically linked; it is, however, a most unequal linkage. The most economically dynamic economy of the region, linked to the poorest country and the most unstable in the region (Doucet et al. 2011).

In spite of the common land border, Haïti is the destination of just a third of the Dominican Republic's exports, after the United States and Puerto Rico. Part of the reason for this is the 1991–1994 trade embargo imposed on Haiti, during which time the smuggling of various goods across the border intensified. The same networks and channels that made such smuggling possible have been reinforced once the embargo was lifted. To the extent that, some 20 years ago, perhaps three trucks would cross the Jimani–Malpasse border every week; today, some 60 trucks cross every day. There were three flights per week between the two capitals in the 1990s; today, there are four flights every day (*ibid.*).

Because of these growing exchanges and articulations, the Quisqueya border region palpates with an appreciated dynamism. Border villages polarise the trope of the international frontier and yet also act like stitches, riding across long-suffered wounds and fusing the island as one commercial organism. These border villages are treasure islands of sorts in themselves: owning a historical legacy that speaks to the border, yet points of transit and negotiation for different types of exchange. There are four such key border spaces on the island: Ouanaminthe/Dajabón in the North, from where a third of all officially registered Dominican merchandise exports to Haiti pass through; Belladère/Elias Piña, in the centre, with limited trade that represents some 5 per cent of total official exports; the key crossing of Malpasse/Jimani, somewhat to the south, from where half of all merchandise crosses the border; and Anse-à-Pitre/Pedernales, in the south, which is however badly served logistically. All four market-villages on the Dominican side have seen a considerable increase in their population, much higher than their respective national demographic average (ONE 2012). Their growth and commercial vibrancy puncture the conceptualisation of national territoriality and reinforce the geographic unity of the shared island space. They are helping to make the border reality evolve from one of acute danger to economic promise. Even though, once again, the balance is stacked in favour of the Dominican side. There are clear infrastructural and logistical weaknesses on the Haitian side, including limited access points for the transportation of goods. And the so-called bi-national markets trade disproportionately in Dominican goods. Hence this is another form of geographic disequilibrium, and more evidence of an interdependence that is mutually beneficial yet most unequal.

The border is therefore porous, broken through and challenged daily, in manners that are both legal and illegal, formal and informal. It is rendered so, thanks to the cross-national differentials that are economic, commercial, fiscal and legislative in nature. Dominican clothing firm Grupo M opened a subsidiary in 2002 at Mariaroux, in Haiti, exploiting the setting up of a free trade zone, and paying the cheapest wages in the region (e.g. Werner 2007). This free trade zone has been set up to attract Dominican capital in what has been officially declared as a special border development zone, a vast swathe of land that involves all the Haitian provinces that straddle the international border. A similar zone is being launched in Caracol near Cap Haïtien. Meanwhile, across the border, a large covered market is being constructed at Dajabón, part-financed by grants from the European Union (Agence Française de Développement 2012). This will reinforce the commercial infrastructure in the region,



along with a new road linking Dajabón to Cap Haitien to the west and to Santiago in the east. And Decree No. 272-02 by President Hipólito Mejía has institutionalised the principle of free trade zones in the Dominican Republic as from April 2002.

Alongside these legal transactions, the island border gives rise to various other shadier transfers. The two countries lie along the drug route axis that sees massive amounts of drugs cross from South to North America, aided by the presence of immigrant communities and serious levels of corruption amongst those entrusted with border controls. Drug seizures are frequent: for example, the United Nations Stabilisation Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and the Haitian National Police (HNP) seized 420 kg of cocaine in a vehicle with official plates at Léogâne in May 2007, with an estimated street value of US\$8 million; five out of ten suspects arrested were HNP officers (Kiskeya Radio 2007). Haitian ex-president René Préval in 2007 declared his determination to fight the drug problem regionally, while criticising the United States for lack of support on the interception of speedboats and flights from Venezuela and Colombia that use clandestine Haitian landing strips, or drop their cocaine packages into the sea offshore (Crisis Group Report 2007: 19). The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime lambasted Haiti as a fortress for drug traffickers that required urgent policing initiatives (UNODC 2010).

The economic exchanges between Haiti and the Dominican Republic are extensive and intensive, but skewed and unequal, given the very different levels of development of the two countries. The transactions – not institutionalised by any formal free trade agreement or customs union – remain heavily biased in favour of the Dominican side. This situation continues to further threaten the already strained productive capacity of the Haitian state, which finds itself as primarily an importer of its neighbour's products. Thus, the two countries continue to nurture ambiguous relations, close yet distant, friendly yet suspicious, tight yet asymmetric.

### **Divided island, connected territories**

In spite of all these differences, there are commonalities. There is a growing population right across the island. Given current trends, projections forecast a total island population of nearly 25 million by 2035: 12.2 million for Haiti and 12.7 million for the Dominican Republic (US Census Bureau 2012). The current high population density would be even higher, straining natural resources – potable water, arable land, native species threatened by extinction – even further. Can

one even contemplate such higher populations without some sense of shared environmental management plan between the two states? Such a question raises concerns about the very different styles of environmental stewardship that prevail in the two countries.

### **Same island, contrasting vulnerabilities**

Quisqueya presents a sad but clear illustrative example of how different land use practices can result in different environmental vulnerabilities, even on the same island. Of course, Haiti and the Dominican Republic share the natural disasters that occur commonly in the region, reminding us that such natural hazards do not respect political borders. The cholera epidemic that followed the January 2010 earthquake left 7,000 dead and 522,000 reported cases in Haiti; with 300 deaths and 21,000 cases notified in the Dominican Republic. The appeal of the World Health Organisation was for a cholera-free Hispaniola (WHO 2011).

And yet, note the discrepancy in mortality and morbidity. When hurricane Jeanne tore across the island in August 2004, it caused over 3,000 deaths in Haiti – of which some 2,800 in Gonaïves alone, which was nearly washed away – but only 27 deaths in the Dominican Republic. These figures are partly explained by the almost absolute level of deforestation in Haiti (close to 98%) compared with the greener Dominican Republic (60%). The heavy tropical rains on this mountainous island can lead to cliff erosions and landslides, especially where the land and soil are not held down by tree roots. Haiti, with its almost absent tree cover plus higher population density, is thus much more seriously threatened by the consequences of flooding.

Jared Diamond makes this case in his 2005 bestseller *Collapse*: he argues that the environment presents one of the three most vivid and convincing distinctions between Haitian and Dominican societies. The Dominicans inherited the eastern side of the island, with its richer natural resource base – forests, rains, rivers, fertile soils – great potential for sustainable agriculture and hydroelectric power. Moreover, the prevailing winds and clouds come in from the east, and discharge rain as they reach the central mountain range that divides the two countries. In this way, the Dominican Republic receives much more rain than does Haiti; and so much of this rain flows down eastwards, replenishing Dominican rivers. These observations contradict the assessment of Jaramillo and Sancak (2007) presented above.

The second explanatory factor for the inter-country difference, according to Diamond (2005), is the history of colonisation. The France–Haiti colonial relationship was a much deeper, more intrusive and exploitative one than that between Spain and the Dominican Republic.

A declining colonial power at the end of the 18th century, Spain has shown much less enthusiasm to exploit its Caribbean half-island colony. By that time, Haiti's forests were cut down to pave the way for an intensive plantation economy run by many thousands of African slaves. After independence in 1804, the new state – ostracised by many other powers – shunned such a slave-driven economy and even prevented foreigners from owning land or controlling active investments in the country. And so, Haiti was the recipient of both minimal foreign investment and minimal immigration, contrary to its neighbouring republic.

The nature of political rule is the third determining factor identified by Diamond. Rafael Trujillo became the president of the Dominican Republic in 1930, while Francois Duvalier came to power in Haiti in 1957. The former wanted to develop a modern state based on an industrial economy; but the latter did not. While both are known for their despotic rule, the first accelerated the economic transformation of his country; the second restrained it. Now, after several decades, the Dominican Republic protects its forests, a haven of biological diversity; and its hydroelectric power has fuelled its industrial growth. In Haiti, charcoal and firewood remain the main sources of household energy, contributing even further to deforestation.

The differential impact of public policy on forests, or on their absence, is just one example of note. Similar conclusions can be drawn with respect to the quality of buildings, public infrastructure and emergency services. No less than 220,000 people lost their lives in the wake of the January 2010 earthquake in Haiti: such a level of mortality, along with considerable human suffering and infrastructural collapse, has been exceptionally high when compared with other locations impacted by a similarly powerful tremor. Indeed, it has been the world's fourth most destructive tremor in the past 100 years (Hou 2011).

### **People of blended lands**

It appears that Haïti and the Dominican Republic suffer each other's presence on the same island. Their territorial and historical proximity is an objective condition that cannot be neglected or avoided; it has also contributed to considerable cultural exchange (Matias 2001). These linkages are all the more significant when one acknowledges the presence of a Haitian diaspora of about 500,000 persons in the Dominican Republic, plus a further million or so residents on the Dominican side of (up to third generation) Haitian descent. This is reflective of, as much as a contributor to, a considerable current of flows and exchanges between the two states.

The situation of Haitian immigrants in the Dominican Republic is a bone of contention between the two governments, however, as also reported by Amnesty International (2007). The children of these immigrants, according to Dominican law, should be granted Dominican citizenship; but the Dominican government is not keen to do so, continuing to treat these people as 'in transit'. The illegal status of many of these Haitian immigrants poses an additional problem: If the parents should not be in the Dominican Republic in the first place, how can the status of their children be regularised? Double citizenship, which would provide a potential solution to this impasse, is recognised by the Dominican government but not by the Haitian one: its 1987 constitution states that dual Haitian and foreign nationality is in no case permitted. As a result, many Haitian immigrant-born children in the Dominican Republic have a state of legal anonymity, and do not officially exist (Moral 1961).

This considerable and largely one-way flow of migrations across the border can be largely explained by the strong socio-economic differences. Many Haitians cross the border daily, looking for a better life on the other side. At the same time, the forced repatriations of Haitian emigrants back to Haiti are also a daily occurrence, an operation supported by Dominican military personnel and CESFRONT staff who supervise the formal border crossings. But the Haitians do not despair: many try crossing again, and many succeed in doing so, in spite of the very poor working conditions that await them. The irony is clear: while their state was born out of a repudiation of slavery, desperate Haitians today choose to work in near-slave conditions in the Dominican Republic (Anaya Gauthier 2007). This is especially the case in the *bateyes*: labour camps or company towns restricted to male immigrant agricultural labourers from Haiti who engage in the heavy manual labour and long hours required on the sugarcane plantations. This form of deliberate segregation acts as a system of labour control on the Haitian labourers.

It is primarily around the market towns that a specific border cultural space and border practices exist. Commercial exchanges often rest and thrive on daily encounters, the summation of which involves transactions in millions of pesos. Dominican traders, sellers and middlemen are obliged to enter the world of their Haitian customers, even if just to negotiate and agree on a deal. The Dominican merchant class at the border effectively organises its commercial and social activities to satisfy the various demands of their Haitian neighbours. That much can be glimpsed also from the various radio announcements, made in Creole, which one can hear in the border regions, as well as from various

publicity postings, also in Creole, in the same locations. These details are proof of a robust Haitian–Dominican *métissage* that straddles the border zones; a trans-national socio-economic culture that leads to mixed marriages and mixed families, even to an informal polygamy in some cases – with persons belonging to two families, one on each side of the border (Matias 2001). These cultural forms are hurt and corralled by the active construction of nationalism and the stubborn persistence of legal obstacles, particularly on the Dominican side, as in the case of children born of Haitian immigrants in the Dominican Republic, denied a legal identity.

At the border, the control of the migratory flux is itself an ambiguous pursuit, subject to considerable discretion and latitude, renewed and refreshed between legality, arbitrariness, corruption and need. The Dominican government seeks on the one hand to outfox and outdo the *buscones*, members of its society that engage in human trafficking, meant to provide cheap Haitian labour for the sugarcane fields. It also tries to mollify international opinion, as well as that of the Haitian government, who regularly complain of heavy-handed practices. But it also keeps a wary eye on its own general public, largely suspicious of Haitians ‘invading’ their much better kept country.

Beyond the frontier region, meanwhile, new generations of immigrants, no longer sugarcane labourers but students and trained technicians, are starting to change the general negative perception of the Haitian in Dominican society. Meanwhile, on the other side of the island, *bachata* (a type of Dominican music and dance) is practised as far as the westernmost reaches of the country, where an increasing number of Haitians now also speak Spanish.

## Conclusion

Such visibly different landscapes and socio-economic regimes on either side of a land border on an island space result in a bewildering political economy. There is a heavy baggage of state-sponsored symbolism and nationalism: this weighs heavily on border practices; and it both nuances and strains bilateral relations. And yet, the same division and contrast are also the trigger for considerable economic dynamism. The inter-country land border acts as an interface: whether to support the operation of free trade zones; to conscript Haitian labour in Dominican agriculture; to witness the to-and-fro of migrations and repatriations; of goods and products changing hands; of new and blended lives, liaisons, alliances and families being struck (Philoctete 1989). These are some

of the constituents of a merging and blurring, of an interval that has become its own culturally and economically legitimate space, and a constant rebuttal against the sense of discontinuity and duality imposed by the dry politics of a land border, and its two states. The border has definitely perturbed and scripted the overarching islandness in defining and suggestive ways. Quisqueya is an intermediately divided island space, with each of its constituent countries uncomfortably connected to, and dependent on, each other. Its two states are much like anxious bedfellows, pushing to contain and manage the ambiguities, as well as the opportunities, of a forced relationship (Saintilus 2007).

The presence of a land border does not compromise insularity, but it certainly impacts on the nature of the island experience (e.g. Redon 2010, 2011). One does not quite see the island in the same way; as if a piece of the puzzle is missing. If insularity is characterised by isolation, then what characterises islandness is fragmentation (Bonnemaison 1992: 120). On divided islands, this rupture is doubly felt: the separation from the continent, as reminded by the ocean; and the separation from the rest of the island, as reminded by a land frontier. This discomfiting sense of place can manifest itself at various levels of analysis. On Quisqueya, the nature of the land-based difference can be felt at different scales: when contrasting hues and terrain are looked down upon from an aircraft at 10,000 m altitude; as much as through the international division of labour, or the commercial transactions, practised there. And yet, there are people and households who may not apply an island perspective to their condition, locked as they may be in some mountainous village deep in the island's interior. The keen sense of being naturally closed and separated by the Caribbean waters that circumscribe the whole island may be breached, countered and even replaced by a sense of other types of borders, in this case political ones, which rudely interfere on the mental processes that determine a particular sense of place (Moles 1982: 283).

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# 10

## Saint-Martin/Sint Maarten

*Steven Hillebrink*

### Introduction

St. Martin is the world's smallest inhabited island shared by two states. With an open border, a tempestuous economic and demographic growth, a mixed population of more than 100 nationalities, large-scale migratory movements and an economy that is much dependent on international dynamics, it is a microcosm of globalisation. As one of the most popular tourist destinations in the Caribbean, it is a place where migrants from some of the poorest countries work, and also one where some of the richest people anchor their yachts. The local population, which has been reduced to some 20 per cent of the total population on both sides of the island, meanwhile struggles to preserve its identity.

This chapter describes the history of the division of St. Martin and the development of the constitutional status of the two sides. It analyses how the division of the island has influenced its economic development, and how the governments and also residents, migrants and tourists on both sides of the island have adapted to the uniquely prevailing circumstances.

### Context

St. Martin is one of the Leeward Islands in the north-eastern Caribbean. It is located in-between Puerto Rico and Guadeloupe and a number of other overseas territories of the United States, France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom; the only *independent* states in the vicinity are Saint Kitts & Nevis and Antigua & Barbuda. It covers just 87 km<sup>2</sup> of mountainous terrain. The northern part is a *collectivité d'outre-mer* (overseas community) of France, called Saint-Martin. The southern part is called Sint Maarten and is part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands as

an autonomous *land* (country). (Reference to ‘St. Martin’ in this text indicates the island as a whole, ‘Sint Maarten’ refers to the Dutch side, and ‘Saint-Martin’ to the French side.)

The island numbers among the most densely populated territories in the world. The French part (53 km<sup>2</sup>) is larger than the Dutch (34 km<sup>2</sup>), but the Dutch side has slightly more inhabitants: 41,000 against 37,000 on the French side (Statistical Yearbook Netherlands Antilles 2009: 15, [www.insee.fr](http://www.insee.fr)). Estimates of the number of unregistered resident aliens vary substantially, from 10,000 to 40,000. Some 1.5 million cruise ship passengers visit the island per year, and some 500,000 travellers visit the island via Princess Juliana International Airport in Sint Maarten and Grand Cas Airport in Saint-Martin. All this explains why a visit to the island – especially to the Dutch side – imparts a ‘feeling of crowding that borders on the claustrophobic’ (UN-ECLA 1998: 7) (see Table 10.1).

