

Imperialism after Decolonisation

Britain's Remnants of Empire since 1963 (with Special Reference to the
Falkland Islands, the British Indian Ocean Territory and Brunei)

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Declaration

This submission is my own work and contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma of the University or other institute of higher learning, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text, in the United Kingdom or overseas.

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Abstract

This thesis examines an area largely neglected by imperial historians: the remnants of the British Empire. In order to do so, the thesis will invert the traditional approaches to decolonisation – internal/indigenous factors; metropolitan imperial considerations; and global geopolitics – to showcase that these influences caused colonial retention as much as independence. For this purpose, three case studies have been chosen: The Falkland Islands, Diego Garcia (part of the British Indian Ocean Territory), and Brunei. These constitute a cross-section of the British Overseas Territories as well as territories that did not become independent during the ‘great wave’ of decolonisation in the 1960s. The thesis will demonstrate how these three case studies are important in understanding colonial nationalism working to maintain imperial links, as well as the lack of agency from London (through inertia, or inability to drive the decolonisation process), post-war global strategy, and the Cold War as important drivers in the maintenance of colonialism. What will also be evident is the role of the remnants in the twenty-first century and how the imperial ghost still haunts Britain (and especially England).

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Abbreviations

AHRC	Arts and Humanities Research Council
BDTC	British Dependent Territory Citizenship
BIOT	British Indian Ocean Territory
BoE	Bank of England
BOT	British Overseas Territory
BP	British Petroleum
BSP	Brunei Shell Petroleum
CO	Colonial Office
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CONIFA	Confederation of Independent Football Associations
CPA	Commonwealth Parliamentary Association
CRO	Commonwealth Relations Office
EEC	European Economic Community
EIU	Economist Intelligence Unit
EU	European Union
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
FIA	Falkland Islands Association
FIC	Falkland Islands Committee
FICo	Falkland Islands Company
FIDC	Falkland Islands Development Corporation
FIG	Falklands Island Government
FO	Foreign Office
FPDA	Five Powers Defence Agreement
FRUS	Foreign Relations of the United States
HMG	Her Majesty's Government
HSBC	Hongkong & Shanghai Banking Corporation
ICJ	International Court of Justice
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
KPU	Kenyan Peoples Union Party
LNG	Liquefied Natural Gas
MoD	Ministry of Defence

NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NSC	National Security Council
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OCT	Overseas Country and Territory
ODM	Ministry of Overseas Development
PRB	Brunei Peoples Party (<i>Malay: Parti Rakyat Brunei</i>)
PRC	Peoples Republic of China
SAS	Special Air Service
SDP	Seychelles Democratic Party
SPUP	Seychelles People's United Party
TGC	Tokyo Gas Company
TNA	The National Archives of the United Kingdom
UDI	Unilateral Declaration of Independence
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNGA	United National General Assembly
US	United States
USSR	United Soviet Socialist Republic
WHO	World Health Organisation

Note on Source References

All source references with the prefix BT, CAB, CAOG, CO, DEFE, DO, FCO, FO, OD, POWE, PREM, T are held in the National Archives of the United Kingdom (TNA), Kew, London