Table 10.1 Comparing Saint-Martin and Sint Maarten

	Sint Maarten	Saint-Martin
Political status	Autonomous country within the Kingdom of the Netherlands since 2010	Overseas community of France since 2007
Capital city	Philipsburg	Marigot
Population (estimated, 2009)	40,920	37,460
Land surface area (km <sup>2</sup> )	34	53
Resident population density (persons/km <sup>2</sup> )	1,203	707
% of population that lives in Urban Areas	Practically 100%	Practically 100%
Life expectancy at birth in years	73.1 (male, 2010) 78.2 (female, 2010)	76.2 (male, 2007, Guadeloupe) 83.1 (female, 2007, Guadeloupe)
% annual population growth	3% (2000–2010)	2.9% (1999–2008)
GNP per capita (US\$)	19,900 (2008)	20,800 (2009 est.)
Human development index	n.a.	n.a.
% of population below poverty line	n.a.	n.a.
Adult (15+) Literacy rate (%)	95.8% (2010)	n.a.
Main language(s) spoken	English, Spanish	French, English
Currency (exchange rate as at November 2011)	Netherlands Antilles guilder (1US\$ = 1.79 NAf)	Euro (1US\$ = 0.75 EUR)

## The division of the island

The division of St. Martin dates from the 17th century, when French settlers occupied the northeast coast of the island and the Dutch West Indian Company occupied the area around the great salt pond in the south of the island. In 1648, the separation was formalised in the Treaty of Concordia, which provided that the French and Dutch shall live on the island as friends and allies. The original text of the Treaty of Concordia was probably lost, perhaps when British troops burned down the Court House in Philipsburg in 1810, disappointed that they did not find the treasures they had hoped for (Badejo 1989: 5). But the contents (as reproduced in Tertre 1667: 412–414) have been recognised as binding by France and the Netherlands (Hoeneveld 2002: 90–91).

The Treaty instructed the French and Dutch authorities to determine the precise course of the border. There is a popular story about how the border was drawn. A Frenchman and a Dutchman started walking in opposite directions from Oyster Pond, on the east coast. The Frenchman walked along the northern coast of the island, the Dutchman along the southern coast. At the place where they met up, they drew an imaginary line back to Oyster Pond, which roughly corresponds to the present-day border. The Dutchman walked slower – or took a nap halfway because he had too much to drink – which explains why the Dutch half is smaller. This story is used on the island to mock the Dutch, or to illustrate that the French are ‘dangerous to the “relax and enjoy yourself” ideology of the island’ (Guadeloupe 2009: 21–23).

Whether the walking contest has any relation to historic fact is unknown. The first written sources do not mention this episode. In the version of the French missionary Jean-Baptiste Tertre, the French and Dutch colonial authorities sent detachments to St. Martin after the Spanish abandoned their occupation in 1648. The French and Dutch commanders agreed to revert to the situation that had briefly existed before the Spanish had chased them from the island (Tertre 1667: 409 *et seq.*). A later British version offers more details, apparently derived from a visit to the island during the mid-18th century. According to this account, French and Dutch prisoners of war, who had escaped to the woods during the Spanish occupation, agreed upon the division after the Spanish left. They built a canoe, and the Dutchmen used it to inform their Governor in St. Eustatius, from where the French authorities would also be informed. But ‘from a true principle of Dutch perfidy, they forgot the last part of the errand’, and returned to claim the entire island. The French authorities in St. Kitts found out, and

sent troops, but their commander decided to offer a peaceful division of the island, which the Dutch accepted (Jefferys 1761: 75–76). The formal separation by way of a treaty seems to have been inspired by the division of nearby St. Kitts, which would also explain the treaty's reference to rivers and lakes, which did not exist on St. Martin (Glasscock 1985: 11).

During the colonial period, it was not uncommon for Caribbean islands to be occupied by settlers from different European countries. Examples are Saint Kitts (British and French), Saint Croix (Dutch and British), Tobago (Latvian and Dutch) and Quisqueya (also known as Hispaniola, French and Spanish). All these separations except the last have now been terminated. One of the reasons for this may have been that the early colonial economies shifted from trade (and piracy) to agriculture. The colonists moved inland in search of land, where they came into conflict with settlers from other countries. St. Martin did not provide much opportunity for agriculture, especially on the Dutch side, which might explain why the separation survived the early colonial period, and why the island was not granted to the British in the Utrecht Peace Treaty of 1713 (Hartog 1981: 32–33).

Nonetheless, there has always been a drive towards unification of the island, either by force, by buying up the other half, by petitioning the British Crown to take over the entire island, by proposing to sell the entire island to the United States, or to become an independent state (Speetjens 2002). During the 17th and 18th centuries, the French, Spanish, British and Dutch on various occasions controlled the entire island. Each time, the situation of the Treaty of Concordia was quickly – or after a few years – re-instated. During the 19th century, there were many French initiatives to acquire the Dutch side, and vice versa: for example, the Commander of the Dutch territory during the 1740s recommended that the West Indian Company should consider buying the French side to relieve the overpopulation on the Dutch side. He estimated that the French side could be bought for 150,000 guilders (Hartog 1981: 41). Yet, none of these initiatives came to pass (Sicking 2006). Perhaps this can be explained from the minimal and declining economic and strategic importance of the island after the 18th century.

After the Second World War, the idea of uniting the island under a single colonial government lost much of its appeal, and was replaced by the idea of becoming independent as a single country. Appeals for the independence of St. Martin have been mooted, and this idea has gained some popularity since the 1980s, particularly on the Dutch side (Lake 2000, Sekou et al. 1990).

## Constitutional status

After the Second World War, the constitutional development of the two sides of the island took distinctly different turns. Saint-Martin was integrated into the mother country as part of the *département d'outre-mer* (overseas department) of Guadeloupe in 1946, whereas Sint Maarten gained a large amount of autonomy as part of the Netherlands Antilles in 1951. As a result, the two sides of the island developed quite differently. But one thing they have in common is that they both represent a trend in overseas governance of fission or disintegration into ever smaller administrative units. This trend started in the 1960s with the high-profile break-up of the West Indies Federation, and may continue until a situation is reached where each dependent island has its own (autonomous) government that has direct constitutional ties with the metropolitan government. At the same time, a process of Caribbean economic integration has started, but the dependent territories cannot always participate in this process in the same way as their independent neighbours.

### Sint Maarten

Until 2010, Sint Maarten was part of the island federation of the Netherlands Antilles, which was an autonomous country within the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The seat of the federal government of the Netherlands Antilles was located on Curaçao, off the coast of Venezuela, almost 1,000 km from Sint Maarten. The Netherlands Antilles furthermore consisted of the smaller islands of Bonaire, Saint Eustatius and Saba.

Within the Netherlands Antilles, Sint Maarten handled many of its own affairs independently, but it depended on the central government in Curaçao for law enforcement, tax collection and a number of other subjects. The Kingdom government (i.e. the Dutch government in The Hague in consultation with the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba) retained responsibility for foreign affairs and defence, as well as the task of issuing Dutch passports to the inhabitants of the islands. A large proportion of the legislation prevailing in Sint Maarten was made in Curaçao. Sint Maarten participated in the federal government of the Netherlands Antilles, but with its three seats in the 22-seat federal parliament, its influence was obviously limited.

Despite the large amount of autonomy that Sint Maarten enjoyed within the Netherlands Antilles, it was not fully free to develop its own economic policies. The example of Aruba, which left the Antilles in

1986 to obtain a separate status within the Kingdom, and thereafter went through a period of strong economic growth, helped to reinforce the idea that Sint Maarten would be better off without being subordinate to Curaçao. That it was possible for even a small island to secede from a larger territorial entity was already well known in Sint Maarten and Saint-Martin. Many islanders had seen British paratroopers land on neighbouring Anguilla in 1969, after that island had attempted to secede from the British-associated territory of St. Kitts–Nevis–Anguilla. The ‘Anguillian revolution’ ultimately led to a separate status for Anguilla as a dependency of the United Kingdom in the 1980s, whereas St. Kitts and Nevis became independent. It was argued that severing the ties with Curaçao would also facilitate cooperation with the French side (Atlink 2003: 40–41). But a referendum in 1994 showed that most of the voters preferred to stay part of the Netherlands Antilles.

The deciding moment for many Sint Maarteners probably came in the aftermath of hurricane Luis, which struck the island in 1995. The Netherlands was quick to supply aid, and agreed to provide further aid directly to the island, and not via the central government of the Netherlands Antilles in Curaçao, as had been customary until then. This reinforced the perception that Sint Maarten would benefit by virtue of having direct ties with The Hague. The failed attempts at restructuring the central Antillean government during the 1990s probably sealed the fate of the Netherlands Antilles as a single country.

The island government of Sint Maarten organised a referendum in 2000, in which 67 per cent of the voters chose to leave the Netherlands Antilles and become a separate country within the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The government of the Netherlands Antilles did not really object to this, but the Netherlands was not prepared to discuss a separate status for Sint Maarten. Partly because it feared that the chronic governance issues of Sint Maarten made it unsuitable for increased self-government, and partly because a secession of Sint Maarten would spell the end of the country of the Netherlands Antilles as a whole.

In 2004 and 2005, referendums in the other Antillean islands showed that a large majority of the population of those islands was also in favour of dismantling the Netherlands Antilles. Combined with the growing problems of the central Antillean government, the Netherlands became convinced that the Netherlands Antilles no longer had a future and agreed to a break-up of the country. The Netherlands provided debt relief to the amount of 1.7 billion euro, so that the islands would not be burdened with an enormous debt at the start of the new situation. Curaçao and Sint Maarten agreed to a number of conditions in the areas of law

enforcement and state finances. Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba became part of the Netherlands, as special overseas municipalities (Hillebrink 2008: 177–180).

Sint Maarten became a separate country in 2010. It is not an independent state, but remains part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The constitutional status of Sint Maarten is now the same as that of Aruba and Curaçao. It makes its own laws and policies on all subjects, except foreign affairs, defence, nationality and a few others, which continue to be the responsibility of the Kingdom as a whole. A few subjects are handled jointly with Curaçao and/or the Netherlands and Aruba. The Sint Maarten government obtained the authority to conclude loans, although this authority is subject to restrictions.

Near the end of the process of constitutional reform, Sint Maarten agreed with the Netherlands and the other parts of the Kingdom that the Sint Maarten government was not yet ready to take on all of its new responsibilities independently. Sint Maarten formulated plans of approach for the improvement of its police force, prison facilities and the handling of immigration. The realisation of these plans is monitored by a joint ‘committee of progress’ (*Staatsblad* 2010, nr. 344). The island government’s budget and spending are also monitored by an independent committee of financial supervision (more about this below, in the section on growing pains), which was instituted jointly by Sint Maarten, Curaçao and the Netherlands (*ibid.*).

A few of the former institutions of the Netherlands Antilles remain in place for Sint Maarten and Curaçao. These islands continue to share a central bank – the Centrale Bank van Curaçao en Sint Maarten, ([www.centralbank.an](http://www.centralbank.an)) – and an official currency, the ‘Netherlands Antillean guilder’, which is to be replaced by the ‘Caribbean guilder’. While Sint Maarten is now an autonomous country and no longer formally depends on Curaçao, its relations with the Netherlands government have become more direct. The build-up of its autonomous government in part continues to depend on the cooperation of Curaçao and the Netherlands.

### **Saint-Martin**

The constitutional status of the French side of the island also changed during this same period. France, a unitary state, had long resisted the trend of disintegration among overseas island territories. Since 2007, Saint-Martin is one of the first French *collectivités d’outre-mer* (overseas communities, or COMs) that consists of only one inhabited island (Oraison 2008: 161), or rather, half an island. It also consists of a number



of uninhabited islands and islets, one of which (Tintamarre) used to be inhabited until 1960 (Büch 2000: 158).

Until 2007, Saint-Martin was a community of the overseas department of Guadeloupe. Politicians on Saint-Martin and Saint-Barthélemy had long been pleading for a separate status of their islands within the French republic. The main island of Guadeloupe, located 250 kilometres to the south, is very different in many respects. Guadeloupe is traditionally an agricultural society, oriented towards its relationship with France, whereas the two northern islands are more embedded in their Caribbean and American environment, also because the French administration remained virtually absent from the northern islands for a long period of their history (Seners 1999: 8–10). In Saint-Martin it was claimed that its constitutional attachment to Guadeloupe did not fit well with its international orientation, its inescapable relationship with Sint Maarten and its economic emancipation (Oraison 2008: 157–158). The fact that the authorities on Guadeloupe were largely invisible in Saint-Martin until the 1970s (Diémert 2007: 675) did not stimulate a sense of belonging to that department.

After a change in the French Constitution in 2003, it became legally possible for Saint-Martin to leave Guadeloupe and become a separate COM. This status offers the local government more autonomy and creates more room for France to adapt the prevailing legislation and policies to the specific circumstances of Saint-Martin. In 2003, a referendum was held, in which 76 per cent of the voters voted 'yes' to the status of COM. Only 44 per cent of the voters turned out (Diémert 2007: 669), but the outcome was nonetheless considered valid. The '*document d'orientation*' that had been adopted by the local representatives before the referendum served as a roadmap for the French organic law by which Saint-Martin was transformed into a COM in 2007, at the same time as Saint-Barthélemy (*Loi organique* nr. 2007-223 of 21 February 2007).

France did not provide many specific measures for Saint-Martin. The legal regime therefore remains much the same as before. This conservative approach to the new status was proposed by Saint-Martin itself, and differs from the more adventurous road taken by neighbouring Saint-Barthélemy. Coupled with the fact that Saint-Martin has requested to remain part of the European Union as an ultra-peripheral region, the newly created room for tailor-made solutions that deviate from French legislation does not yet appear to be stretched to the maximum (Oraison 2008).

The local government of Saint-Martin has obtained more authority over local affairs. The local authorities may provide – within limits set by

French statutes – rules on subjects such as local taxes, roads and traffic, labour permits for foreigners and tourism. As of December 2012, these subjects will also include energy supply and urban planning (Article LO6314-3 of the *Code général des collectivités territoriales*). The authorities of Saint-Martin have also obtained a limited possibility to act on the international level, somewhat similar to the government of Sint Maarten. Cooperation between the two governments should therefore become easier, for instance, through the harmonisation of legislation, or by formulating joint policies, also with regard to international relations.

## **Economic development**

In spite of an international border cutting across the island, the island has formed a free trade area since the 1648 Treaty of Concordia. Even though Saint-Martin is part of the European Union while Sint Maarten is not, there is free, unregistered and untaxed movement of persons and goods. Both sides do not levy import duties. Since 2010, a treaty between France and the Netherlands provides for cooperation in the area of customs administration. Other than that, however, there are few common economic policies, and legislation is not harmonised. The island cannot therefore be considered as an economic union. Even though the US dollar is widely used on both sides of the island, there is no monetary union, because the official currency of Sint Maarten is the Netherlands Antillean guilder, and on the French side it is the euro.

From the 17th century onwards, the economy of the French side was characterised by plantations (mainly sugar) and that on the Dutch side by the exploitation of salt ponds. The products of the island were exported to North America, and to islands in the region. These activities became less and less profitable; and so, until around 1960, the island had become a sleepy backwater with no more than 5,000 inhabitants in total, whose main occupation was fishing and raising cattle (Johnson 1994: 100), and which strongly relied on remittances from St. Martiners abroad (Kersell 1993: 61).

The economic situation of Sint Maarten started to change after the Netherlands Antilles achieved self-government in 1951. Elections quickly brought into power Claude Wathey, the son of a local merchant, who would stay in power for 40 years (Badejo 1989). His entrepreneurial spirit played an important role in the development of Sint Maarten's potential for tourism. Wealthy Americans discovered the island through an enthusiastic article about a French–Dutch island 'of virgin beaches and friendly natives' in the widely read *Saturday Evening Post* in 1957

(Speetjens 2002: 24–26). The article seems to have created a rush for land (Badejo 1989: 86–87). But the development of tourism did not really take off until after the United States imposed an embargo on Cuba in 1962 (Johnson 1994: 105). An airport had been built by the United States on the Dutch side in 1942, and a pier for cruise ships was opened in 1962, also on the Dutch side. Foreign investors came in to build increasingly large hotels and casinos on Sint Maarten, which attracted US tourists who could no longer holiday in Cuba. The economy of the Dutch side boomed during the 1970s and 1980s. At first, this was largely a function of tourist arrivals from North America, but gradually also from Western Europe and Latin America (Haan 1998: 88).

The foreign investments, which made this development possible, allegedly derived partly from international crime syndicates. These allegations gained Sint Maarten a somewhat notorious reputation. The size of the informal economy of Sint Maarten, and its influence on the economy of the island as a whole, has not been the subject of much economic research. But there are indications that the drugs trade, human smuggling and money laundering have played – and continue to play – a substantial role in the economy of the island (CBA 2012, Ilegems and Sauviller 1995, Redon 2006, Van den Heuvel 2003, Verhoeven et al. 2007).

During this same period, the Sint Maarten government was criticised for a perceived lack of integrity, and for not living up to standards of good government (Badejo 1989). The integrity issue came to a head in the early 1990s, when the government of Sint Maarten was temporarily placed under the supervision of the governor in Curaçao, and Claude Wathey and others were convicted on charges related to corruption (Oostindie and Klinkers 2001: 265–266, Van Ditzhuijzen 1996: 65). Recent years have witnessed convictions of a politician and a number of senior law enforcement officials, also on charges of corruption (CBA 2012: 212 *et seq.*).

The economy of the Dutch side started to overheat near the end of the 1980s. From 1990, economic growth slowed down for various reasons. Attempts to diversify the economy were not very successful. The island was struck by two big hurricanes in the second half of the 1990s, which damaged many hotels and apartment complexes. The growth of the economy picked up afterwards, but never achieved the levels of the 1970s and 1980s.

The development of the tourism industry in Sint Maarten obviously affected Saint-Martin in many ways. The two sides of the island have

become economically closely intertwined and interdependent since the 1960s. The infrastructure on the Dutch side (airport, sea harbour and cruise ship berthing facilities) is the 'lungs' of the entire island's economy (Seners 1999: 28). The French side has aimed to provide an attraction for stay-over tourists on the Dutch side, by developing complementary services. It has been noted that Europeans are not likely to fly nine hours to visit 'an expensive copy of Menton' (Kersell 1993: 63); but for tourists from the American continent, Saint-Martin offers an opportunity to visit a little part of France without having to cross the Atlantic.

Despite this interrelationship, the development of the French side proceeded at a much slower pace, until the taxation of investments in the overseas departments was reduced by a French law of 1986, the *Loi Pons*. This so-called *défisicalisation* sparked a building spree in Saint-Martin during the 1990s, which almost equalled the boom of the 1970s and 1980s on the Dutch side. Instead of the large hotels, casinos and fast food restaurants on the Dutch side, French entrepreneurs invested in luxury hotels, boutiques and restaurants offering a more refined cuisine. A similar development did not occur to the same extent in the other French communities in the Caribbean, which were granted the same tax privileges. This suggests that the proximity of Sint Maarten played a role – perhaps not only by providing the economic 'lungs', but maybe also because its entrepreneurship served as an example for initiatives on the French side. Some 3,000 hotel rooms were built within a few years, drastically changing the landscape, economy and society of Saint-Martin (Seners 1999: 22–23). Apparently, not all of the new hotels catered to demand, because some 1,200 rooms either closed down after 1995, or were turned into apartments. The remaining hotels have faced declining or varying occupancy rates (Hyst et al. 2005: 44).

## Growing pains

The rapid economic growth of St. Martin has caused social, demographic and environmental problems (Haan 1998, Hyst et al. 2005, Jeffry 2010, Johnson 1994, Seners 1999). The demographic numbers are staggering. The population of the Dutch side grew from 2,700 in 1960 to 32,000 in 1992 (Central Bureau of Statistics of the Netherlands Antilles 2005: 15). According to the Dutch government, the actual number of inhabitants was closer to 50,000 (*Kamerstukken II* 1991/92, 33 300 IV, nr. 2: 19). The French figures show a similarly explosive development somewhat later in time: from 8,000 in 1982 to 35,000 in 2002 (Hyst et al. 2005: 10).

The demographic growth originated mainly from immigrants, who were attracted by the chronic labour shortage since the 1970s (Haan 1998: 89). The local St. Martiners – that is, those inhabitants who descend from families that have lived on the island for several generations – now probably constitute less than 20 per cent of the population. There are probably more than 100 nationalities on the island (Benoît 2008: 211). The demographic figures do not reflect the probably considerable number of unregistered foreign inhabitants of the island. Research shows that approximately 75 per cent of the immigrants who came to Sint Maarten during the 1980s were not registered (Van Dam 1995). These immigrants worked as labourers in the construction of the large hotels and casinos. In 1996, the Dutch government estimated that half the population of Sint Maarten was on the island illegally (*Kamerstukken II* 1996/97, 24 074 (R1531), nr. 9: 1). During the 1990s, when the economic growth slowed down, the authorities started deporting illegal aliens, especially on the French side (Benoît 2008: 217). Their share in the population probably decreased since then, but it is not known to what extent. There remains considerable movement of unregistered persons to and from the island (Verhoeven et al. 2007).

Integrating large groups of immigrants from many different countries into a small society is not an easy task, and may be aggravated by islandness (Hyst et al. 2005: 64). It has been noted that people born on either side of the island tend to consider themselves part of one and the same people (Atlink 2003, Rummens 1993: 318). These St. Martiners are described as being strangers in their own country (Oraison 2008: 156, Verhoeven et al. 2007: 33). However, they do not appear to be a repressed minority, at least not if one looks at political representation. The council of ministers and the parliament of Sint Maarten, with just one exception – the new United Peoples Party, led by Claude Wathey's grandson Theo Heyliger – is made up largely of representatives of old St. Martin families, and the same goes for the political bodies of Saint-Martin, where old St. Martin family names such as Gumbs, Fleming and Richardson are still common. But this does not change the reality that much of the economic power has shifted to persons who are usually not considered local St. Martiners.

Economic growth has put considerable pressure on public services on both sides of the island. The public sector on the Dutch side of the island did not keep pace with the growth of the private sector during the 1970s and 1980s (Haan 1998: 89). According to the Dutch government, the large-scale construction of hotels, casinos and condominiums,

combined with a lack of adequate planning and insufficient administrative competence, led to overpopulation, traffic jams and badly overstretched public services (*Kamerstukken II* 1991/92, 33 300 IV, nr. 2: 19). A chronic shortage of housing arose during this period, with large numbers of illegal workers living in slums across the island, deprived of adequate medical care or education for their children.

At the same time, the public authorities on both sides of the island have struggled with considerable budget deficits for many years (Haan 1998: 126–127, Hyst et al. 2005: 47–51). As Saint-Martin is an integral part of France, tax collection and public spending is for a large part determined in Paris, or by representatives of the French government in Saint-Martin. For Sint Maarten the situation is different. As an autonomous country, it is responsible for raising and collecting taxes itself, and for determining how such revenues are spent. In combination with the debt relief that the Netherlands provided in 2010, a form of financial supervision was put in place for Sint Maarten. An independent Board of financial supervision (*College Financieel Toezicht*, Cft) monitors whether the budget and spending of the island government conform to certain standards that have been laid down in a Kingdom act (*Staatsblad* 2010, nr. 334). So far, the Cft has reported on a number of occasions that draft budgets of Sint Maarten government did not conform to the standards and has repeatedly expressed concerns. The Sint Maarten government feels that the supervision hinders the development of the newly acquired country status. Former deputy Prime Minister Theo Heyliger recently classified the current state of affairs as ‘modern day slavery. (...) Only thing the Dutch now provide is supervision. (...) [We have] supervision out the nose, coming out of the eyes, you name it. There is no Dutch budgetary help, we have to suck salt’ (*The Daily Herald* 2011).

## The border

The border between Saint-Martin and Sint Maarten is hardly visible. There is no physical barrier, no customs and no border patrols. (Saint-Martin is not part of the European Schengen area.) The border is often described as merely ‘symbolic’, which suggests that the border has no real meaning for the islanders. But this is not true. The border has far-reaching consequences for the inhabitants when it comes to their contacts with the state in matters such as passports, social security, health care and education. St. Martin thus shows that ‘a border is not so much a physical demarcation as a political project’ (Benoît 2008: 219).

The border delineates two distinctly separate jurisdictions. The law in Sint Maarten is for a large part based on the legislation of the former Netherlands Antilles, which in turn was often based on Dutch legislation. The new country now makes its own laws ([www.sintmaartengov.org/laws](http://www.sintmaartengov.org/laws)). In Saint-Martin, most French legislation applies, as well as the large bulk of European Union law. As a result, there are many legal differences. Certain behaviour may be punishable in Saint-Martin but not in Sint Maarten, or vice versa; certain goods may be sold in Sint Maarten without restrictions, but not in Saint-Martin; and so on.

The relevance of the border is increased by the fact that the two governments cooperate in fewer areas than might be expected on such a tiny island. Each side of the island produces its own drinking water, has its own power plant, hospital, airport, prison and schools. And there is little official cooperation or coordination of government efforts in these areas. While this is to some extent inherent to the way modern governments operate, and can also be explained from the constitutional status of both sides of the island (Kersell 1993: 51), the current situation does seem a far cry from the intentions of the signatories of the Treaty of Concordia, who agreed that 'the French and the Dutch established on the said island shall live as friends and allies.' Recent years have seen an increasing number of initiatives, which may eventually lead to more cooperation between the two sides. In 2010, a treaty was signed between France and the Netherlands on island-wide police cooperation, but this treaty has not yet been ratified (*Tractatenblad* 2010, nr. 311).

As it is, these two rather disparate jurisdictions, separated by a completely open border, offer many opportunities for evading onerous regulations that do not apply on both sides, or which are not enforced with the same strictness on both sides. The legal, economic and fiscal differences between the two sides are constantly on the minds of inhabitants. There is 'a permanent game of comparative advantage, often at the limits of the law, which is itself also relative' (Redon 2006: 258, my translation). This situation offers opportunities for profit maximisation. The business elite has 'strongly objected to plans to either remove the border or drastically change its character' (Atlink 2003: 41), because the border offered a tourist attraction. But the division of the island also makes it easier to evade certain government policies. For instance, the minimum wage is twice as high in Saint-Martin as it is in Sint-Maarten, and employers have to pay social benefits on the French side that are three times higher than in Sint Maarten (Seners 1999: 24). It is therefore not surprising that more businesses have their seat in Sint Maarten than in Saint-Martin (Baldacchino and Dana 2006: 427).

Important differences also exist between the social protection offered to residents and other persons. Generally speaking, public services on the French side, and access to them, are comparable to those in Western Europe; while Sint Maarten models itself after the United States in this respect. The corresponding differences are very relevant for people with low income or lack of legal status on the island, which puts pressure on the schools, hospitals and other public services on the French side. This situation is criticised by French scholars (Hyeet et al. 2005: 51, Redon 2006: 249, Seners 1999: 39).

There have been appeals to regulate the border with Sint Maarten, also because the open border – combined with the absence of much cooperation between the two governments – hampers effective crime control. But regulating the border, however lightly, would have many negative consequences for Saint-Martin. Instead, France has for a long time sought to obtain some amount of control over who enters the island through the airport on the Dutch side. On 17 May 1994, France and the Netherlands signed a treaty in Paris, which provides for certain ‘at risk’ flights to be subject to a joint inspection by French and Sint Maarten authorities. Passengers on such flights should satisfy the entry requirements for both Saint-Martin and Sint Maarten.

The ratification of the treaty came to a standstill in 1999, after Sint Maarten voiced fears that the treaty would harm its economy. The treaty would restrict access of people from nearby countries to Sint Maarten, because they would be required to obtain a visa before arrival (*Kamerstukken II* 1995/96, 24 074 (R 1531), nr. 7). At the same time, Sint Maarten feared that Europeans would flood the island, because the treaty seemed to give them free access. The treaty became a symbol for the dissatisfaction with the continued constitutional ties with France and the Netherlands among the local cultural elite (e.g. Lake 2000). France agreed to partly synchronise the list of nationalities that require a visa to enter Saint-Martin with the requirements for Sint Maarten. Although the Sint Maarten government continued its opposition, the Netherlands parliament approved the treaty in 2006, and it entered into force in 2007. It is not yet clear if, and to what extent, the treaty will affect the economy of the island.

During this same period, France has developed policies to make Saint-Martin socially less attractive for its Caribbean neighbours. These policies revolve basically around a requirement of legal residence for a certain period before a foreigner obtains access to certain public services. Some observers have called attention to the precarious situation of unregistered aliens in Saint-Martin and Sint Maarten as a result



of these policies. They describe the development of an 'institutional border' similar to that in Western Europe, which 'consists of mechanisms which turn access to social security into a site of immigration control away from the physical border enclosing the territory' (Benoît 2008: 225).

## Concluding remarks

The French and the Dutch side of the island have followed very different paths in their political and economic history since the 1950s. But the island as a whole has been transformed from a rural backwater into one of the most densely populated territories of the world; a bustling regional centre with a busy economy; and a newly acquired autonomy on both sides of the island. The fact that the island is shared by two states played a considerable role in this development.

The division of St. Martin coupled with its small scale means that the entire island is a borderland. This creates many challenges for the two governments. Recent French policies tend towards the creation of an institutional border, which might take the place of the absent physical barrier, and which would increasingly restrict access to some public services to certain categories of persons. At the same time, the new constitutional status of both sides of the island, which was partly motivated by a desire for more cooperation, clearly makes cooperation easier, and offers more possibilities for harmonisation of regulations and policies in the areas of taxation, the labour market, energy supply, tourism, roads and traffic. This might help the authorities face the challenges of the open border and the tempestuous economic and demographic developments of recent decades, as well as cut some of the high costs of providing adequate public services on a small island.

In February 2012, a declaration of intent was signed by France, Saint-Martin and Sint Maarten, which should lead to more cooperation in many areas. According to the prime minister of Sint Maarten, the declaration celebrates the 'everlasting cooperation' between the two sides of the island. The president of the Territorial Council of Saint-Martin saw it as a symbol that Sint Maarten and Saint-Martin are an 'inseparable couple'. The French *Préfet Délégué*, who signed the declaration on behalf of France, commented on a more sober note that: 'The road will be difficult but we have a duty to succeed for the welfare of our citizens who would not understand why, in the 21st century, leaders of two friendly countries sharing a common territory, are not able to agree on such cooperation' (Today 2012).

Saint-Martin and Sint Maarten are sometimes described as each others' competitors. This is probably only true at the government level. Local entrepreneurs, inhabitants and tourists, who are often neither French nor Dutch, simply choose to reside, trade, work or visit where conditions are most favourable. Instead of viewing each other as competitors, the two governments might achieve better results by investing in effective forms of cross-border cooperation, in the spirit of the Treaty of Concordia, which formed the basis for the separation of the island in 1648.

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# 11

## Tierra del Fuego

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### Introduction

Tierra del Fuego (literally, Land of Fire) is the name of the archipelago in the southernmost part of the Latin American continent. It consists of a large island, *Isla Grande*, and dozens of islands and islets to its south that together form the southern tip of Patagonia, the immense peninsula covering the southern provinces of the Republics of Chile and Argentina. Patagonia is different from the rest of Latin America: it has a relatively cold, windy and barren climate; when the continent is mostly tropical to subtropical. Perhaps that explains why Patagonia was never successfully colonised by European powers and remained unclaimed until the beginning of the 19th century, when Chile and Argentina started a squabble over its sovereignty that lasted almost two centuries and finally divided the territory up to the last isle. Within this division, *Isla Grande* of Tierra del Fuego was to suffer an artificial political partition by means of a vertical line that divides Chilean from Argentine territory (see Table 11.1).

The political economy of cross-border transactions between Argentina and Chile must be seen as part of a larger dynamic in which the entire Fuegian archipelago and continental Patagonia are implicated. The history of Tierra del Fuego partly comes to light as a reconstruction of geopolitical interventions by national governments, both in keen pursuit of their respective state formation.

### Early movements and incursions

Archaeological evidence suggests that the earliest known signs of human habitation of Tierra del Fuego date back 10,800 years (Borrero

Table 11.1 Comparing Chilean and Argentine Tierra del Fuego

	Chilean Tierra del Fuego	Argentine Tierra del Fuego
Political Status	Chilean territory since 1881, Province since 1990	Argentine territory since 1881, Province since 1990
Capital City	Porvenir (of province); Santiago (of country)	Ushuaia (of province); Buenos Aires (of country)
Population (2010)	7,003	127,205
Land surface area (km <sup>2</sup> )	29,485	21,478
Resident population density (persons/km <sup>2</sup> )	0.2	5.9
% of population that lives in Urban Areas	69%	97%
Life expectancy in years (2010)	78.8 (for Chile)	75.7 (for Argentina)
% annual population growth	0.9% (for Chile)	2.9% (for Argentina)
GNP per capita (US\$)	13,561 (Chilean Tierra del Fuego only)	17,965 (Argentine Tierra del Fuego only)
Standing on human development index (2010)	45th out of 169 countries	46th out of 169 countries
% of population below Poverty Line	11.5% (in 2009)	2.2% (2010 in Tierra del Fuego only)
Adult (10+) Literacy rate (%)	98.7% (for Chile)	98.4% (for Argentina)
Main language(s) Spoken	Spanish	Spanish
Currency (exchange rate as at February 2012)	1 US\$ = 476.850 Chilean Peso	1 US\$ = 4.35 Argentine Peso

1997). Indigenous tribes settled from the north and gradually divided themselves into four groups, each with its own territory, language and lifestyle. Within each of these populations, various grades of territoriality can be defined along the line of ethnic division. Within each of these divisions, there were smaller political territories, composed of peer groups of extended families. Any such territorial segregation was abruptly interrupted and fully disappeared – along with the entire indigenous population – within a lapse of two centuries through the process of occupation by Western powers that began in the mid-19th century.

The presence of Western powers in the area dates from the year 1520, when Portuguese explorer Magellan (actual name, Ferdinand Magalhães, 1480–1521) discovered the inter-oceanic route named after him, and becoming the first person to lead a circumnavigation of the globe. It was he, too, who gave Tierra del Fuego its name, referring to the fires lit by

the indigenous population, and which were spotted from his ships. For three consecutive centuries, English, French, Dutch and Spanish expeditions came by the islands but did not set foot on them, until the English Captain Robert Fitz Roy arrived in 1830, discovering yet another waterway in between the ocean south of Cape Horn and the much more northerly Straits of Magellan, naming the Channel after his ship: the *Beagle*.

In 1832, Fitz Roy's His/Her Majesty's Ship (HMS) *Beagle* arrived in Tierra del Fuego for a second time, with the young naturalist Charles Darwin on board. On Christmas Day, Darwin reports on the indigenous inhabitants:

These were the most abject and miserable creatures I anywhere beheld [...] These poor wretches were stunted in their growth, their hideous faces bedaubed with white paint, their skins filthy and greasy, their hair entangled, their voices discordant, and their gestures violent. Viewing such men, one can hardly make oneself believe that they are fellow-creatures, and inhabitants of the same world.

(Darwin 1997: 203)

Tierra del Fuego was still completely unexplored territory; little was known about its inhabitants. When Fitz Roy took four Indians captive during his first visit and took them back to England to 'civilise' them, European interest in the life of these 'savages' grew, even encouraging a specific literary genre (Hazelwood 2000, Thompson 2005). As of 1844, several missionary expeditions set sail to Tierra del Fuego to establish a settlement among the tribes in order to evangelise and civilise them. Many of these attempts ended up as horrific adventures of fatal confrontation – all the indigenous people were eventually wiped out – as much as with the harsh climate as with the local population. Finally, in January 1869, the first permanent European settlement was set up at Ushuaia, meaning 'the bay that points to the west' in the local Yamana language, at the northern shore of the *Beagle* Channel, almost halfway between the two oceanic passageways. This choice was not coincidental: Ushuaia offered a wide and protected harbour, with large adjacent lands fit for cultivation. Ushuaia became a permanent home for tens of Yamanas and several missionaries and their families (Bridges 2000).