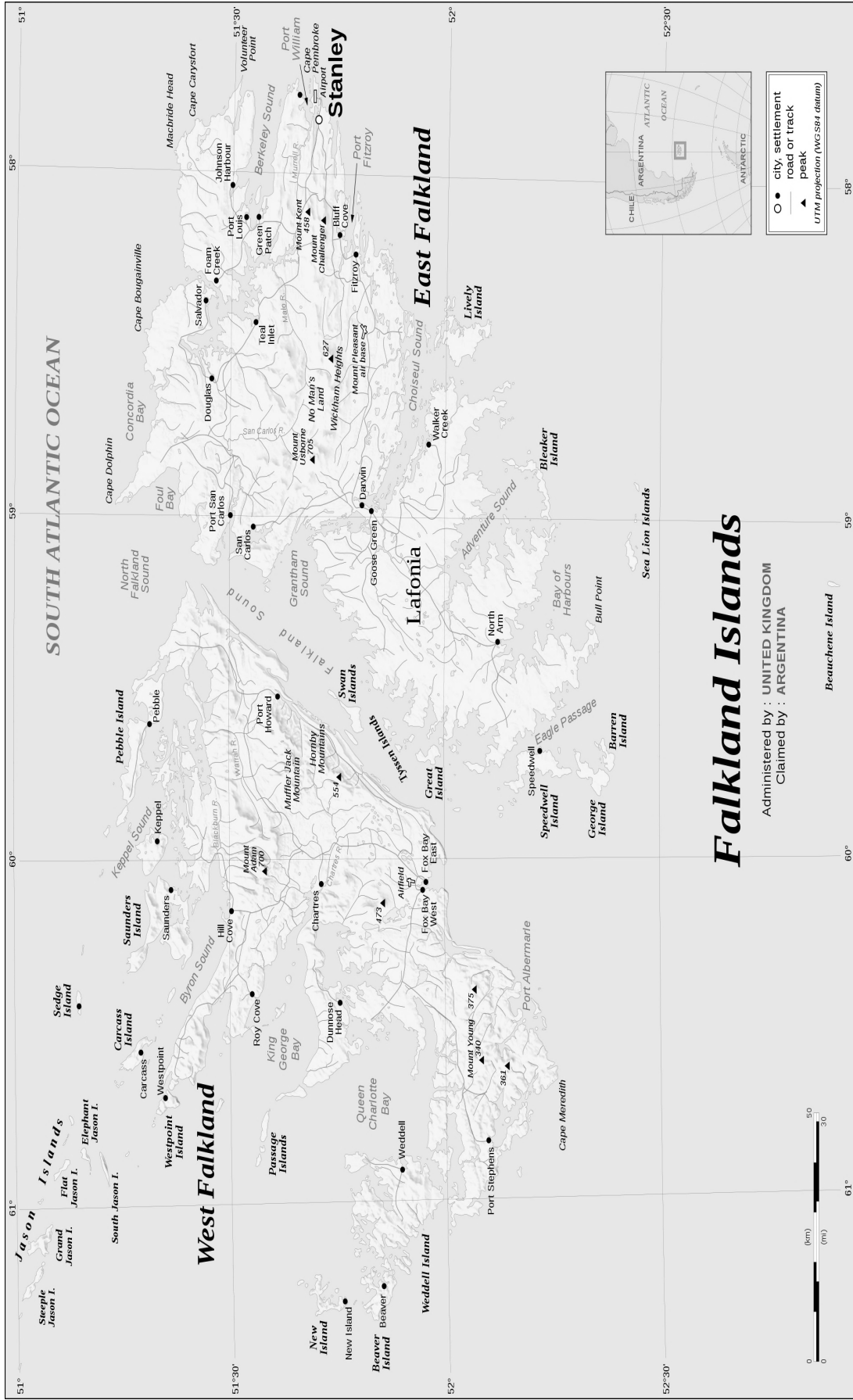
Maps

LOCATIONS OF UK OVERSEAS TERRITORIES AND CROWN DEPENDENCIES



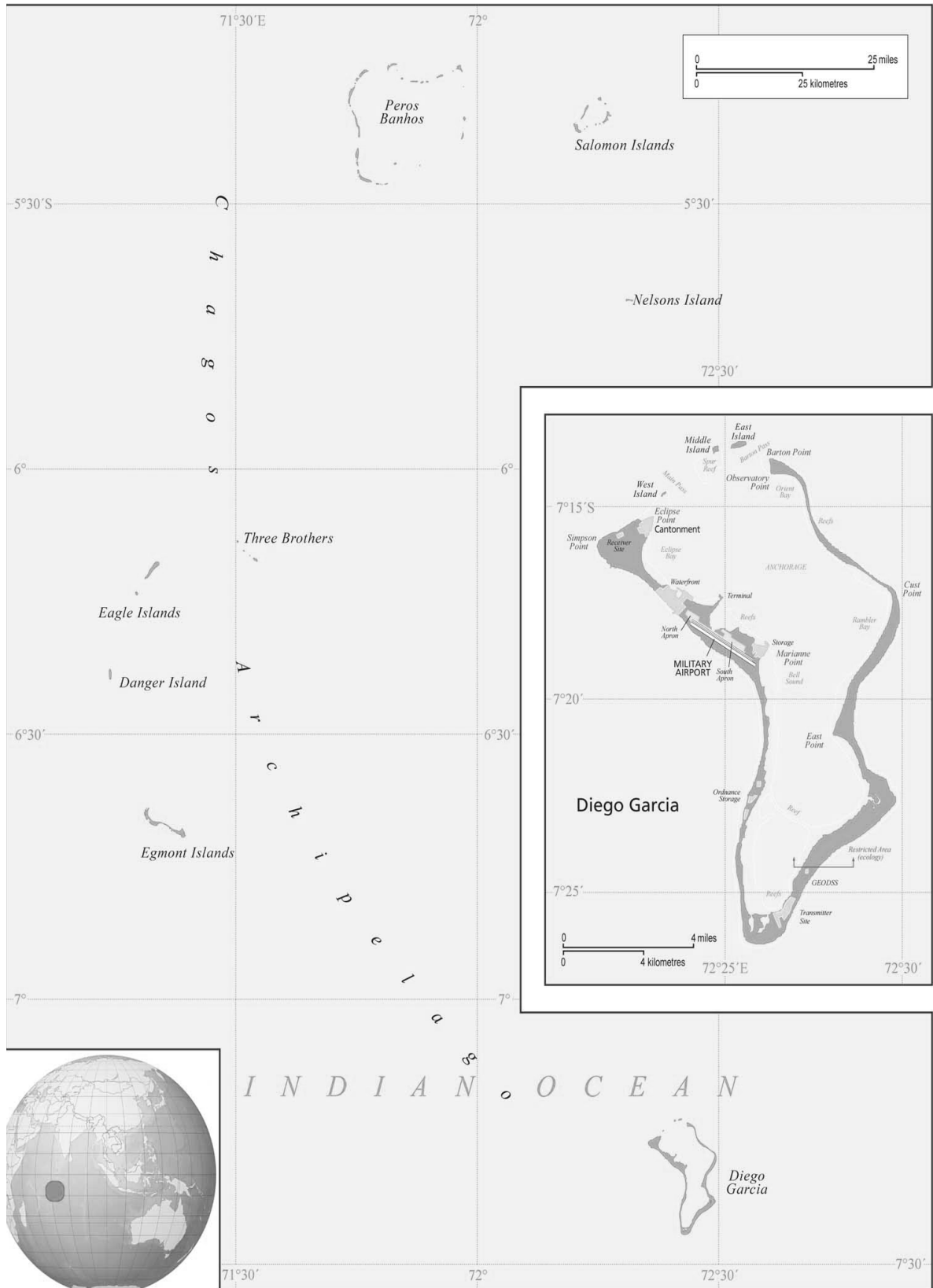
Map of the British Overseas Territories, 2010.