The missionary settlement in Ushuaia may have inaugurated a permanent Western presence on the island; but meanwhile, on the other shore of the Straits of Magellan, a Chilean colony had been established, eventually named Punta Arenas in 1848. For Chile, the territorial

expansion towards the south had both geopolitical and economical motives. Land suitable for agriculture was most desirable to Chile (a largely mountainous country), and the Magellan region was declared tax exempt to attract economic activity. Moreover, possession of the Straits of Magellan was thought to offer significant strategic potential with growing inter-oceanic trade, and especially so after the introduction of the steam boat that could better navigate the narrow waters of the Strait, avoiding the more dangerous open waters of the Drake Passage south of Cape Horn. Punta Arenas became an important logistic centre for international companies until the opening of the Panama Canal in 1914, which degraded the city to the periphery of international trade flows. Nevertheless, since its foundation, Punta Arenas has remained southern Patagonia's largest settlement.

With a British presence on the Great Island of Tierra del Fuego, and on the Islas Malvinas/Falkland Islands, an effective trade and transport network was developed between Port Stanley, Ushuaia and Punta Arenas. This network was sustained well after the Border Treaty of 1881, which paved the way to the division of all land and water into Chilean or Argentine territory.

### **Towards a national border**

Most states are younger than the societies that they purport to administer. States therefore confront patterns of settlements, social relations, and production, not to mention a natural environment, that have evolved largely independent of state plans. The result is typically a diversity, complexity and unrepeatability of social forms that are relatively opaque to the state, often purposely so.

(Scott 1998: 183)

This canny observation holds true for Tierra del Fuego. Before political borders artificially split this region, it functioned as an autonomous and peripheral society, consisting of various settlements of which Punta Arenas was the hub.

A quick glance at a topographical map of Tierra del Fuego suggests that much of the border between Argentina and Chile on Tierra del Fuego does not coincide with any logical natural division; it thus has all the hallmarks of a rational compromise. Indeed, the border separating the two countries is merely an abstract line drawn in space, forged as a result of long and fierce political struggles. The dispute over the ownership of the most southern region, Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego was not



settled easily; the issues at stake were too great a concern for the two main parties in the dispute.

Only through various geopolitical interventions of an authoritarian nature could both Chile and Argentina secure their sovereignty over their respective southern edges. Economic activity was accompanied by a new process: that of keen state formation. This process was directed from the respective centres of the two nations and expressed through a competitive clash between two neighbouring states that accused each other of threatening national territory. It was not through territorial or economic arguments but through strategic and even sentimental aspirations that the discussion resulted in a crucially maintained status quo (Luiz and Schillat 1998: 81).

The competition for land took off after the two fledgling nations wrested their independence from the Spanish crown, both in 1810. The distribution of and control over land was seen as directly related to that of political power:

Issues dealing with (among other things) military and political security, the demarcation and protection of international borders... have been, and still are, the prerogatives of national governments.

(Ganster et al. 1997: 4)

State formation is implicated in the positioning of its borders: the pursuit of space was a keen policy objective by many other nations on the continent in the initial years immediately following the declaration of independence. In this respect, extension of territory does not necessarily originate from an interest in more land, but from a concern with one's relative strength in proportion to that of others. Apart from the Straits of Magellan, claim to that vast territory of continental Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego, practically unknown to either of the two nations, could then only have had a strategic purpose. After all:

[A]nyone who declines to compete, merely conserving what is his, while others strive for an increase, necessarily ends up smaller and weaker than the others, and is in ever-increasing danger of succumbing to them at the first opportunity.

(Elias 1982: 43)

The political border conflict between Chile and Argentina is a continuum of mutual strategic anticipations and reactions on domestic and international affairs. One cannot isolate this tension from the much

larger spatial rivalry in which both countries were involved (Thies 2008). Political clout and strategies are directly related to events and results in this larger sphere of operations. Whereas Chile fought various countries to expand its territory, Argentina found itself defending an already heavily diminished territory. Significant chunks of what used to be the viceroyalty of Rio de la Plata, under the jurisdiction of Buenos Aires, were gradually lost in different battles, forming part of Bolivia in 1825, the Republic of Uruguay in 1828, and part of Paraguay in 1870 (Romero 1997).

In 1855, the Republic of Chile and the Confederation of Argentina signed a Treaty of Peace, Friendship, Commerce and Navigation (Luiz and Schillat 1998: 79). This Treaty referred to the principle of '*uti possidetis*', respecting the border between both nations as it existed when Spanish rule ended in 1810. However, maps for the southern territories were particularly inadequate and contained sparse information. Moreover, as Argentina and Chile were recovering from the war with Spain and in search of some internal political stability, both nations aspired to take over the as yet un-colonised austral territories. As a result, both Chile and Argentina claimed sovereignty over Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego (*ibid.*: 93–94).

In 1843, possession of the Straits of Magellan and its adjacent land was officially claimed by Chile, and after several earlier attempts the country finally made good on its claims by founding Punta Arenas in 1848. The possession of Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego for Argentina became more a matter of consolidation and strategic balance than of any economic or industrial aspirations. Threatened by the growing strength of Brazil to the north, and the English presence on the Malvinas/Falklands to the east, the issue of sovereignty over Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego became a matter of significance to the Argentine state (*ibid.*: 81). Chile's possession of the Straits of Magellan effectively forced Argentina to react and hold on to what it believed should be its own.

But protracted negotiations were in store. They were reopened in 1872 by Argentina to try to clarify the possibly troubled contents of the agreement made in 1855. By this time, Chile, however, had changed tack and responded by laying claim to the entire territory south of latitude of 44°. It argued that it already had a prosperous colony established at the northern bank of the Straits of Magellan, whereas Argentina had not yet shown any concrete interest in this area; its settlements lay far away from the disputed territory (*ibid.*: 120). Argentina fiercely resisted these claims, exposing them as mere opportunism, and not backed by any precedent. In 1876, Chile presented a new proposal, gambling

with the continental land of Patagonia to achieve its key objective: securing the Straits of Magellan. Argentina again rejected this proposal outright.

Then, in 1879, Chile declared war on Peru and Bolivia. Sensing its moment, Argentina took the initiative. While Chile was preoccupied in the north, Argentina took definitive action on the Patagonian plains. Two maritime sub-prefectures were established, in Puerto Deseado and Río Gallegos, in 1879 to consolidate its sovereignty over the Patagonian Atlantic coast. And a controversial military campaign, called '*desierto*', ruthlessly ended lingering hostilities with indigenous tribes and took over 84,000 km<sup>2</sup> of Patagonian land (Morzone 1982: 57).

Now Argentina's presence in the south could no longer be denied. With the Border Treaty of 1881, completed following international arbitration, continental Patagonia and eastern Tierra del Fuego were assigned to Argentina; whereas Chile obtained the Straits of Magellan and its adjacent territories, western Tierra del Fuego and the archipelago south of the Beagle Channel.

What was now left to settle was Tierra del Fuego, consisting of one large island (*Isla Grande*) and countless small fjords on its southern flank. These negotiations were no longer a matter of gaining as much land as possible, but of preventing the opponent from obtaining a relative competitive advantage. A clinical approach was the only way to settle the matter. Hence the glaringly artificial vertical borderline, crossing the great island of Tierra del Fuego, from the Atlantic mouth of the Straits of Magellan to the waters of the Beagle Channel, which marks the border further eastwards, until flowing into the Atlantic Ocean.

Not long after this agreement, fresh problems arose. Since both parties now had to identify any positional advantages within the concepts of the treaty, differences arose in the way the agreement was interpreted. Tensions were again rising and an 'Additional Protocol to clarify the 1881 Treaty' was signed in 1893 (Luiz and Schillat 1998: 97), tightening the agreements so as to counter any possible friction. But still this was not enough: in 1896, international intervention was requested to calm the situation once more, leading to the British Arbitrary Judgement of 1902 (*ibid.*: 128).

One major issue still remained unresolved: sovereignty over three small islands at the far eastern side of the Tierra del Fuego archipelago. The 1881 Treaty had declared that Argentina was granted Staten Island, and 'all other islands situated in the Atlantic ocean, east of Tierra del Fuego', whereas Chile came to possess 'all islands south of the Beagle channel down to Cape Horn'. The islands were not explicitly mentioned

in the agreement, and so both nations laid claims to Picton, Nueva and Lennox islands. Negotiations to settle 'the Beagle conflict' started in 1904, but for decades led nowhere until it nearly erupted into a military confrontation in 1978. Since military aggression was not deemed an effective means of settling land claims by either nation, diplomacy persevered, finally resulting in the 'Treaty of Peace and Friendship' of 1984 – again secured through international political and ecclesiastical intervention – which assigned all three islets to the Republic of Chile (*ibid.*: 126).

## Colonisation

Following the 1881 Treaty, both Argentina and Chile commenced a rapid process of colonisation of their respective Fuegian territory. That of Chile was characterised by production-based initiatives, while Argentina, until the 1970s, opted for a consolidation of symbolic state representation.

With a stable and well-developed urban centre at the Western shore of the Magellanic Straits, Chile initiated the colonisation of Tierra del Fuego soon after the 1881 Border Treaty was signed. The discovery of a trace amount of gold deposits promptly encouraged the start of mining activity on *Isla Grande*. By 1898, 223 miners were employed in Chilean territory on the island (Martinic 1981). Some accompanying merchants and tradespersons settled down on the other shore of the Strait, where the first Chilean settlement on Fuegian ground arose in 1894, suggestively named *Porvenir* (literally, Future).

However, the true spin off of the colonising process was not mineral gold but 'white gold', as the production of lamb's wool was nicknamed. The allotting of large parcels of land – in some cases, up to 180,000 hectares – led to a massive growth in the production and export of wool from lambs that had been imported originally from the Malvinas/Falklands. Magellan wool was highly valued on the British market; the rearing and shearing of more than 250,000 lambs by the end of the 19th century boosted the social-economic conditions of the Chilean Magellan region, even though Porvenir, its main urban hub, had only 151 inhabitants reported for 1990 (Martinic 1981: 79).

Argentina decided to follow suit and also assigned its side of the island territory to the breeding of lambs. By the end of the 19th century, the northern steppe had been auctioned into parcels that could each exceed 100,000 hectares. However, no Argentine settlement was yet established in Fuegian territory. The interior of the island was hardly explored, and

the relative successful expansion of Chilean investments on the island resulted in encroachments by Chilean interests into Argentine land, and of Chilean workers moving into Argentine territory. This led to a drastic geopolitical intervention by the Argentine national government in 1972, with the implementation of a *Special Customs Area* to attract industrial activity, and with it, voluntary migration from continental Argentina.

After an early prosperity, the plummeting of wool prices on the international market stagnated Porvenir's growth and relativised Tierra del Fuego's role in the regional Chilean economy. Only by 1990 was Chilean Tierra del Fuego declared a province, integrating it within the 12th province that comprised the 'Magellan Region and Chilean Antarctic Lands'. Its capital city would be Porvenir that, according to the last National Census of 2002, counts 5,416 inhabitants. The same census revealed a total population of 6,904 inhabitants, distributed over almost 30,000 km<sup>2</sup>, making it the third least densely populated of Chile's 54 provinces.

Things went different on the Argentine side of the border. After the 1881 Treaty, Argentina also moved to consolidate its position in the region. Santiago was suspected of wanting to expand its borders; since Chile already had an urban centre at Punta Arenas, Argentine territory could easily be entered from the western banks of the Straits of Magellan. Furthermore, considering the presence of various third countries in Atlantic waters – not only because of the inter-oceanic passage but also because of the profitable hunting for whales, sea lions and penguins, Argentina felt the necessity to consolidate its possessions on the Atlantic side as well. In 1884, two sub-prefectures were established in Tierra del Fuego: one on Staten Island, and the other at Ushuaia on *Isla Grande*. Both extreme southern corners of Argentine territory were hereby occupied.

Soon thereafter, eastern Tierra del Fuego was officially declared a National Territory, under the administration of the Ministry of Domestic Affairs. Very little power was assigned to the local governor; juridical and legislative responsibilities rested in the urban centres of continental Patagonia.

At that time, a sub-prefecture was a division of the national army, which represented and secured the sovereignty of the territory, guiding and controlling all navigation in the area. It is thus quite remarkable that a sub-prefecture was established at Ushuaia, since the Beagle Channel was not a busy maritime route. And the Anglican mission was the only so-called 'civilised' settlement there. Perhaps the main reason to

establish the sub-prefecture in Ushuaia was to use the mission's local knowledge to facilitate the administration of what was then left of the local, indigenous population.

After the 1895 national census, Ushuaia, Tierra del Fuego's only settlement, counted 39 houses, 39 families and 313 inhabitants, indigenous population excluded. Any growth during the first years of its existence is hardly noticeable. This led to a push by both the territorial governor and the national government to design a project to stimulate population growth. Voluntary settlement was scarce, and for that reason the idea to establish a penal colony was mooted, following the example of various other island colonies such as New Caledonia (by France) and Australia (by Britain). This idea was soon accepted as the most expedient and practical way to catalyse Fuegian progress, and which afterwards would hopefully attract voluntary migration (Basalo 1981: 87–88). Establishing such a penal colony in Ushuaia would not only offer a solution to actual socio-political problems to the acceptance and function of new penitentiaries, but would reinforce physical sovereignty over Tierra del Fuego by the Argentine state. The plan was approved and the prison opened its doors in 1902. This prompted the first proper urban development when the prison guards and support staff settled in Ushuaia.

But the hope for trickle effect in terms of population growth did not materialise. In 1947, Argentine president Perón ordered the prison to be shut down. Moreover, unfolding international developments foresaw a new destiny for Ushuaia.

Argentina had found itself in a political and economic impasse. The country had declared its neutrality during the Second World War, whereupon the United States openly condemned the passivity of Argentina and boycotted the country economically. The US Marshall Plan prohibited any financial aid assigned to European countries to be used for trade with Argentina. The country felt threatened and at the brink of another military conflict. Consequently, the military presence in the south needed to be expanded, and the distance between Buenos Aires and its southern periphery had to be reduced. In 1948, the Naval Air Station of Ushuaia was opened; in 1950, a naval base was installed in Ushuaia, occupying the buildings of the former penitentiary.

Finally, in 1957, the Argentine government redefined the borders of its southern National Territory, incorporating the Malvinas/Falklands, the Southern Georgia Islands, the Southern Sandwich Islands and the Antarctic sector between the Meridians 25°W and 74°W and the Parallel 60°S up to the South Pole (0°S). This vast territory was supervised from the naval air base in Ushuaia, catapulting the settlement into key

strategic importance. The naval base quickly changed the character of the city by opening up a commercial market and creating a more residential atmosphere: the marines were not captives but inhabitants of Ushuaia, and had moved there with their families. The city was also connected by air to the rest of the nation in an unprecedented way.

After the provincialisation of Santa Cruz in 1972, the whole continental area of Argentina was divided into various provinces, designating peripheral regions as National Territories. In the same year, national legislation created three distinct fiscal areas within the incorporated national borders: a *General Regime* (*Régimen General*), which comprises the continental area of Argentina; the *Special Customs Area* (*Aerea Aduanera Especial*) operative in Tierra del Fuego; and a *Free Trade Zone* (*Zona Franca*), which covers the South Atlantic Islands and that part of Antarctica to which Argentina has laid claim.

The General Regime upholds national policies of tax and trade. The Free Trade Zone applies exceptions with regard to taxes on commodities. This is a tax-free zone and is regarded as a transit market. The Special Customs Area goes further: not only are goods exempt from any import or value added tax, but companies also do not pay taxes on profits and individuals do not pay taxes on income. The transportation of goods and people between this zone and others is tightly supervised; but, within its borders, one is free from levies and taxes. Since the introduction of this law, Tierra del Fuego has offered a major tax advantage to both corporate firms and individual inhabitants.

This far-reaching measure was mainly implemented to attract voluntary migration of Argentine residents to the island. It can be justified when taking into account the demographic disadvantage of Argentina in a context of growing tensions with Chile. In 1947, almost half (44%) of the population of this region was Chilean; but, given the continuous immigration of Chileans to the area, this grew to nearly 70 per cent by 1970. The main hub for this growth was the urban settlement of Punta Arenas, already with 63,000 residents by 1970. Argentina feared a Chilean invasion.

In March 1976, a coup ended the Peronist era. The incoming military junta faced a serious financial crisis: a recession with high rates of inflation. Following liberalising reforms in the UK and the US, a similar free market policy was considered more capable to equally discipline all actors, stimulating efficiency and preventing uncompetitive corporative behaviour (Romero 2001: 212). The social and economic protectionist measures of the Peronist regime were dismantled; foreign investment was encouraged.

Many local enterprises in the textile, food and electronics sectors fled to the south in order to survive the invasion of foreign industry. This ushered in the incidental industrialisation of Tierra del Fuego: more and more companies were unable to withstand foreign competition and, in order to survive, were obliged to move to the protected zone of Tierra del Fuego. Here, state subsidies and tax advantages protected industries from certain bankruptcy. From 1980 to 1987, the number of industrial establishments in Tierra del Fuego grew nearly 250 per cent while the total resident labour force grew by over ten times: from 45 establishments with a total staff of 600 in 1980, to 109 establishments with a total staff of 6,720 in 1987. What had been a largely naval community in Ushuaia was swamped by new industrial activities, which brought along a continuous stream of migrants. Río Grande, a former missionary post on the Atlantic shore, was converted within two decades into an industrial city of immigrants from all over Argentina and bordering countries.

In 1990, the last and southernmost Argentine province was created and baptised *Tierra del Fuego, Antártida e Islas del Atlántico Sur*, through which it also lays claim to the *Islas Malvinas*/Falklands, various south Atlantic Islands and a part of Antarctica (the triangular wedge between Meridians 25°W and 74°W and Latitude 60°S).

## Repercussions of border dynamics

Colonisation processes, geopolitical interventions, national political transformations and global market fluctuations have had significantly different impacts on the social construction of the two national territories that comprise *Isla Grande* of Tierra del Fuego. The 2011 census reports 127,000 residents on the Argentine side, whereas the latest official numbers (from the 2002 Census) indicate less than 7,000 inhabitants on the Chilean side. These numbers evince a clearly different colonisation strategy, undoubtedly related to the presence of the Chilean city of Punta Arenas, now with about 120,000 inhabitants, just across the Straits of Magellan.

Political and economic relations between the now capital cities of Punta Arenas (*Region of Magallanes and Antártica Chilena*) and Ushuaia (*Province of Tierra del Fuego, Antártida e Islas del Atlántico Sur*) originated from before the Border Treaty; but following the ratification of borders and sovereignty over territory, official contacts were frozen, turning trade partners into political rivals for over a century. Within the geographical limits of a single island, two territories arose, intensely



suspicious of each other. It is only recently that these have expressed some interest in regional integration, stimulated by national policies of regional integration and institutionalised by the creation of the Southern Common Market, (*Mercado Común del Sur*, or MERCOSUR) in 1991 and the *Union de Naciones Suramericanas* (UNASUR) in 2008.

## Conclusion

For the past two centuries, the relation between Argentina and Chile has been overshadowed by reciprocal accusations of expansionism. The arbitral award of 1977, which was to end the Beagle Conflict assigning the three islets at stake to the republic of Chile, was signed by Queen Elizabeth II on a moment that Argentina as well as Chile held on to their respective representation of national territory prior to the Border treaty of 1881. School books in both countries still claimed sovereignty of the entire Patagonian peninsula even eight decades after the first agreement was signed (Lacoste 2003). The idea of an expansionist Chile was popularised in Argentina through the national media, which created the fertile grounds for a 'massive mobilisation of troops and arms towards the border on that edgy Christmas of 1978' (*ibid.*: 380). The conflict did not erupt into cannon fire, but did bring the bitter taste of the 5,150-km border twist to the surface.

The representation of being a constant threat to the other catalysed many geopolitical interventions by both young nation-states to disintegrate frontier dynamics, such as the trade circuits between agrarians of northern Patagonia and markets in the southern Chile (Bandieri 2002). The construction of railroads and the relocation of urban centres that would realign these activities towards the Atlantic were initiatives applied simultaneously, with the opening of the penitentiary in Ushuaia and the allotting of the plains in northern Tierra del Fuego at the turn of the 21st century. In this sense, following the distinction made by Bandieri (2002) between the notion of a frontier and that of a border, the social space implicated in frontier regions was gradually disintegrated by the authoritarian imposition of limiting borders. The political economy of Tierra del Fuego, being one of the primary settings of the long-lasting border conflict that tended towards social disintegration, must be understood in the context of these processes.

As most border struggles aggravated on account of political engineering of military governments, since the last dictatorship in both countries came to an end (1983 in Argentina, 1990 in Chile) relations have improved. The democratisation of public and private institutions

in both countries facilitated a gradual decline of rivalry, and stimulated a change in the perception towards the neighbouring country (Lacoste 2003). Not only in political sense were improvements felt, but also in the field of economic cooperation things changed rapidly. By the year 2000, Argentina's export to Chile had climbed to over two billion US dollars, which made it the third export market with close to 7 per cent of total exports. The same year, Chile exported over one billion US dollars to Argentina, which represented 5 per cent of its sales abroad, lifting Argentina to the fifth place in Chile's export ranking (*ibid.*: 383). In 2010, the commercial balance between Argentina and Chile climbed to US\$5.8 billion; of which US\$4.7 billion are Argentine exports (Cámara Aduanera Chile 2011).

The latest tendencies of growing cooperation have encouraged political leaders of both countries to fit in the notion of *regional integration* into their discourses, in that way explicitly abandoning the repelling politics applied during the clash on border issues. This brings to mind the interesting question whether the notion of a region can hold projecting it onto the southernmost confine of the continent. After all, Tierra del Fuego is the name of a region that was afterwards divided into two national territories.

Following Matteucci (1998: 120), we can understand a region 'as a construction whose character depends on the objectives of the regionalisation process. Therefore, there is always more than one possible regionalisation for any given territory'. In this manner, its applicability depends on 'its construction from the social interactions that define it as such in terms of space and time' (Bandieri 1996: 80). Exploring the cross-border cooperation in Tierra del Fuego therefore implies an analytic approach of Tierra del Fuego as a region. This brings us back to the fundamental question of this chapter: How has the territorialisation of Tierra del Fuego impacted the political economy on the island? By means of final reflection, we can propose a hypothesis that may inform future research for the better understanding of the social construction of the Fuegian territory and its cross-border relations.

The above pages have shown how both territories underwent different impacts through different kinds of state interventions. While nearly 8,000 people live in the Chilean segment, the Argentine part of the island is host to almost 130,000. Productive capacity between both territories is therefore very unequal. But also the nature of productive activity is extremely different; Chilean Tierra del Fuego represents few private companies, most of them orientated to the primary sector, while the Argentine counterpart, through the industrial promotion and

the exploitation of hydrocarbon fields off shore, count various multinational oil companies and manufacturers. Where Chilean Tierra del Fuego leans on the regional economy, boosted by Punta Arenas across from the Straits of Magellan, Argentine Tierra del Fuego takes advantage of the presence of oil and gas fields off the Atlantic coast, and tax benefits on industrial production sustained by national law. Since these benefits only count on exports towards continental Argentina, none of the promoted industrial production is exported to Chile. However, Argentina does export hydrocarbon-based products from Tierra del Fuego to Chile, worth no less than US\$526 million in 2011. Not much of these exports, naturally, are destined to Chilean Tierra del Fuego.

The productive activity that does presuppose a complementary character is that of tourism. In 2009, Tierra del Fuego attracted close to 300,000 tourists, of which 70 per cent during summer months (Municipalidad de Ushuaia 2011). According to research undertaken by the Secretary of Tourism for Ushuaia, the motives for tourists to travel to the so-called *uttermost part of the world* has little to do with its political division. The spectacular natural landscape, the imaginary of 'The End of the World', the proximity to the Antarctic continent, are the key reasons for travel; they are totally indifferent to which state possesses the valuable resources, and how they are divided. Indeed, the circuit that absorbs large tourist flows includes Punta Arenas, Ushuaia, Cape Horn and Antarctica; it is a trans-national itinerary that leads to a shared dependency on tourism receipts (Daverio and Luiz 2002). With this significant economic activity in place, one would expect strategic initiatives on behalf of both Chilean and Argentine policy makers in favour of bilateral cooperation to stimulate an integral exploitation of the region and introduce smooth custom procedures. And yet, not much progress has been made in this respect; there are no companies active on both sides of the border and custom procedures are fastidious. Moreover, although an excursion from Ushuaia to Chilean Isla Navarino on the other side of the Beagle Channel would further improve the local tourist offer enormously, regulations prohibit the commercialisation of this international crossway.

Arguably, in spite of recently improved relations between the two neighbouring nations, memories of the Beagle Conflict still resonate in local political circles. Moreover, Argentina's and Chile's claims on Antarctica partly overlap (respectively 74°W–25°W, and 90°W–53°W): this is a pending and potentially delicate geopolitical matter that could seriously hamper fraternal reconciliation.

To conclude, this preliminary interpretation of the facts suggests that there are the seeds of a distinct international political economy for Tierra del Fuego. An increase in economic cooperation between both regions and countries could benefit their sustainable development. Governments, local and national, do not appear so keen to facilitate cross-border dynamics, however. What *does* appear clear is that the border that separates the two parts of the Great Island of Tierra del Fuego, part of a process that led both Argentina and Chile to develop their own national identity, has perhaps been the most determinant factor of the Island's contemporary history. The social construction of modern Tierra del Fuego is not so much a story of extreme latitudes, indigenous past or colonial interests. It is a story of a line drawn in space that for decades has stifled arguments and initiatives for the pursuit of the regional integration and shared identity of two alienated yet uncomfortably neighbouring territories.

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# 12

## Bolshoi Ussuriiski/Heixiazi

*Akihiro Iwashita*

### Introduction

A large river delta between the Ussuri and Amur rivers (or the Heilongjiang and Wusuli rivers, in Mandarin Chinese) is the site of a series of serious challenges between China and Russia for many centuries. The delta is almost 350 km<sup>2</sup> in area and is located very close to Khabarovsk, the capital city of the Russian Far East. It includes two sparsely inhabited islands, called Bolshoi Ussuriiski and a smaller Tarabarov island (as known in Russian) or Heixiazi and Yinlong, respectively (in Mandarin). This remote delta area has been occupied by Russia since 1929, but China has maintained its claims to this territory. Deadlock over the future of this region has proved to be the main obstacle towards the full resolution of Sino-Soviet border disputes for various decades. The dispute led to the Zhenbao/Damanskii military clash in 1969 and drove the two countries to the edge of a nuclear war. Since 2004, a 'fifty-fifty' solution has finally been implemented and agreed to by both sides.

This chapter is based on archival research, a critical perusal of recent Russian and Chinese newspapers, and fieldwork undertaken by the author in the affected region late in 2011. It explores the unfolding of the challenges and claims raised by Russia and China on this delta region, up to its (very recent) division. Even a 2001 Treaty for Good Neighbourliness, Friendship and Cooperation had failed to resolve the delta issue after repeated high-level talks on the matter. This chapter also examines the somewhat uncertain path being now pursued to chart the region's future. Both China and Russia are now promoting the delta as a working example of 'one island, two countries'; but the operational details still need to be fleshed out, to the satisfaction of the parties

concerned. The happy resolution of the Bol'shoi Ussuriiski/Heixiazi conundrum may indeed provide the key to a broader resolution of border disputes and an eventual stabilisation of Sino-Russian relations. The two governments appear enthusiastic in promoting the merits of this, quite unique, resolution of a border dispute involving islands. They augur that the citizens of both countries, and particularly those inhabiting the border regions under discussion, would be able to develop a trans-national, cross-border system of economic and cultural cooperation. This would include a special freedom of movement, the right to be able to stay and/or go back and forth across the border without any restrictions. Details about the divided island, and the two countries involved in the case, are provided in Table 12.1.

*Table 12.1* Bolshoi Ussuriiski (Russia) and Heixiazi (China)

	<b>Bolshoi Ussuriiski</b>	<b>Heixiazi</b>
Political Status	Part of administrative division of Khabarovsk Krai, Russia	Part of Fuyuan county, Heilongjiang province, People's Republic of China (PRC)
Capital City	Moscow	Beijing
Population (2011)	Probably less than 100 inhabitants all year round	Barely inhabited
Land surface area (km <sup>2</sup> )	164	171
Resident population density (persons/km <sup>2</sup> )	Very low	Very low
% of population that lives in Urban Areas	None	None
Life expectancy in years (2009)	63 for men; 75 for women (in Russia)	71 for men; 75 for women (in PRC)
% annual population growth	-0.47% (for Russia)	+0.49% (for PRC)
GNP per capita (US\$)	13,200 (2011) for Russia	8,400 (2011) for PRC
Standing on human development index (2011)	66th out of 187 countries (Russia)	101st out of 187 countries (PRC)
% of population below poverty line (2009)	13%	2.8%
Adult (15+) Literacy rate (%)	99.5%	94%
Main language(s) Spoken	Russian	Mandarin (Standard Chinese), Cantonese
Currency (exchange rate as at March 2012)	Russian Rouble (1US\$ = 29.4 RUB)	Chinese Yuan Renminbi (1US\$ = 6.3 CNY)

## Roots of confrontation

Understanding why the resolution of the delta border has been so problematic for China and Russia involves a foray into history. Yet, such a backdrop does not help much in shedding light on the claims and counter-claims of the two sides. Perhaps unsurprisingly, Russian and Chinese historians do not agree amongst themselves as to the background conditions that led to the disputed territory. Moscow never recognised the inequality of the past treaties, which Beijing claims, were imposed on China by Russia in the 19th century. The protracted negotiations are indicative of the high sensitivity and symbolic value of the territory in question (Maxwell 2007, Ryabushkin 2007). Now, after the resolution that came into force in 2008, it appears that the Solomonic 'fifty-fifty' solution would work well as a mechanism for decoupling a tortuous history with serious spatial challenges from a bone of contention and a regional 'hot spot' to an area of economic and border cooperation.

The initial bone of contention was not the Amur-Ussuri delta itself, but control over a river (Iwashita 2004). After the Aigun Treaty of 1858 and the Peking Treaty of 1860, an emboldened Russian empire took control over the Amur and Ussuri rivers and stretched its power towards the Sea of Japan and the Korean Peninsula; while China under the Qing Dynasty, then engaged in and distracted by its Second Opium War, was pushed back from the coastal regions around the Sea of Japan. These treaties reversed the outcome of the Treaty of Nerchinsk (1689) in Russia's favour, and basically established what remains today as the general disposition of the long Sino-Russian border. China described these as 'unequal treaties' because they were imposed unilaterally, rather than negotiated by two nations that treated each other as equals (Hsü 1970: 239); hence Beijing was under no moral obligation to honour or accept their terms. Indeed, China continued to claim the ceded lands at this delta region persistently, and regardless of regime changes – whether as the Republic of China, Manchukuo, Taiwan or as the People's Republic of China. Interestingly, these treaties provided for the inhabitants along the Amur, Sungari and Ussuri rivers to be allowed to trade with each other, with all restrictions on trade being lifted.

A closer look at the specific geography of the area helps one to better understand what is at stake: as the Amur River widens near the city of Khabarovsk, it merges with the Ussuri River at a number of spots. The delta, effectively a sand bar, called Bolshoi Ussuriiski or Heixiazi, is located where the two rivers conjoin. One juncture, north of the delta,



is 30 km away from Khabarovsk – with some 570,000 residents, the second largest city in the Russian far east, after Vladivostok – while another juncture is further south, between the delta and the Chinese city of Wusuzhen. The channel bounding the southern sides of Bolshoi Ussuriiski/Heixiazi has at least three different names – Xiaotongjiangzi, Fuyuanshuidao, Kazakevichevo – reflecting its keenly contested status. The last of these is the current Russian name, identical to the name of a Russian village on the right bank of the Ussuri River and which originates from Petr Kazakevich, a Russian representative during Sino-Russian border negotiations in 1861. When settlements are named after border negotiators, they alert us to the heavy nationalist baggage of border work.

The disagreements about what to do with the delta region were triggered by which of the two Amur-Ussuri junctures should be considered as the main one: the south or the north? An interpretation of international norms and arguments was the basis for discussion. But both China and Russia wanted to acquire maximum control over the river delta. According to Article 1 of the 1858 Aigun Treaty, the left bank from the Argun River to the mouth of the Amur River belonged to Russia, while the right bank to the Ussuri River belonged to China. Russia argued that the Kazakevichevo channel (or Fuyuan channel, to the Chinese) is a branch of the Amur River. Accordingly, the Ussuri River comes to an end at the south junction point near the village of Kazakevichevo, and a stream flowing from it could be taken as being a tributary of the Amur River. If the Ussuri River stops before the beginning of the delta, the delta should then technically be considered Russian territory.

China argued differently. It had first claimed the delta back officially in 1906. Beijing emphasised that the north junction is a natural border; the Fuyuanshuidao channel is not the main stream of the Amur at all but only a narrow and shallow rivulet. Moreover, the stream flowing to the west of both Bolshoi Ussuriiski/Heixiazi and Tarabarov/Yinlong islands was an integral part of the Ussuri River. The Russian geographers disagreed with China's assertion: since the water flowing in the Kazakevichevo channel ran through the Amur River to the Ussuri River, the delta was formed by the sediment left by water flowing out of the Amur River, which was undeniably Russian.

Marine geography apart, other claims could be lodged in terms of settlement history. But who were the first people to live in that sparsely populated region? Neither country could come up with long-standing historic claims. From the Russian point of view, the name assigned to

Tarabarov Island originated from the first settlers on the delta, but these came on the scene well after the Aigun Treaty of 1858. A jetty was built on the delta and the village of Ussuriiski was founded there in 1895. Chinese historic records indicate that Chinese Han people had already lived on the delta and were practicing farming and fishing by 1901. Chinese records also refer to Russia prohibiting Chinese ships from navigating on the north river channel of the delta since 1911; although Chinese ships could once again navigate freely from 1918 to 1923 as a result of Russia's weakness just after the Bolshevik Revolution. Russia then had expelled all Chinese residents from the delta region and completely controlled the islands and the surrounding channels following the so-called Chinese Eastern Railway Incident of 1929, where the Soviet Union reversed a Chinese incursion into a complete Russian victory (Patrikeeff 2002). In short, Russia's exclusive control of Bolshoi Ussuriiski and Tarabarov had been active since 1929, in spite of the subsequent protests of the Kuomintang and subsequent Chinese political leadership.