Source: Overseas Territories Conservation UK, <https://www.ukotcf.org.uk/background>



Map of the Falkland Islands, 2007

Source: Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Falkland_Islands_topographic_map-en.svg



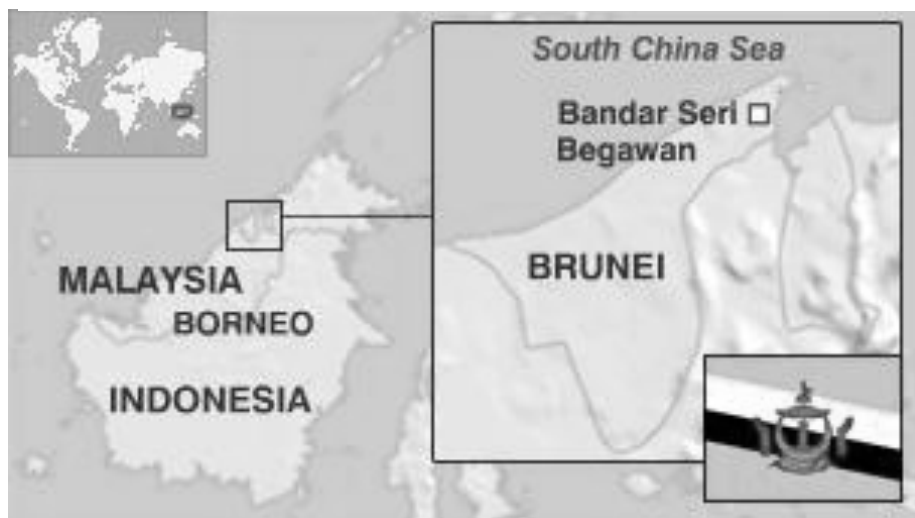
Map of the British Indian Ocean Territory, 2013

Source: BIOT government website, <https://biot.gov.io/about/download-a-map-of-the-islands/>



Map of Brunei and Malaysia in Southeast Asia, c. 1963.

Source: *A.J. Stockwell (ed), British Documents on End of Empire, Malaysia (London, 2004).*



Map of Brunei, 2019.

Source: *BBC Website, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-12990058>*

Introduction

Outline of the Project

The British Empire, as we see it today, has apparently ended. In the popular imagination, it probably reached its terminus on 1 July 1997 after withdrawal from Hong Kong and the transfer of the colony to the People's Republic of China (PRC). Images of the event are evocative with Chris Patten, the last Governor-General, noticeably upset as the British flag was lowered. With Hong Kong Britain's most economically successful colony in the post-war period, there was palpable sadness as "what began with Drake and the Pilgrim Fathers came to an effective end", and "the empire that once encompassed the globe" was now "shut down."¹ Nevertheless, the handover of Hong Kong to the PRC gained little attention outside the fourth-estate and the next day Tim Henman's win at Wimbledon was actually the main story. The most pressing affairs of the day in Parliament were school absenteeism and transport in the regions, with the secession of Hong Kong not discussed in Parliament until 8 July, a week later.² The public was also largely unmoved, a British police officer who worked in Hong Kong conceded that he would miss the Asian women, but not the Britishness of Hong Kong.³ The Empire was seemingly over and the transfer of Hong Kong did little to capture any loss or legitimate discussion of Britain's role in the world.

1997 was a key date in British imperialism and sits alongside the 1960 'Wind of Change' speech as an important juncture in decolonisation. However, historians are conflicted on when the British Empire ended. Can a terminus be posited for 1960 with

¹ 'A Last Hurrah and the Empire Closes Down', *The Guardian*, 1 July 1997.

² House of Commons (HoC), Order of Business, Volume 297, Column 109, 1 July 1997.

³ Mark Hampton, *Hong Kong and British Culture, 1945-1997* (Manchester, 2016), 202.

Harold Macmillan's 'Wind of Change' speech in South Africa, or for the accelerated military withdrawal east of Suez from 1968, or for the cessation of Hong Kong in 1997? Setting aside these dates, there still exist many colonies that remain attached to European metropolises (see Table 1 for the British overseas dependencies alone). Decolonisation occurred in the mid-to-latter parts of the twentieth century, but to place stringent dates on the demise of European colonialism overlooks the remnants of Empire that remain. The thesis's aim is to analyse the remnants of Empire to establish why they remained attached to Britain throughout the process of broader decolonisation. This will be achieved by using a theoretical framework to analyse three case studies through internal, imperial, and international lenses. These factors holistically approach the remnants through looking at matters in the colonies (the Internal), considerations in London (the Imperial), and global geopolitical affairs (the International), and collectively these dimensions will be referred to as the '3 Is'.

At the opening of the twentieth century, the British Empire held sway over approximately twenty-five per cent of the world's population, yet the "breakup of empires as the greatest geopolitical phenomenon of the twentieth century" reduced this to 350,000 by the 1980s.⁴ This thesis will be concerned with the 'embarrassing remnants' of empire - the outposts that were once deemed important for refuelling stations in oceanic trade or having strategic geopolitical significance.⁵ But, in an increasingly globalised society, smaller areas of Empire became less valued and,

⁴ R. Cribb & L. Narangoa, 'Orphans of Empire: Divided Peoples, Dilemmas of Identity, and Old Imperial borders in East and Southeast Asia', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 46, 1 (2004): 164.

⁵ Nicholas J. White, *Decolonisation: The British Experience Since 1945* (Abingdon, 2014), 57. While a contentious phrase to some, 'embarrassing remnants' highlights the international condemnation of imperialism in the post-war era - the crux of the thesis is to bring out how embarrassing these remnants were.