### **From military clash to reconciliation**

Officially, the first Sino-Russian border negotiations took place in 1963–1964. At that point, the Soviet Union almost accepted the *thalweg* principle – which joins the lowest points along the entire length of a riverbed or valley – and today a major navigation principle for the delimitation of river borders. The spirit of the negotiations suggested that the USSR was quite prepared to transfer the numerous islets that apparently belonged to the Chinese part of the rivers. If this were realised, Zhenbao/Damanskii Island would have been transferred to China without any military conflict in the 1960s. However, Russia urged China to accept one condition in exchange for the acceptance of this principle: that the delta, along with Bolshoi Ussuriiski, Tarabarov and other islets between the Amur and the Ussuri rivers, would all remain an integral part of Russia. China refused the proposed swap and demanded once again that the delta be returned back to China. Since this proposal was intended as an all-inclusive package deal, negotiations reached a stalemate. The 7,000-plus-km Sino-Soviet border became a dangerous non-regulated line, and border guards from both countries were forced to watch over it with heightened tension.

Finally, the frustrated Chinese decided to break the political stalemate by encroaching on what was felt to be Russia's 'weak' defensive line, on the Ussuri River near the location of Zhenbao/Damanskii island

(with a land area of just 0.74 km<sup>2</sup>, and so flat that it would easily disappear under water during flooding). The main disputed island in that stretch of the river was, then, neighbouring Qiliqin/Kirkinskii Island, 3 km to the north. Soviet Union had a military unit stationed to defend Kirkinskii, but not Damanskii. In March 1969, China launched a surprise attack on the few Russian border guards patrolling Damanskii; this accelerated mobilisation along the whole Sino-Soviet border. China launched other incursions into Soviet territory along other parts of the Amur. The conflict over Zhenbao/Damanskii raised concerns that it could ignite another world war, until an initial resolution of the conflict was secured in November 1969 following a meeting by Alexei Kosygin and Chou-En Lai. By virtue of this agreement, Soviet border guards were ordered not to prevent a renewed incursion into both Zhenbao/Damanskii and Qiliqin/Kirkinskii by the persistent Chinese. It was not until May 1991, however, that the two sides officially agreed that both Zhenbao and Qiliqin islands were part of the territory of the People's Republic of China (Naumov 2006: 192).

Full-scale negotiations over the border issue were resumed only after Gorbachev's Vladivostok speech of 1986, where he indicated the USSR's willingness to establish cordial and long-lasting peaceful relations with its neighbours (e.g. Lapidus 1987). In 1987, Russia and China reaffirmed the constructive results of the 1964 consultations and agreed to demarcate the river border based, again, on the thalweg principle. But the devil, as they say, lies in the details. Most delimitation issues on the Sino-Soviet 4,300-km-long eastern border, from Mongolia to North Korea, were finally resolved after a couple of tough negotiation rounds (Kireev 2006). The delta near Khabarovsk between the Amur and the Ussuri rivers remained, however, 'a thorn in the side of peaceful Sino-Russian relations' (Levenstein 2011).

For a moment, it looked like the 1960s all over again: Gorbachev hoped to conclude the package deal with the Amur-Ussuri delta remaining in Russia's hands, in exchange for giving China hundreds of islands along the disputed rivers on the basis of the thalweg principle; but China never accepted the offer (Iwashita 2005a, 2005b). Once again, negotiations faced an 'all or nothing' scenario just like in the Khrushchev era; but both sides finally agreed to decouple the most difficult delta's fate from other issues that had already been resolved on paper. Agreement was reached on 98 per cent of the disputed territory (Iwashita 2008, 2009). The 1991 agreement on the Sino-Soviet eastern boundary was conceived in this way by excluding the fate of the delta to future negotiations. This agreement not only reflected the seriousness

of the challenges, and highlighted the strategic and symbolic importance of the disputed delta region to both sides; but it also paved the way to an eventual solution, thanks to considerable confidence building (Hyer 1996).

### **A long way to a final decision**

The collapse of the Soviet Union added a new urgency to the pending negotiations. The Russian Primorsky region, next to Khabarovsk, was the site of an anti-Chinese demonstration against the 1991 agreement, which had allowed China to wrest back several territories that had belonged to Russia for over a century. Damanskii Island became a symbol of Russia's weakness in conceding land to the Chinese bully. Besides, there was a largely unmanageable influx of Chinese immigrants to the Russian Far East: an outcome of a visa-free regime for Chinese workers and by the sheer impossibility of registering and controlling the passage of foreign visitors and guest workers along the enormous border. Local Russian sentiments in the region were galvanised against what they perceived as a 'China threat'. Even more recently, the Damanskii Island incident 'still looms large in the mind of the older generation, and in the senior echelons of the armed forces in particular' (Kuhrt 2007: 112).

The Khabarovsk city authorities also insisted at the time that a serious security threat would materialise if the Amur-Ussuri delta, not too far from their city, were transferred to China. They also mentioned the significant economic damage that would result to local citizens, many of whom had practised agriculture on Bolshoi Ussuriiski for many years. They particularly criticised Moscow for granting Chinese ships, including military vessels, the right to navigate freely on the river channels near the city. The Khabarovsk authorities were also wary of the possible 'joint use' of the disputed islands. If such an arrangement were put in place for both Bolshoi Ussuriiski and Tarabarov, then the disputed delta region would be open to Chinese influence, even if it were to remain notionally under Russian jurisdiction. They were concerned that there would be a rush of Chinese settlers on those islands facing Khabarovsk in order to establish permanent settlements there and use them as a base from which to conduct business. Local newspapers in Khabarovsk insisted on the legitimacy and legality of Russia's possession of and control over the two islands and of China's presumed malicious and evil intent towards them. One widespread but groundless rumour, fuelled by Russian sinophobia, and which had spread all over Russia since 1998,

was that China was secretly filling in a narrow gap in the Kazakevichevo channel in order to get Heixiazi back.

Rumour or no rumour, the people of Khabarovsk felt justified in have an uneasy feeling about the future of the two islands. In July 2001, when Russia and China were preparing to sign a 20-year Treaty of Good Neighbourliness, Friendship and Cooperation, Russia showed considerable interest in having all remaining problems on the territorial issue resolved in time for the signing of the treaty (Ministry of Foreign Affairs – China 2001). During this time, a story was being circulated: Russian president Vladimir Putin hoped to hand Abagaitui Islet (58 km<sup>2</sup>) on the Argun, another of the few remaining disputed areas, over to China in return for keeping the delta between the Amur and the Ussuri rivers under Russia's control. China, once again, is said to have rejected Russia's proposal. Rumours of 'a secret Chinese plot to fill in the Kazakevichevo Channel' persisted. But there were also some encouraging developments: a 700-m floating pontoon bridge between Bolshoi Ussuriiski and Osinovaia Rechka, on the way to the village of Kazakevichevo, was built in 1995, providing the first ever fixed link between the disputed island and the Russian mainland.

### **The 'fifty-fifty' solution: drawing a new border on the island**

Few expected any solution over the near future, but a surprise was in store. A high-level summit meeting between China and Russia in 14 October 2004, put a sudden end to all remaining border disputes, including the lingering delta question. The solution that had been reached was leaked to the public just after Vladimir Putin and Hu Jintao had declared a historic 'win-win' resolution for finalising all pending territorial problems: all remaining disputed islands would be divided between Russia and China on the basis of a clinical, 'fifty-fifty' solution. As far as Bolshoi Ussuriiski and Tarabarov islands on the Amur river delta were concerned, they would be partitioned in almost equal halves: Tarabarov (some 40 km<sup>2</sup>) was handed over to China in its entirety; but Bolshoi Ussuriiski (some 300 km<sup>2</sup>) would be partitioned off such that, in total, both countries each ended up with some 160–170 km<sup>2</sup> of the delta in all. That meant that some 120–130 km<sup>2</sup> of Bolshoi Ussuriiski were handed over to China; while the remaining 160–170 km<sup>2</sup> remained in Russia. (The exact size of the land area remains unclear; it is subject to a continual erosion and silt deposition underway because of the actions of the rivers.)

Admittedly, both sides continued a round of secret negotiations for dealing with the remaining disputed islands. It seems that every imaginable attempt was being made to prevent the partition of small islands. Russia even proposed to provide China with some surplus destroyers in exchange for the whole of Heixiazi Island (Iwashita 2005b). China refused, and in turn, suggested it would give up Heixiazi in exchange for some territory around the Tumen River, which would provide access to the Sea of Japan. It was Russia's turn to decline the offer.

The 'fifty-fifty' policy was clearly a last resort. Both sides had avoided splitting whole islands, preferring instead to maintain a single and unambiguous management and governance structure for what were very small island spaces. This 'Judgment of Solomon' type solution had however been tried before: in 1997, when China and Russia had agreed to divide a disputed area of some 300 hectares in the Khazan region, near the trilateral Sino-Russia-Korean border: 140 of these hectares remained Russian; and 160 hectares moved to China (Iwashita 2007). That probably represented the first case of the 'fifty-fifty' formula being used to resolve a land dispute through a political judgement. Once such a precedent had been set, similar cases followed in the western section of the former Sino-Soviet borderlands in dispute. The 1998 Sino-Kazakh agreement, the 1999 Sino-Kyrgyz agreement and the 2002 Sino-Tajik agreement resolved all remaining disputes through the 'fifty-fifty' formula. The results did not necessarily mean dividing territories in exactly equal halves; rather, there was an emphasis placed on a political decision for balancing mutual claims and benefits. These were pragmatic departures from a 'winner takes all' strategy that was clearly unacceptable to one of the parties.

The 'fifty-fifty' deal over the Amur-Ussuri river delta was most likely hatched in May-June 2004. The plan was carefully kept away from the public eye, while the concerned parties laid the groundwork for implementation. The then Governor of Khabarovsk city, Viktor Ishaev, had long resisted the (even partial) transfer of Bolshoi Ussuriiski and Tarabarov islands to China in the 1990s; how he was eventually persuaded to support the deal, even if begrudgingly, was most likely a crucial detail for realising the success of the division. He pretended to mull over the deal when it was finally made public; but he must have been informed about the matter beforehand and seemed unable to reject the deal.

The 'fifty-fifty' formula presented both a loss and a victory to either party. It also allowed for some attempts to balance each country's national and local interests, as much as its pride; and so, the details

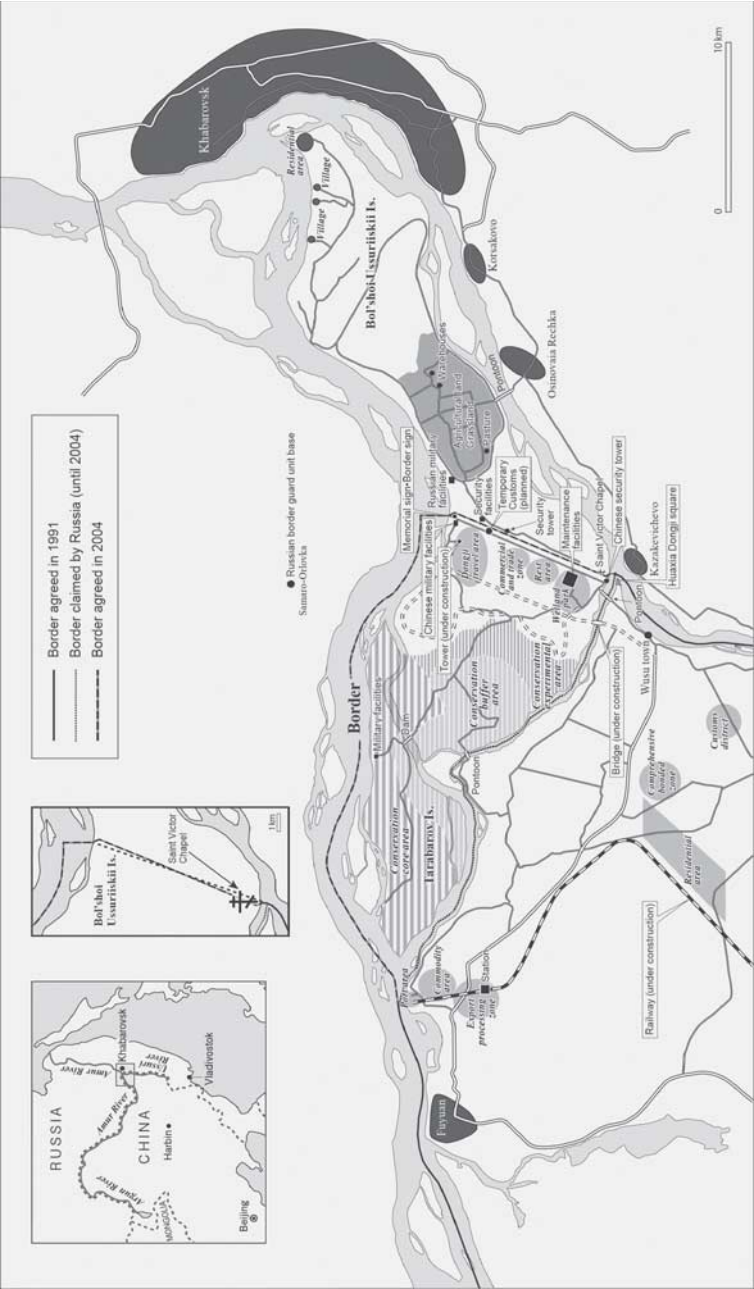
of the agreement are crucial. Would Russian farms, dachas, churches and military equipment on the islands remain under Russian control? Would China exercise control over the Kazakevichevo channel of the Amur River? The details on bordering must depend on the actual work demarcating the site following the agreement. As things turned out, it was not until July 2008 that both sides signed the protocol for the 2004 agreement and agreed to finalise all necessary procedures (Weitz 2008). On 14 October 2008 – exactly four years to the day of the agreement – China and Russia celebrated the opening of new boundary markers on the delta with a formal ceremony (The Economist 2008).

The full details of the demarcation process were revealed to the public in 2008; a final challenge to the protracted Sino-Russian negotiations over the Ussuri–Amur river delta could still have reared its head at this point, squabbling over the actual realisation of the demarcation line drawn according to the 2004 agreement. Had the line been drawn as an exact straight from the designated point along the Amur River to that on the Ussuri River near Kazakevichevo, a chapel, dedicated to St Victor, that Russia had firmly claimed as its own would have had to be transferred to China (see 2nd inset to Map 12.1). The details of the 2004 agreement, however, successfully resolved this quandary by shifting the proposed straight line slightly to the west. Other challenges were happily resolved by devising several carving points for boundary demarcation.

### **Asymmetry of division**

The case of Bolshoi Ussuriiski/Heixiazi is the only known case of a populated, albeit small, island divided between two countries on the basis of a presumably fair compromise: an almost equal division of land area (rather than, for example, on the basis of geographic expediency).

But the novelty of the situation does not stop there: in 2010, China and Russia issued a joint programme for the mutual development of the delta. The two separate plans look similar: the goal is to enhance local economic activity, set up a tourist and recreation zone and guarantee the rich ecological diversity on the delta islands. Both also agree to open a border checkpoint and promote the free entry and exit of personnel within the islands as if they were unified with no barriers (Iwashita 2004). There are various ongoing plans for the development of these islands: they include conservation areas and buffer zones, military facilities, a security tower, customs office, along with shopping and rest areas for visitors. These are outlined on Map 12.1.



Map 12.1 Details of the Russia-China border along the Ussuri/Heilongjiang and Amur/Wusuli river deltas



The plans on the Chinese side are much more ambitious. A bridge between Wusu and the islands is nearing completion; the wetland area is identified; some buildings connected to the conservation experimental area have been built; and the commercial and travel areas are under construction. Such progress is in sharp contrast to that on the Russian side, where minimal investments have been made.

This has been the common and conventional scenario observed on the Sino-Russian borderscape: a China eager to exploit opportunities presented by cross-border dynamics; and a rather inactive Russia concerned with what may be happening at its doorstep. Some experiments in Sino-Russian cross-border cooperation had already been introduced in the 1990s. Then, there were plans for free trade and exchange for both Chinese and Russian citizens in various border regions: Manzhouli-Zabaikalsk (at a special zone near an international railway and the boundary between Inner Mongolia and Chita region), Great Heihe Island (on the Amur River between Heihe and Blagoveschensk) and Suifenhe-Pogranichnyye and Dongning-Poritavka (at a special zone between Heilongjiang province and Primorsky region). Most of these cases followed a similar pattern: China was the more eager of the two parties and has been keen to inaugurate these plans and complete its own reforms first; while Russia agreed to the plan as a whole but delayed the project for decades with hardly any progress being made.

For most of these cross-border experiments, the original plan has had to be changed. China border cities – such as Manzhouli, Heihe and Suifenhe – were much too developed to open themselves to Russians as a ‘special economic zone’ with visa exemptions. In contrast, Russian border cities – such as Blagoveschensk and Pogranichnyye – allowed Chinese nationals to enter with visa exemptions, but do not provide a ‘special economic zone,’ although here was some moderate economic development. In the Manzhouli-Zabaikalsk special zone, no progress has been made at all on the Russian part of the zone; the same situation exists with regard to the special zone on Great Heihe Island. In August 2011, a 4.53-km<sup>2</sup> zone on the Suifenhe-Pogranichnyye border was sanctioned for ‘free-tax trade’; but the original plan had been laid out back in 1994. The road to borderless transactions is a slow and tortuous one, at best.

The same applies to the joint Heixiazi-Bolshoi Ussuriiski development plans. A free trade shopping area and an industrial park are planned; the latter geared to house factories making products for the Russian market. The joint development of roads, bridges, seaports, and an airport to link Heixiazi with Khabarovsk, and ‘to jointly develop the entire China–Russia border in this area as a tourist and business hub’ are notionally

under discussion (China Military News 2010). A railway station, port and other important facilities on the border area between Wusu and Fuyuan are being provided along the border connecting the islands. The number of passengers travelling annually through Fuyuan port has shot up from 93,000 in 2002 to 155,000 in 2007 (Heilongjiang Year Book 2002–2007). Once again, Beijing is definitely the more eager party to get moving. In July 2011, China has celebrated the invitation of the first group of 150 tourists to the island, allowing visits to the historic boundary stone, the former Russian barracks and a tour of the area's natural environment (Levenstein 2011). In turn, Moscow has confirmed its hope to open the eastern parts of Bolshoi Ussuriiski for tourism and investment, but the pace of development is slow and raises doubts about the future of the plan.