“[outside of the key areas,] the UK government invested relatively few resources in imperial upkeep.”⁶ The territories that prevailed, post the Wind of Change in the 1960s, left a diminished empire that faced challenges in diplomacy and precisely how to deal with these anachronisms “of recently deceased empires”.⁷

However, deceased is a strong term. Certainly, the British Empire had fallen from its zenith at the turn of the twentieth century, but to signal its death knell seems short-sighted. Arguments persist that Britain moved to a more neo-colonialist role, based less upon formal control, and towards influence and economic domination. It is entirely possible that these remnants were not rendered useless and either found new contributions to the metropole or provided on-going assistance through strategic or financial means.

In order to examine the remnants in greater depth and their importance to the metropole, three overseas territories have been selected: the Falkland Islands, Diego Garcia and Brunei.⁸ Detailed analyses of these territories will form three case study chapters (Chapters 3-5). They provide a varied cross-section of territories that remained attached to Britain after the ‘great wave’ of decolonisation in the 1960s, highlighting strong cultural and kinship links (the Falklands), strategic importance in light of geopolitical changes (Diego Garcia), and a territory with important economic links with the UK (Brunei). This approach facilitates discussion of the main themes of decolonisation and

⁶ Wm. Roger Louis and Ronald Robinson, ‘The Imperialism of Decolonization’, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 22, 3 (1994): 463.

⁷ David Killingray, ‘British Decolonisation and the Smaller Territories: The Origins of UK Overseas Territories’ in D. Killingray & P. Clegg (eds), *The Non-Independent Territories of the Caribbean and Pacific: Continuity or Change?* (London, 2012), 1.

⁸ In this thesis, the names Diego Garcia and BIOT are used interchangeably. This reflects practice in government documents as Diego Garcia was (and is) the only island that was/is inhabited and operated within the colony.

how they can apply to those territories that remain attached to Britain. Moreover, these territories are understudied and outside of specific events, for example, the Falklands War, they have not been situated within a wider framework of imperial history. The Falklands will be analysed before the 1982 Anglo-Argentinian War, specifically regarding the core-periphery relationship, metropolitan politics, and South Atlantic geopolitical concerns. The Falklands represented imperial inertia preceding 1982, but the conflict resulted in a reassertion of British control and saw the islands become a self-governing Dependent Territory with full British citizenship in 1983. Analysing the core-peripheral relationship will allow exploration of the Falklands as a long-term constituent of the Empire rather than just focusing on the minutiae of the 1982 conflict, which has overshadowed research and scholarship.

Diego Garcia, part of the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT), was created as a separate colony in 1965 for reasons of Cold War security. It is an effective case study for understanding why colonial retention was preferred in light of the planned military withdrawal east of Suez, the expansion of the Cold War into the region, and Soviet intrusions into the Indian Ocean. Using Diego Garcia as a vehicle to analyse why retention could be beneficial to manage these concerns facilitates examination of the practical ongoing benefits of colonialism.

Brunei, while a protected state until 1984, is examined in this thesis to highlight the paradox of a state wanting to remain attached to Britain, but with little will in Britain to maintain the protectorate. Even though Brunei is not a British Overseas Territory (BOT) today, it was still a remnant twenty-one years after it refused to join Malaysia in 1963 and after the great wave of decolonisation. Even after full decolonisation in 1984,

the Anglo-Bruneian relationship was strong with economic links maintained. This is notwithstanding the continued role of the Special Air Service (SAS) which uses the jungles of Brunei for training purposes. The Sultanate underscores the economic benefits that were obtained through retention, but also how imperial commitments were not so easily disposed of, even with strong metropolitan determination to do so.

The examination of these case studies will be undertaken through the theoretical tripartite of the 3 Is. Internal, Imperial, and International factors will be utilised as variables at the end of the British Empire to examine why retention occurred. Territorial-level concerns provide a peripheral lens on empire, which complements metropolitan edicts from London, which in turn coalesces with wider geopolitical factors. These have all contributed to decolonisation and in inverse can also be used to examine the retention of colonies. Inversion emphasises the originality of the thesis; not only does the study bring smaller territories into imperial history but it also uses a framework ordinarily employed to understand decolonisation for retention. In doing so, the thesis highlights that colonial retention was as complicated for London as decolonisation - the same processes which informed colonial independence also influenced territories that remained bound to the UK in some form or other after the 1960s. Utilising the three themes as a foundation to analyse the case studies provides the backbone of the thesis and a framework for analysis. Historians have taken the Internal, Imperial and International factors to analyse decolonisation, but the hardest task is considering which analytical frame takes precedence. Darwin, White, and

McIntyre recognise that no singular cause can be attributed to the collapse of the British world system.⁹

The tripartite approach demonstrates that decolonisation was dictated by a multitude of factors: the rise of populist anti-colonial nationalism, Britain's status as a great power, the Cold War, the interests of the United States (US), the role of the United Nations (UN), and the decolonisation policies and strategies of other European imperial powers.¹⁰ As Louis & Robinson argue in 'The Imperialism of Decolonization', the dismantling of the British Empire cannot be seen in monolithic terms of metropolitan infirmity.¹¹ There has to be more to decolonisation, and the post-war imperial situation, than singular theories. By the same token, this should equally apply to the retention of overseas territories.