It is quite understandable that patriotic Russians may not wish to visit an island, or even a region, that has been partly lost to China. Meanwhile, the Chinese section is likely to be further developed by attracting more Chinese tourists from Beijing, Shanghai and other international visitors. The gap between the divided areas might widen as a result and the implications of this uneven approach on the border region are hard to predict. The 'one island, two countries' slogan itself is reminiscent of China's 'one country, two systems' model, applicable to the special administrative regions of Hong Kong and Macau, and offered to Taiwan (by whom it has, however, been refused); but perhaps not so suitable to Russia. Some Chinese are not so comfortable with the rate of development, preferring to rely on local initiatives, rather than on the state-centred current programmes. They also know quite well how Russia reacted negatively to China's rapid involvement on another part of the border: the Heihe–Blagoveschensk cooperative proposal based on the notion of 'one city, two countries'. The local Russians were already imagining that a developed Heihe would absorb a more slowly developing Blagoveschensk. Talk of 'Sino-Russian border cooperation' is often interpreted as a nightmare for the locals (Iwashita 2004).

It is noted that the Fuyuan development plan is a local initiative driven largely by the city of Jiamusi (a centre of the Heilongjiang eastern district), while the more sensitive development of Heixiazi itself is administered directly by Beijing. An ambitious plan that includes an 'export processing zone' must first be sanctioned by Beijing, which wants to feature these frontier spaces to showcase and recover state prestige. It may therefore not be too enthusiastic about Fuyuan's own development ambitions. The complex rivalry and competition among different levels of the Chinese state bureaucracy may yet hinder or

apply brake on the rapid development of this and other Sino–Russian trans-border regions. Nevertheless, the railroad and station are almost completed and the port area is ready for use. The recent increase of Fuyuan’s trade with Russia and the development of the city are nothing short of impressive: the volume of annual cross-border trade has risen from US\$32 m in 2002 to US\$664 m in 2007 (Heilongjiang Year Book 2002–2007).

## Conclusion

Thanks to the ‘fifty-fifty’ compromise, China and Russia have overcome some serious challenges to more stable cross-border relations; the climate is certainly much less tense than in 1969. The confidence that both countries have shared in the process of securing this achievement, and the peace of mind that subsequently followed, is difficult to grasp. That it took exactly four years to finalise the details of the demarcation of Heixiazi/Bolshoi Ussuriiski (2004–2008) was to be expected. Some media reporters who knew little about the boundary-making process and may have wanted to overplay the distrust between China and Russia tried to sensationalise the Sino–Russian discussion on demarcation (Sino–Russian Joint Statement 2007). Luckily, to no avail: China and Russia successfully kept on track.

The future of the divided island, and of its environs, is difficult to foresee. The implementation of a common plan for a cross-border region will generate its own challenges. However, long but sustainable spells of collaboration between different levels of government of the two countries would accomplish what is effectively a ground-breaking experiment in the Sino–Russian relations.

The lessons of history do not suggest a bright outlook for Sino–Russian trans-border cooperation, and these carved up, divided spaces may suffer as a consequence. For Russia and, to some extent, China, the border has not been a ‘tool’ or an interface for cooperation with neighbours. It has been, in contrast, more of a bastion against potential aggressors, conceived as some kind of a ‘Great Wall’. Securing the border thus relates directly to national security. Any economic benefits may be seen as secondary, although economic considerations are assuming an ever larger role: energy-rich and resource-rich Russia can ill afford disregarding an energy-hungry neighbour and a lucrative market of some 1.4 billion citizens: there has been a fair ‘deepening of energy relations’ between the two countries of late (Hauser 2009: 28). Already by 2004, China was Russia’s fourth largest trade partner, and Russia was China’s eighth largest.

Most of the world's few divided islands have endured centuries of interaction on the site before and/or after bordering. By comparison, the Heixiazi/Bolshoi Ussuriiski case is very recent. The area is very sparsely inhabited. Any social, economic or cultural interaction on and around these islands has a history of some civilian settlement of no more than 70 years. Most of the land area of the islands was deemed off limits since it was earmarked for military use. The dividing line is also quite artificial, arising out of a political judgement established between the two countries at the highest imaginable political level. It appears that, for the moment, the balance of the arrangement is working largely in favour of the non-island residents of China, who can now visit as tourists. In conclusion, the fate of the islands will depend on political brinkmanship, as in the 2004 deal. The islands are just one spot on a 4,300-km border – the longest international border between two countries in the world – but their current status is a template for Sino–Russian borderland cooperation, and a clear alternative to the political tension and loss of human life that affected both China and Russia in the late 1960s.

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# 13

## Britain: The Fractured Island

Ray Burnett

### Introduction

This royal throne of kings, this sceptred isle, ...

This happy breed of men, this little world,

This precious stone set in the silver sea, ...

This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England.

(William Shakespeare, *King Richard II*, Act II, scene 1)

Despite the sonorous magnificence of Shakespeare's John of Gaunt monologue, England is not an island. Rather this 'England, that was wont to conquer others' just thinks, acts, governs, talks, plays and presents itself as if it is. For the island polity known as 'Britain', more formally as 'Great Britain (GB)', the 'United Kingdom (UK)' is an odd place. In spite of its self-promotion as the ostensible product of a long, stable and immutable partnership of equals, the 'national' institutions of this state-nation consistently present themselves as those of a singular 'nation-state' through the monofocal prism of the dominant 'island race' of England: the English historical narrative of 'this sceptred isle', and a smothering blanket of English cultural referents.

Yet this wilful misrepresentation finds universal acceptance and acquiescent dissemination on a global scale. Whether through uncritical academic discourse, the elisions of library cataloguing or the commonalities of popular culture, it is the prevailing and established prism through which this island polity is invariably perceived, classified and discussed. It is, however, a depiction that conceals both the actuality of history and the reality of the present – the fracturing process now finally registering on a myopic anglocentrism as the 'break up of Britain'. This chapter sketches the background past, outlines the conjunctural moment of the

present and suggests a framework for considering the future from a perspective based on the discipline of international political economy (IPE). And it does so rooted in a critical perspective from Scotland 'beyond the wall', the other side of the tectonic shift in this most divided of island polities.

## The past of a stateless nation

### i

... for, as long as a hundred of us remain alive, never will we on any conditions be subjected to the lordship of the English. It is in truth not for glory, nor riches, nor honours that we are fighting, but for freedom alone, which no honest man gives up but with life itself.

(*Declaration of Arbroath*, 1320)

One of Europe's oldest nation-states, Scotland is a 'mongrel nation', with its own origins, mythic history and a distinctive grand narrative of independence gained through struggle with an expansionist, aggrandising island neighbour (Donaldson 1998). There was no Roman conquest here, only an unsettled frontier 'beyond the wall'. And ironically, although the superior Roman forces of Agricola slaughtered the Pictish men of Caledonia at the battle of Mons Graupius in 83/84 AD, it is the eve of battle speech that historian Tacitus ascribed to Calgacus, their leader, that has passed down through the generations in Scottish folklore and memory:

We, the most distant dwellers upon earth, the last of the 'free', with only the sea behind us must stand and fight. The Romans boast of their great empire, but look around you: to robbery, butchery and rapine, they give the lying name of '*pax Romana*'; *ubi solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant* [They make a wilderness/solitude and call it peace].

(Tacitus 85 AD/2010: 19–20)

This text has retained a powerful resonance within colonial struggle around the globe, as the British Empire proudly presented its global imperial rule as '*Pax Britannica*', the modern era's successor to '*Pax Romana*'.

Nor was there a 1066 and a 'Norman Conquest', only a later invite to Norman grandees to come north and settle in the realm by Scotland's King David I (1124–1153). Nor was there a protracted antipathy to the

French who were partners in the 'Auld Alliance'. For the emergent and tenacious Scotland, with its own separate and distinctive notions of popular sovereignty, it was England that was the 'auld enemy' as the Scottish 'community of the realm' faced down centuries of an aggressive English expansionism drawing cultural hegemony through the ideological construct of 'Britain' and 'Britons'. The 1603 Union of the Crowns saw James VI of Scotland leave for London to become James I of England; the Scottish monarchy never returned. Not one but three distinct but linked Civil Wars, in England, Scotland and Ireland, mercantile capitalism, militant Protestantism, emergent Empire, England's 'Glorious Revolution' of 1688 and the Hanoverian accession to the throne, were all precursors to 1707 and the passing of not one but two Acts of Union, whereby the Scots dissolved their Parliament and the English continued their own, slightly enhanced with a modicum of members from Scotland and under new nominal nomenclature as the parliament of the 'Kingdom of Great Britain'.

## ii

[T]he River Tweed was the line of demarcation between all that was noble and all that was base – south of the river was all honour, virtue, and patriotism – north of it was nothing but lying, malice, meanness and slavery. Scotland is a treeless, flowerless land. Formed out of the refuge of the universe, and inhabited by the very bastards of creation.

John Wilkes, *The North Briton*, 1763

(cited in Young 1996: 27)

As the song, story and poetry of Scottish tradition testify, the 1707 Act of Union, passed by a parliament with no democratic franchise, was deeply unpopular and there were widespread expressions of anti-English sentiment. Nor was union popular south of the border. Following the 1689 Williamite revolution and the defeat of the followers of the exiled Stuart kings, there were a series of Jacobite rebellions in Scotland campaigning for the restoration of 'the rightful king' and a demand for 'Prosperity to Scotland and No Union'. After the 1745 Rising in particular, with its ill-fated march on London and ultimate defeat at Culloden, the Scots themselves, ostensible partner 'Britons' in a shared union island polity, became deeply unpopular in England. It was a prevalent sentiment in 1760 London, the other side of the voice of popular English radicalism. As the British imperial project developed, however, Scottish national sentiment was reconstructed by many as a form of unionist nationalism. With a dual identity of patriotic Scot and fervid imperial



Briton, the military, mercantile, administrating, governing and exploring dimensions of the Empire were serviced by thousands of loyal and faithful Scots. As peoples around the world discovered, not least in the myriad island populations where their presence was felt, the Scots were the backbone of Britannia as it 'ruled the waves' and 'waived the rules' around the globe from Ireland to the far Pacific.

From the 1760s to the 1960s, the wave of Britannic commitment to union and empire rose, peaked and then began to fall. The process is a complex dynamic of economics, culture, politics and above all ideas, the ideational dimension being the key element in the unifying unction of 'Britishness' that held this peculiar state-nation together. The trajectory of union within this divided island polity has been traced in a series of corrosive critiques by Tom Nairn that chart both the 'break up of Britain' from an early prophetic prediction of its immanence (Nairn 1977) and the concomitant demise of 'Britishness' in both its ancient and modern guises (Nairn 2000). A key feature of Scotland's passive acquiescence to Anglo-Brit cultural hegemony, its complicity in the imperial promotion of the latter, has been what Nairn terms 'self-colonialism', an aspect of the relationship in terms of cultural capital and power that could be formulated in a more specifically Gramscian manner as collective subalternity. It is not that Scotland did not retain a significant tradition of radical thought grounded in an undiluted Scottish identity in which a critical detachment from an imperial Britain and an occasionally explicitly anti-union sentiment was expressed (Burnett 2004). But, from the moment in the early 19th century that the emergent Scottish labour movement bought into the formation of a pan-Britain Labourism to combat cross-border Capital, a process of deep cultural 'britification' took place in which the latter was reduced to a marginalised and excluded subaltern status (Burnett 1990).

### iii

I want to begin with the words I have always wanted either to say or to hear someone else say: the Scottish Parliament, which adjourned on the 25th day of March 1707, is hereby reconvened (Applause).

*(Winnie Ewing MSP, Opening of Scottish Parliament,  
12 May 1999)*

By the late 1960s, the first signs of a shift in the political culture of Scotland were emerging. Voices on the left began to seek ways to break free from the suffocating blanket of britification as a new political nationalism also began to develop. A period of intense, often bitter,

debate and realignment ensued as a resurgent nationalism and a dying Labourism fought for dominance as the prevailing representative party of the socio-economic interests of the Scottish people, while old manufacturing industries, a depleted rural hinterland and a decayed urban landscape declined and died. A fierce Anglo-Brit labourist rearguard action checked the momentum but in due course a popular campaign within Scottish civil society forced the London government to accede to legislation providing for a devolved administration. After almost 300 years, a reconvened Scottish Parliament met in Edinburgh in May 1999.

The legislation and the voting arrangements were designed to ensure a permanent unionist majority within the new body of governance. Comforted by the thought that 'power devolved is power retained', the ardent defenders of Westminster-rule pronounced that benign devolution would 'kill nationalism stone dead'. Instead, precisely the opposite happened. The governance and ideological lubrication of Scotland as a stateless nation had always been a complex affair (McCrone 1992) in which Scottish identity was ever present and the implicit premise on which a unionist aversion to independence or even more powers to the Scottish parliament was that this was the position that best suited the interests of Scotland. When the Scottish electorate thought differently, and with the Parliament providing a focal point to sharpen up such thinking, then things began to fall apart. The first devolved Scottish government had been a coalition of unionist parties, but in 2007 the electorate returned a minority Scottish National Party (SNP) government pledged to independence. And then in 2011 the unthinkable that was never meant to happen actually happened. Despite all the locking mechanisms, the power of the unionist parties and media, the SNP romped home across Scotland with a majority government and Scottish unionist Labourism went into the final throes of its terminal decline.

### **The conjunctural moment of the present**

Back in the 1980s, when the 'Iron Lady' came to power and 'Thatcherism' – neoliberalism through an Anglo-Brit prism – became the new 'common sense', the ideational orthodoxy that lubricated the UK's political economy, within the anglocentric UK left, an awareness emerged that some fundamental re-thinking as to the ideas and institutions of politics, culture, society, the economy and the state was an urgent necessity if this new challenge to the hard-won gains and achievements of previous generations was to be fully understood, halted and ultimately overcome. A leading figure was Stuart Hall and a core

argument was his advocacy of a 'Gramscian turn'. In a series of outputs, Hall and his cohorts sought to ground Gramscian theory and method in the context of the island polity of Britain. In raising awareness of the significance of the new neoliberal agenda, Hall focused on the Gramscian concept of the historical conjuncture to portray the Thatcher project as one such conjunctural moment, where 'history shifts gear' (Hall 1988: 162).

'Gramsci', wrote Hall (Hall 1987: 2), 'knew that difference and specificity mattered.' Therefore:

instead of asking 'what would Gramsci say about Thatcherism?' we should simply attend to this riveting of Gramsci to the notion of difference, to the specificity of a historical conjuncture: how different forces come together, conjuncturally, to create the new terrain, on which a different politics must form up. That is the intuition that Gramsci offers us about the nature of political life, from which we can take a lead.

(*ibid.*)

Ironically, it is events as they have unfolded some 25 years later not in England but in Scotland – this 'other' northern 'beyond the wall' realm of the divided island polity of Britain – that have come together to confirm the aptness and relevance of this early exhortation. There has been a rewriting of 'a different politics' and national agenda around the 'independence question', the gathering pace and momentum of 'different forces' coming together and the 'new terrain' of a reconvened parliamentary centre of gravity to graphically underline the historical significance of this specific conjunctural moment. For with the seismic election of a majority SNP government in Edinburgh and the confirmation that there will be a referendum in 2014 as to whether the Scottish people would 'wish Scotland to be an independent country', the slow drifting apart of the 'different politics' of this divided island over the devolution has now acquired the kinetic energy of a tectonic and irrevocable rupture.

I say 'ironically' because, of course, despite their persistent advocacy of 'thinking conjuncturally', the latter is the one thing that the luminaries of the Gramscian turn in English critical thought seem perversely incapable of doing (Hall and Massey 2010). Political thought, we are told, requires an ability to see the 'degree of openness or contingency' that is to be found in every historical conjuncture (Hall 2007). Yet, in the summer of 2011, notwithstanding the profound significance for this divided island polity of the Scottish people's return to power, against all

the obstacles, of a majority SNP government committed to independence and the pledge to hold an independence referendum, Stuart Hall and Doreen Massey, the leading advocates of conjunctural thinking, surveyed Britain's political economy in the light of the 'the long march of the Neoliberal Revolution' and did so from a singularly monofocal perspective. Despite their professed awareness of the need to view the present as 'an open horizon', any such 'openness' to the significance of conjunctural events does not extend to north of the border. In the summer of 2011, the profound political shifts in Scotland signalled major uncertainties as to the future of every political element within this deep fractured island. Yet, an important critical survey of the background, meaning and future implications of the identified conjunctural moment within British society could only be framed in terms of the political interventions of 'English intellectuals'; the ideational history of 'English common sense'; the grand narrative of 'the English race'; the inherited beliefs that 'Englishmen were born free' and that 'England was the true home of Liberty' (Hall 2011).

Such a myopic inability to see a 'Britain' other than that refracted through the monofocal prism whereby 'England' and 'Britain' are two superimposed images of the same thing should come as no surprise. For, in the three centuries since the Union was enacted, such a narrow, blinkered view is what has long passed as normal vision in the 'common sense' discourse whereby the island polity of 'Britain' is regularly presented and discussed across the English-speaking world and beyond. It sets the framework and the parameters of the dominant 'way of seeing', the 'current ideological hegemony' that its professed critics seek to challenge. An intellectual framework of enquiry in which Scotland, as the 'other' dimension of this shared and divided island, remains firmly out of sight and out of mind: an invisible realm that lies over the border and 'beyond the wall' – beyond intellectual comprehension, concern or comfort zone.