Before the swell of decolonisation in the 1960s, there was a twofold rhetoric about the maintenance of colonies and support for the Commonwealth, with the Colonial Office (CO) advising that simultaneously "there should be no abandoning of responsibilities [towards colonies] prematurely... and a further strengthening of the Commonwealth."¹² However, managing these two expectations was difficult; nationalism at times was overwhelming and an unstoppable force, such as in India, Malaya and throughout Africa. As Darwin argues, the "zephyr" of decolonisation in multiple locations defies

⁹ These three works provide a thorough assessment of British decolonisation through the prism of indigenous nationalism, imperial politics and economics, and international geopolitical factors, providing the foundation for the hypothesis presented in this thesis. John Darwin, *The End of the British Empire: The Historical Debate* (Oxford, 1991); David McIntyre, *British Decolonisation, 1946-1997: When, Why and How did the British Empire Fall?* (London, 1998); White, *Decolonisation*.

¹⁰ D. Killingray and D. Taylor, 'Introduction' in D. Killingray and D. Taylor (eds), *The United Kingdom Overseas Territories: Past, Present and Future* (London, 2004), 4.

¹¹ Louis & Robinson, 'The Imperialism of Decolonization', 462.

¹² CO International Relations Department Paper, May 1950. Reproduced in White, *Decolonisation*, 150.

the search for a logical pattern; there was a baffling wayward course, which had little to do with any of the set criteria for imperial withdrawal.¹³ The movement of the Commonwealth from the ‘old’ (the dominions of Empire: South Africa, Canada, New Zealand and Australia) into the ‘new’ Commonwealth (more recently decolonised countries) meant that the post-colonial organisation could be utilised as a vehicle for influence. This provided avenues for Commonwealth governments to be aligned with Western ideals as opposed to moving towards the Soviet Union.¹⁴ However, balancing influence through the Commonwealth and managing ongoing decolonisation proved a difficult tightrope to walk.

Controlling this alone was exhausting, but the US-UK coalition had a profound effect on decolonisation too. Despite explicit anti-colonial US rhetoric, there was evidence that Washington tacitly supported the Empire with post-war regeneration underpinned by US wealth and power. However, this acquiescence waned when empires came to be viewed as a hindrance in the Cold War, especially after the 1956 Suez Crisis, which moved Britain to accept US dominance in global affairs. Secretary of State, Dean Acheson’s, infamous statement that “Britain has lost an empire and not yet found a role” rang true.¹⁵ As an influential architect of US foreign policy, Acheson highlighted the contemporary trans-Atlantic dynamics with British power receding in the post-war world. Additional international pressures came from the UN, whose anti-colonial policy strengthened in the period because of ex-colonial states joining the organisation. The

¹³ John Darwin, ‘British Decolonisation since 1945: A Pattern or a Puzzle’, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 12, 2 (1984): 187-209.

¹⁴ Ronald Hyam, ‘Bureaucracy and “Trusteeship” in the Colonial Empire’ in Judith Brown & Wm. Roger Louis (eds), *The Oxford History of the British Empire; Vol. IV: The Twentieth Century* (Oxford, 1999), 263.

¹⁵ D. Brinkley, ‘Dean Acheson and the “Special Relationship”: The West Point Speech of December 1962’, *Historical Journal*, 33, 3 (1990): 599-608.

formation of the Committee of 24 to implement the *Declaration Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples* in 1961 reinforced this resistance to colonialism. However, the international context cannot be viewed reductively. The post-war world was beset by huge, tectonic power-shifts, which included new hegemonies resulting in the demise of maritime empires. The Cold War context rapidly altered the balance of power, and the continued growth of capitalism and globalisation meant that empires had to adapt from formal control towards economic influence.

Expanding these ideas to colonial retention highlights that equally that process cannot be explained by one factor but needs to be examined in a holistic manner. This comprehensive approach will be adopted in the thesis by extending the scholarship of decolonisation to the retention of colonies. One of the difficulties in studying imperial history, and decolonisation specifically, is that existing accounts tend to be episode-driven in a step-by-step trajectory of imperial decline (for example, the withdrawal from and partition of India, the Suez Crisis, the break-up of the Central African Federation, the military wind down East of Suez).¹⁶ These narratives have obscured the reality that British decolonisation was not universal and occurred simultaneously with acts of imperial reassertion and colonial retention – such as the suppression of the Brunei rebellion in 1962 and the creation of a new colony in the Indian Ocean in 1965. This critique can also be applied to the theoretical underpinning itself; treating the end of Empire as a constituent of wholly separate parts belies the multi-causal nature of imperial decline and fall. Was decolonisation “an abject scuttle, a pragmatic Anglo-

¹⁶ Stephen Howe, *Anti-colonialism in British Politics: The Left and the End of Empire, 1918-1964* (Oxford, 1998), 4.

American realignment, or the product of a vision of a multiracial Commonwealth” and, therefore, was retention obverse to these considerations?¹⁷

The inversion of the Internal, Imperial and International factors, and how they will be applied in the individual case-studies in Chapters 3-5, will be fully explored in Chapter 2. Nevertheless, a brief understanding of the 3 Is is required here. The internal role in retention reverses the narrative that peripheral affairs, such as domestic politics and nationalism, forced independence quicker than was desired by the imperial power. What will be evident is that in some instances internal and peripheral factors actually drove closer ties to the metropole and strengthened attachments. The imperial role in decolonisation, which historiography accepts as disengaging from Empire owing to fiscal constraints, will highlight the financial and strategic benefits, as well as the sustaining of imperial grandeur, that could still be reaped from a continued colonial role in particular circumstances. International factors, such as the geopolitics of the Cold War and the US colonial mindset, value-judged imperialism as unfavourable in the bipolar post-war dynamics. However, the realities of ideological battles meant that retention of colonies suited the geopolitical *zeitgeist* and benefitted Western states in some notable cases.

Employing this strict framework across the thesis prevents it being nebulous and allows a coherent argument to develop. From this, equal weight is given to each case study and its examination, providing clarity in assessing the reasons for colonial retention. While this account will not be exhaustive because of space constraints and the selection of

¹⁷ K.O. Morgan, ‘Imperialists at Bay: British Labour and Decolonisation’, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 22, 2 (1999): 234.

case studies it will offer an overview of why the continuation of imperial rule was preferred in some cases through a synthesis of data. The thesis can therefore be viewed as an entry into further study of a significant chapter in twentieth-century history and situates itself as part of the emerging literature of imperial decline.¹⁸

A Fifth British Empire?

“It is tempting to reply with an expression of horror: a fourth British Empire is surely a concept too far”, so begins Darwin’s seminal chapter ‘Was there a Fourth British Empire?’¹⁹ His argument that the immediate post-war world heralded a new age of British imperialism, with a shift strategically and economically towards Southeast Asia and Africa and an attempted regeneration of linkages to the self-governing Commonwealth (Australia especially), has resonated within the academic community, and itself follows from the concept of a second and third Empire.²⁰ This ‘Fourth British Empire’ fits neatly into the idea that the Empire was a grand project, not wholly a territorial phenomenon, and as Darwin claims was always a “work in progress.”²¹

Narratives of empire tend to have an end date, and this is telling within the language used, which is finite and conclusive. For example, Darwin’s work *Unfinished Empire*,

¹⁸ John Darwin, ‘Last Days of Empire’ in Miguel Banderia Jerónimo & António Pinto Costa (eds), *The Ends of European Colonial Empires: Cases and Comparisons*, (Basingstoke, 2015), 268.

¹⁹ John Darwin, ‘Was there a Fourth British Empire?’ in Martin Lynn (ed), *The British Empire in the 1950s: Retreat or Revival?* (London, 2006), 16-31.

²⁰ Ashley Jackson proposes that “the first British Empire was largely destroyed by the loss of the American colonies, followed by a ‘swing to the east’ and the foundation of a second British Empire based on commercial and territorial expansion in South Asia. The third British Empire was the construction of a ‘white’ dominion power bloc in the international system based on Britain’s relations with its settler offshoots Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and South Africa. The fourth British Empire, meanwhile, is used to denote Britain’s rejuvenated imperial focus on Africa and South-East Asia following the Second World War and the independence in 1947–48 of Britain’s South Asian dependencies, when the Empire became a vital crutch in Britain’s economic recovery.” *The British Empire: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford, 2013), 72.

²¹ Darwin, ‘Fourth British Empire’, 29.

which deals with the legacies of imperial rule that spatially linger, ends with Britain's east of Suez decision to accelerate military withdrawal in 1968 and a brief word on the Falkland Islands and Hong Kong; McIntyre's does not address smaller states in the imperial system past the 1970s; and Hyam's *Britain's Declining Empire* terminates in the 1960s.²² However, there is scope to update and progress the 'Fourth British Empire' concept, in light of access to new primary material, and suggest that there was and is a 'fifth stage' to British imperialism. This development is an expansion of Darwin's which proposed a fourth British Empire post-World War Two with roots in the first three as periods of the British Empire. With Chancellor of the Exchequer Stafford Cripps and Prime Minister Clement Attlee as architects of the Fourth British Empire, there was hope that a new imperial order could be established. The notion of a fifth stage to the empire builds on the Fourth-empire concept as another period in the Empire, highlighting areas that remained attached and still constitute areas coloured pink on the map. Whilst this 'fifth stage' lacks the cohesive policy and post-war rejuvenation associated with the 'fourth' (even though there is an organisational structure in London), a separate stage which came after the decolonisation of the 1960s can be envisaged given the residual territories still left. The discussion below will outline the smaller territories of empire and the BOTs showing how this 'fifth' episode of empire may look and be considered. While this may be perceived to be 'reading history backwards' (with the 'order' and organizational structure evident is because of the 'disorder'), it is important to recognise that empire and world-systems adapt and change thus providing some scope to understand remnants as a collective and not as wholly separate territories.

²² John Darwin, *Unfinished Empire* (London, 2013); W. David McIntyre, *Winding up the British Empire in the Pacific Islands* (Oxford, 2014); Ronald Hyam, *Britain's Declining Empire: The Road to Decolonisation* (Cambridge, 2006).

So, Britain still retains colonies today and looking past the 1970s there still remained significant remnants of colonialism.²³ Indeed, Stockwell has characterised Britain in the 1970s and 1980s as a “Janus-faced late-imperial state” being both post-colonial and colonial simultaneously. This is also argued by Louis, who wrote that interpretations of decolonisation (specifically for the Middle East) were both of “decline and fall” and of “revival, adjustment, and continued commitment to the idea of trusteeship.”²⁴ Despite decolonisation in much of the colonial empire, the British government maintained in 1965 “over 13,000 publicly funded Britons in development programmes, and 11,000 British officials in colonies and ex-colonies; a number comparable to those employed in the Colonial Service at the height of Empire.”²⁵ Notwithstanding the current BOTs which include the Falkland Islands, Gibraltar and Bermuda among others, there were plenty of late decolonisers such as Rhodesia which did not achieve formal independence as Zimbabwe until 1980, British Honduras which was granted independence as Belize in 1981, and Brunei which remained a protected state until 1984. The BOTs are reminders of a grand theme in world history, and ironically their continued existence has seen the empire almost come full circle, with the overseas territories akin to the first empire: small outposts, albeit different in their purpose. Global politics, and social issues too, are all far removed from the period that the Fourth British Empire resided in. Adding a ‘fifth’ phase situates the remnants within an understanding that the empire has changed and developed since the post-war fourth

²³ Bernard Porter, *The Lion's Share: A Short History of British Imperialism, 1850-2004* (London, 2013), 334.