While persistent disregard, the wilful sleight-of-hand elision of 'UK' into 'Britain' into 'England' and back again, or an arrogant disdain for the 'united' polities in an avowedly 'United Kingdom', may be the prevailing norms of intellectual integrity in a range of academic disciplines and studies or in the cultural and political programme output of the UK and global media, it would be wrong to portray it as the only type of response to the growing articulation of *dis*-uniting sovereignty claims within this shared island polity. In both Scotland and England, there is a wide range of reactions and responses, all reflective of a particular strand of opinion, some more vocal, some, arguably, more articulated

or influential than others. And the implications of the advancing 'break up of Britain' for the two other devolved polities of Wales and Northern Ireland, whether through devo-max or independence, could be substantial (SCIS 2012).

Among those in favour of the status quo (i.e. the existing Union and governance arrangements with the minimum of amendment), reactions to political demands for significant changes to the governance of this shared island include:

- ignore it as the novelty and the delusion will pass
- oppose it through ridicule, racial contempt and/or accusations of racism
- oppose it by stirring up fear with manufactured misrepresentation of 'the facts' or black propaganda and false stories
- oppose it with the ideological sealant of a new modernised 'Britishness'
- placate it with occasional gestures of recognition of the 'Other'.

For the majority in favour of some degree of change (i.e. those in favour of 'full independence' for Scotland, or 'further devolution of powers to Scotland' and/or some degree of institutional power for the distinct political entity of 'England'), reactions and responses include:

(i) Scotland

- independence but the SNP programme as a necessary stepping stone to further independence, for example, no monarchy
- independence with the SNP programme as adequate in itself
- 'devo-max' or fiscal autonomy and all other powers except defence and foreign affairs
- still undecided but not uncomfortable with either devo-max or independence

(ii) England

- actively encourage Scotland to go independent to free England of a 'burden'
- accept Scotland's right to regain full independence, but reluctantly and with regret
- support Scotland's right to full independence and for new institutions of governance for political polity of 'England'
- do not support independence but agree to 'devo-max' although with qualified concerns as to implications for England

Space precludes exemplars of this wide range of reactions and responses; but a selection is available online with links to some relevant websites as the volume, if not always the quality, of responses will obviously intensify over the coming two years (SCIS 2012). By way of selection, two are perhaps particularly useful in catching a sense of the different moods, north and south of the border, in which the debate is unfolding.

In Scotland, such is the distinct and palpable sense of national cohesion around the prevailing sentiment that the status quo is no longer an option and that *something* has to change, that it is possible for one insightful eye to reflect on the prevailing national mood and encapture it in a single statement. Such was the editorial in the *Sunday Herald*, Scotland's leading weekly broadsheet on 22 January 2012 reflecting on the content of the 'Hugo Young Lecture' given by Alex Salmond, Scotland's First Minister, to a London audience of informed political commentators (*Guardian* 2012).

Apart for what Scotland could do for itself with a positive outcome to the independence referendum to be held in 2014, there were other benefits that would accrue to this divided island polity. 'Scotland', Salmond informed his London audience, 'can be a beacon for progressive opinion south of the Border'. This statement, in the opinion of the *Sunday Herald*, was of greater consequence than any other recent comment surrounding the independence question, more significant than even the phrasing of the referendum question itself:

For the really vital question is not simply should Scotland be independent, but why we would want to be.

This was why even the simple fact of the announcement of the 2014 referendum had been so important. For:

Whether by design or by accident the SNP's march towards the referendum has chimed with the mood of a country feeling at once more confident about its abilities and more alienated from the dominant culture in Britain.

This sense of alienation from the 'dominant culture' was palpable. Scotland itself as a 'beacon of progressive opinion' may not yet have come to fruition, but already within the Scottish Parliament, 'we at least see evidence that initiatives close to our hearts – long-term care for the elderly, no tuition fees, no prescription charges – are being protected'.

In marked contrast were the policies and actions of the UK Coalition Government, 'unable or unwilling to tackle corporate greed, seemingly determined to make the most vulnerable pay for the sins of the richest' at home and 'still sabre-rattling over the Middle East while ignoring the dreadful lessons of "our" intervention in Iraq' in its disastrous foreign policy. Faced with the latter as the consequences of being British, the Scots were turning to look at themselves:

And so we look at the land in which we live, and wonder: couldn't we make this a land we're proud of? Couldn't this reflect the values we wish to shape our lives?

Circumstances change, and as the campaign unfolds it may well be that Scotland may yet decide against independence. But for now the really important thing is that the national debate had started. For what the campaign and the debate and the ever-growing tension between Edinburgh and London reflect is the basic fact that 'Scotland has changed':

Changed in ways we're still struggling to understand but changed irrevocably. The old arguments, the old negativity, are irrelevant. We may not yet know where we're going. We may not yet know what awaits us when we arrive. But Scotland has moved on.

For England, ten times the population of Scotland and with a very different social fabric and political culture, it would probably be futile to try and find a comparable articulation of a broad national popular sentiment. All the indications are that the range of reactions and responses are less developed and more inchoate than in Scotland. A simple reflection, in part, of the completely different significance attached to what are conveniently, if too simplistically termed, 'constitutional questions' in the two parts of our divided island polity. However, if one document can be singled out as an insightful indicator to shifting mood and political sentiment, directly caused by the recent decade of devolution and further detachment of Scotland from the rest of Britain, it would be the findings of the Future of England (FoE) Survey in their aptly titled report, *The Dog that Finally Barked* (IPPR 2012).

It had long been a common belief within political commentary that the process of devolution to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland would provoke an English 'backlash' against the anomalies and perceived territorial inequities of a devolved UK state. Slow in coming, belated in arrival, the FoE Survey confirmed that by the end of 2011

the reactive stirrings in England had finally taken shape and a degree of cohesion in their responsive demand had materialised. The survey had examined English attitudes to the Union and to devolution; English views on the structures whereby England itself was governed; and trends in national identity in terms of Englishness vis-a-vis Britishness. The central and most significant finding was that:

The evidence presented here suggests the emergence of what might be called an 'English political community', one marked by notable concerns within England about the seeming privileges of Scotland, in particular, in a devolved UK, a growing questioning of the capacity of the current UK-level political institutions to pursue and defend English interests, and one underpinned by a deepening sense of English identity.

The majority of those surveyed increasingly believed that the English have got a 'raw-deal' from the devolution settlement with Scotland; that the Scots get more than their fair share of public spending; and that the Scottish economy benefited more than England's from being within the UK. And, while less than a quarter actually approved of Scotland gaining independence, some 80 per cent agreed strongly with some form of 'devo-max' with Scots having full control of their own fiscal and economic affairs while Scots MPs in Westminster should be barred from voting on English laws.

In relation to the governance of England itself, less than a quarter had any support for the status quo, the majority did not trust the government of the day to work in the best long-term interests of England, and argued that there should be an 'English dimension' to UK politics with a distinct governance arrangement for England itself, although it remained unclear as to what precise form such arrangements might take. With respect to trends in national identity, the evidence pointed to the emergence of a different kind of Anglo-British identity, 'in which the English component is increasingly considered the primary source of attachment for the English', with the caveat that members of England's ethnic minorities placed much greater emphasis on their British identity. Perhaps most worrying in the context of recent social disturbances in the English cities and the propensity of the far-right to capitalise on political alienation and to portray themselves as the only political grouping prepared to act as the defenders of Englishness, the report found a growing belief that none of the mainstream parties stood up for English interests. And they concluded:



the main problem is not that the English question is now finally being asked by the country's electorate, but rather that the British political class has failed to take it, and them, seriously.

In trying to place this emergent 'English political community' with its growing demands for recognition within the scenario of possible outcomes to the current constitutional conjunctural moment, the report also contained – as a reflection, rather than a finding – an uncomfortable observation. If the Scottish people vote for independence, then a new constitutional settlement for England and the rump of the UK will obviously be required. And even if 'devomax' is the eventual outcome for the moment, then the continuing presence of Scottish MPs voting on solely English matters at Westminster will become even more untenable. 'But', the report authors concluded:

even if Scotland chooses to reject independence and 'devolution-max' and instead opts for the status quo, the Future of England survey suggests that the rise in English sentiment against the current arrangements will prove hard to resist.

In short, even south of the border the tectonic plates are shifting, further confirmation if it were needed of the validity of addressing the present crisis as a conjunctural moment in the long history of this divided island polity.

Further evidence of the dissipation of the ideological function, the shared alignment under the rubric of Britishness, that once held the nations of this shared island together in common cause and a united vision of the future, comes from the wider body of publications, online blogs and journals, media comment and emergent campaign groups that augment the political outreach of the existing political parties. Too numerous and rapidly growing in both Scotland and England to be listed here, they confirm that it is within the national-popular political culture of both polities that the role of history, culture and ideas in the formation of 'hegemonic common sense' are under critical scrutiny in a new and deeply significant way. And notwithstanding the perverse unwillingness or inability to look 'beyond the wall' by some, there is a sufficiency of realisation within engaged English critical thought that happenings in Scotland will reverberate on outcomes in England.

In the articles referred to earlier on the continuous march of neo-liberalism, a valid warning was issued: 'without a serious engagement with the current ideological hegemony it will be impossible to break the stranglehold of the present economic discourse' (Massey 2011: 29). As with Hall, the context in which this caution was given was restricted exclusively to England. What the more perceptive observers within the English polity are aware of is that, in the present conjunctural moment, events in Scotland and England are inextricably linked. And if the question for this shared island polity is, 'how can we contribute to the provocation of a moment of rupture in which the different instances interlock in crisis and open up the ground for a shift in the balance of social power' (Massey 2011), then the answer is most appropriately sought 'beyond the wall', on that other shifting plate where a framework for these necessary ruptures in ideology and a challenge to the prevailing orthodoxy of economic common sense is already being developed.

### **A framework for the future**

In December 2011, Sir Gus O'Donnell, Britain's most senior civil servant, startled the complacency of the London political establishment with a candid assessment about the long-term future of the Union. 'Over the next few years', he warned, 'there will be enormous challenges, such as whether to keep our kingdom united' (*Daily Telegraph* 2011).

The parting comments of the chief Cabinet Secretary in London on the eve of his retirement were a prescient reading of the way the wind was blowing within the divided island polity whose government he served. A few weeks later they were followed by a similar report from Edinburgh where the senior Scottish Civil Servant told his team to anticipate a positive response to the forthcoming referendum and to prepare for a post-UK independent Scotland (*Daily Telegraph* 2012). As the path towards a referendum vote and the campaign for a 'Yes' vote took shape, the view of the informed senior figures in the corridors of powers of both state and devolved governance was clear. Whatever the final outcome, the *status quo ante* was no longer an option.

Notwithstanding the cries of outrage from the Unionist parties, the observations of these senior officials were no more than a prudent recognition of the actuality of the shifts in direction of popular political sentiment on either side of the border. The divide along the inherent fracture line was deepening. Given the tangible formation of a cohesive national-popular historical bloc within Scotland committed to a significant degree of transfer of sovereignty back to Edinburgh, and the

concomitant emergence of an identifiably 'English' political community in England, then advice and future planning based on a scenario that takes cognisance of the diverging political realities makes sense. And out with the inner circles of governance, in the context of an ever-widening divergence in terms of social and economic policy between the two polities, then a framework of analysis that focuses on the *international* relations between differing political economies, also presents itself as a useful analytical engagement. The adoption of a framework, in short, that draws on the disciplinary field of International Political Economy (IPE).

In recent years the full-length studies of Scotland's political economy prevalent in an earlier era (Scott and Hughes 1980) have been replaced by short précis attached to more specifically political, identitarian or constitutional studies (Keating 2009). Over the devolution decade, the focus within this sphere of the social sciences has tended to be on matters of policy, particularly in terms of equality, deprivation, poverty and social justice where the focus has been on how to protect the remnants of welfare state provision from the penetrating acid of free market neo-liberalism (Cumbers and Whittam 2007, Mooney and Scott 2012). Common to these studies is an approach theoretically underpinned by the 'varieties of capitalism' (VoC) discourse (Campbell et al. 2006, Hall and Soskice 2001) and an assessment of the extent to which future governance in Scotland will continue with its divergence from the preferred 'liberal market economy' (LME) of the UK and its preferred orientation towards the coordinated market economies of the small Nordic countries. Implicit to the underpinning that frames this VoC approach is a model based on the core concepts of path dependency and institutional framework. They provide the structures through which the economic agendas within Scotland are seen to gain or lose purchase through the success or otherwise of their grounding within the discrete history, culture and civil society in which political and economic ideas take root and gestate.

In setting the background to the present situation within this divided island, it was argued that it is in the cultural field in its broadest and most variegated sense that the exercise of ideological hegemony and thereby passive consent to political and economic dominance is actively promoted and achieved. The cultural is a contested terrain over which struggle for control over cultural capital, ideational direction and leadership are crucial. The struggle over culture and ideas matters, not least in economic terms. Far from being aspects of life that are of minor significance compared with the 'real' world of the economy, class and

capital, as David Coates points out: 'Models of capitalism do not simply run. They have to be lubricated. Ideas, articulated by intellectuals and brought into packages by political leadership, are the key lubricants' (Coates 2009). In Scotland, in relation to the dominant polity of Britain/UK, it is an exercise of power that involves such processes as were outlined earlier: self-colonialism, subalternity and britification. By way of conclusion, the question put forward for consideration is: How might these ideas be most usefully developed through association with, or incorporation into, a framework deriving from an IPE perspective?

The answer lies in a consideration of the role of history and culture in securing the foundations of the inter-linked, political and economic formations on which this island polity is based. In political terms, the maintenance of the Union and 'Britain' as a union polity is based not on force, repression or economic control but through ideational consent. And the form and manner through which this consensual union arrangement is sustained is, in actuality, not a relationship of 'partnership' but one of dominance and self-colonialism, of hegemony and subalternity. A key and inherent element in the sustaining and reproducing of the socio-economic relations of production of capitalism, with all its inequalities and exploitative misuse of the human and physical resources of the planet, is also through the inter-related consensual acceptance of its lubricating values and ideas.

Understanding the role of culture and history is essential not only to the first but also to the second as these two facets of the social order – the cultural and the economic – are inextricably linked. And, in spatial terms, it is an interconnection that needs to be understood and examined in differing configurations of the national, the state-nation and the global, in all their complexities. As previously alluded to, an important theorist on this interface is Antonio Gramsci; and, not surprisingly, a considerable literature has accumulated in IPE and the associated field of International Relations, developing a Gramscian, or neo-Gramscian approach, a promotion that has generated its own vigorous discourse and debate (Davidson 2008, Morton 2007).

From the perspective of Scotland, and in relation to understanding the peculiarity of the situation between the diverging polities on this fractured island, one approach from within this neo-Gramscian strand of IPE discourse is of particular interest. In recent studies, Ian Bruff (2008, 2011) has argued for the deployment of Gramsci's concept of 'common sense' as a theoretical aid to an understanding of how consent is secured and sustained for both political hegemony and economic power on the contested terrain of culture in national varieties of capitalism (Bruff 2008).

While readily acknowledging the many advances made by the VoC approach, Bruff argues that to fully understand the intricate processes involved, we need to go beyond the latter's limitation:

through delimiting the formation of consensus to the institutional environment, the variety of capitalisms literature cuts institutions off from the society they are rooted in. In contrast, I asserted that we need to consider culture in order to conceptualize the role of consensus.

(Bruff 2008: 158)

Whereas the VoC approach is based on institutions as the point of departure for its analysis, the 'Neo-Gramscian' perspective is grounded on the material basis for existence, that is, capitalism itself; while the former considers the state-society relationship as separate from each other, the latter sees them as intimately linked, if methodologically distinctive; whereas from the VoC perspective the institutional environment is the source of consensus, from the Gramscian perspective it lies within national culture; and while the lens for analysis the presence or absence of consensus in the former is through social learning or path-dependency, in the Gramscian approach the potential for synthesis between different versions of common sense shapes whether consensus is present or absent (Bruff 2008: 159).

As its application to other national capitalisms within Europe demonstrates, the deployment of such an analysis only enables us to move beyond the 'institutional reductionism' on which the VoC approach is premised. It enables the discrete studies of the different aspects of the present political and policy tensions within Scotland to be more usefully analysed in a holistic manner. In analysing the evolution of national political economies we need to recognise that varieties *of* capitalism are also varieties *in* capitalism (Bruff 2011). Nowhere is this more aptly demonstrated than on the divided island polity of Britain.

As has been argued, whether the eventual outcome of the present conjunctural moment in Scotland is a vote for independence or for further fiscal control over Scotland's economy and economic policies, the continuance of the status quo is not an option. Key salients in the forthcoming war of position already feature prominently on the contested cultural-political terrain: education, the universities; media, broadcasting, the cultural industries; health, public sector welfare services; land, energy, the environment; defence, nuclear weapons, NATO, foreign policy. In each cluster of issues, the political, cultural and social are inextricably mixed in an ideational struggle for consensual consent,

hegemony or subalternity (SCIS 2012). If the SNP strategists have their way then the impending 'break up of Britain' will be no more than one final, soft shuffle and silent glide across the ballroom floor of the Titanic. However, while the old Gramscian adage, 'pessimism of the intellect, optimism of the will', is kept firmly in mind, the tremors from the concentric conjunctural crises in Europe and in global capitalism itself continue to be felt even in the further reaches of Scotland. With reverberations from Greece in the background, the quiet observation of David Harvey comes to mind:

Crises are moments of paradox and possibility out of which all manner of alternatives, including socialist and anti-capitalist ones, can spring.

Harvey (2011: 216)

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