²⁴ William Roger Louis, ‘Introduction’ in William Roger Louis (ed), *Ends of British Imperialism* (London, 2006), 10.

²⁵ Sarah Stockwell, *The British End of the British Empire* (Cambridge, 2018), 2.

British Empire, acknowledges their legacy and emphasises that – at least in some form - empires are extant (albeit considerably smaller in territorial area).

Utilising this idea, the thesis will be an analysis of the remnants that remained post the late-1960s period. These remnants are very diverse and constitute a variety of populations, economies, and geographic areas. Those that remain, under the umbrella of BOT status, are recognised by the UK government as having a valued contribution to British culture and as being small communities in a bigger British society.²⁶ Some of these places are memorable; the Falkland Islands or Gibraltar resonate in the contemporary imagination owing to military conflict or tourism. However, many are less known and reminiscent of the empire ‘on which the sun never set’. They include Diego Garcia (part of the BIOT), the Cayman Islands (famous for its role in offshore banking), plus the sole Pacific island territory the Pitcairn, Henderson, Ducie and Oeno Islands (which has a population of 50, the lowest of any territory in the world). The constitutional status of the BOTs varies according to the territory in question. For example, the Falkland Islands and Gibraltar enjoy internal self-governance and elected representatives while recently corruption charges in the Turks and Caicos Islands led to the British government taking over direct control.

While each territory has had different interactions with the UK, they have, by-and-large, brought material benefits. The use of Diego Garcia has been important for US-UK bilateral relations as well as for British strategic defence; the British RAF bases in Cyprus have also been strategically important in Middle East defence. Many of the territories (including Brunei) have provided economic benefits through their support

²⁶ UK White Paper, *The Overseas Territories, Security, Success and Sustainability* (London, 2012), 11.

for Sterling as well as being important financial centres - as is the case of the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands and Bermuda. This is notwithstanding Hong Kong which remained an important financial centre for Britain until independence in 1997. Also, culturally and scientifically, the BOTs have global significance. Pitcairn is a UNESCO world heritage site and biologically the BOTs constitute one of the most biodiverse collections of territories in the world.²⁷ Additionally, Queen Elizabeth Land and the Falkland Islands are important for climate change studies through providing a gateway to the Antarctic region with science tightly woven into the study of the region as well as the possibilities for economic exploitation.²⁸

Table 1: List of British Overseas Territories and Brunei. Data is correct of 2012, and 1983 for Brunei.

Territory	Size (sq. km)	Population	Currency
Anguilla	91	16,318	East Caribbean Dollar
Bermuda	54	64,722	Bermudan Dollar (Parity with the US\$)
British Antarctic Territory	1.7 million	0	N/A
British Indian Ocean Territory	60	0	N/A
Cayman Islands	260	55,456	Cayman Islands Dollar
Falkland Islands	12,173	2995	FI Pound (Parity with Sterling)
Gibraltar	5.8	29,441	Pound Sterling
Montserrat	102	4922	Eastern Caribbean Dollar
Pitcairn, Henderson, Ducie and Oeno	4.5	54	New Zealand Dollar
St. Helena	122	4000	Pound Sterling
Ascension	90	873	Pound Sterling
Tristan de Cunha	98	261	Pound Sterling

²⁷ Biodiversity in the BOTs is important for promotion of science and scientific studies, preservation of wildlife and protection of key biodiverse areas. See UK Overseas Territories Biodiversity Strategy, UK Government Activity, April 2014.

²⁸ See Klaus Dodds and Mark Nuttall, *The Scramble for the Poles: The Geopolitics of the Arctic and Antarctic* (Cambridge, 2016), 142-171.

South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands	3,755	0	Pound Sterling
Sovereign Base Areas of Akrotiri and Dhekalia on Cyprus	256	7,500 military personnel and 10,000 Cypriots	Euro
Turks and Caicos Islands	616.3	36,600	US\$
Virgin Islands	152	29,537	US\$
Brunei	5,765	212,136	Brunei Dollar

Source: UK Government website www.gov.uk [accessed 17 December 2018]; Graham Saunders, *A History of Brunei* (Abingdon, 2006), xvi.

Table 1 shows what is left of the BOTs at the time of writing (including Brunei's position as of 1983, just before the Sultanate became fully independent). All BOTs have their own government, including their own legal system, entirely independent of British law. At times, however, the UK can intervene, as in the case of Turks and Caicos or the Pitcairn child sex abuse scandal of 2004. Since 2002 all citizens of the BOTs are automatically British citizens (barring the Falkland Islands whose residents were given this status in 1983 after the Anglo-Argentinian war and Gibraltar which was extended full British citizenship in 1981 because of the enduring sovereignty claim by Spain, plus its status as an European Economic Community (EEC) member electing MEPs to Brussels in the South West England constituency). This links BOTs to Britain not just through a history of colonialism but also through citizenship and Britishness, a theme that will be explored throughout this study. The 2002 law effectively cemented this idea of a Fifth British Empire and has sustained an 'imperial' mentality that has lingered past the 2016 EU Referendum (and, if anything, has been intensified by Brexit).²⁹ The

²⁹ The imperial mentality, or recent reflections on imperial retreat, was exemplified in December 2016 when then Foreign Secretary, Boris Johnson, gave a speech in Bahrain. He lamented the withdrawal east of Suez after 1968 and how membership of the EEC came at the sacrifice of Empire and world-wide strategic influence. Foreign Secretary Speech, 9 December 2016, <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/foreign-secretary-speech-britain-is-back-east-of-suez> [accessed 15 April 2020]

designation of ‘colony’ or ‘colonial territory’ may have changed to ‘overseas territory’, which implies less formal colonial rule, but allows enough scope to see parallels to a modern empire.

Smaller states and territories have had a troubled history within the Empire. The post-war Attlee government encountered problems surrounding their viability, which needed to be harmonised with long-term aims of decolonisation. The Attlee government established the Rees Committee, which studied the constitutional route that the smaller territories might take and concluded in 1951 by recommending a midway “between a dependency and a fully-fledged governing territory under the title of ‘Island or City States’.”³⁰ Although unpublished, the report indicated the significance of smaller territories within the imperial system. Reconciling the existence of smaller states with a desire to “guide the Colonial Territories to responsible self-government” proved problematic as not all colonies were uniform.³¹ The differing social and economic needs, as well as population sizes, meant that some were unviable as independent states. By 1955 this difference was noted in a Labour Party pamphlet, *Facing the Facts in the Colonies*, which provided an account of the future of colonial territories.³² In the House of Lords, this pamphlet and its development ideas were debated and Lord Ogmores, a

³⁰ Recommendations to the Secretary of States for Colonies by the Committee of Enquiry into Constitutional Development in the Smaller Colonial Territories, March 1951, CO 967/146. The Rees Committee, chaired by historian Sir Frederick Rees, and including imperial historians Margery Perham and Vincent Harlow, was appointed by Secretary of State for the Colonies Arthur Creech Jones in 1949 to report on the constitutional development of smaller territories. The report was far-reaching and produced three tiers of development including integration for the Falkland Islands, Malta, Gibraltar and St. Helena. As the BIOT did not exist until 1965 and Brunei was part of a collection of Southeast Asian territories, they were not included. The report was never published as the creation of the Central African Federation took precedence in the early 1950s, and Creech Jones lost his seat in the 1950 election to be replaced by James Griffiths, an ex-coal miner who knew little about colonial issues. See also David McIntyre, *Winding up the British Empire in the Pacific Islands* (Oxford, 2014), 51-53; Mary Bull and Alison Smith (eds), *Margery Perham and British Rule in Africa* (London, 1991), 185-196.

³¹ Colonial Secretary, James Griffiths, Statement on Colonial Affairs, HoC, Volume 477, Column 1368, 12 July 1950.

³² The Labour Party, *Facing the Facts* (London, 1955).

former junior minister at the Colonial Office, acknowledged that in “smaller states too small to stand alone, special arrangements will have to be worked out...St. Helena is not like Nigeria.”³³ The debate around smaller territories never led to a comprehensive policy. Rather imperial inertia took hold.

Integration with the UK was also presented as a solution for unviable colonies and Malta was mooted as a candidate for incorporation into the UK. The idea was abandoned after consideration by the British government in light of defence changes after the Suez Crisis, hostility towards Maltese Catholicism and its supposed incompatibility with British Protestantism, and the extension of welfare including the National Health Service, which was a financial burden too costly to bear.³⁴ As late as the 1970s, issues arose over the aid and development costs for territories with small populations which were “extremely high on a per capita basis” but technical assistance should be extended to “improve economic and social conditions with all possible speed.”³⁵ This indicated that the cost could be sustained in the short term as economic development could force independence quicker and release Britain from colonial commitments. Integration with the UK in order to ‘solve’ issues with the remaining Dependent Territories was denied in 1972, and, in response to a constituent, Chancellor

³³ The Future of Colonial Territories, House of Lords (HoL), Volume 190, Column 907, 2 February 1955.

³⁴ Maltese integration was first suggested in 1943 and was strongly backed by Dom Mintoff, the leader of the Maltese Labour Party, and later Prime Minister. The fact Maltese integration came so close to success marks it as unique in post-war imperialism – a way to reconcile issues with smaller states was to bring them into the British fold. To Mintoff integration would raise living standards but this jarred with British commitments to ease financial assistance to Malta. After the Suez Crisis in 1956, British world standing changed leaving the Maltese Prime Minister as an anti-colonial figure and integration was fully abandoned in 1957. See R.F. Holland, *European Decolonization 1918-1981: An Introductory Survey* (Basingstoke, 1985), 260-269; S.C. Smith, ‘Integration and Disintegration: The Attempted Incorporation of Malta into the United Kingdom in the 1950s’, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 35, 1 (2007): 49-71.

³⁵ Statement by Parliamentary Under-Secretary, Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO), 12 January 1971, FCO 86/23.

of the Duchy of Lancaster, Geoffrey Rippon, deemed it was “premature to contemplate integration... especially at a time when overseas commitments are being reduced.”³⁶

Additional to this broad reasoning, all Dependent Territories had a great variety of problems and ones that a permanent and irrevocable union would not satisfy and could actually create further issues.³⁷ Accommodating dependent territories in a postcolonial system that favoured independence posed dilemmas for ministers and, while bigger colonial issues, through federation or independence, were resolved, resolution for the smaller states was continually postponed.

The 1961 Reith lecture, delivered by Margery Perham, noted the problems of decolonisation and smaller territories:

Sixteen years ago, we ruled some 600,000,000 people... We shall soon be left with some small and scattered ports and islands. We may have a sense of association, even affection, toward them. But, in realistic terms, some of them represent obligations rather than assets. Even the utility of some of the once cherished military bases is beginning to look rather questionable in the age of jets and atoms. The Britain of 1961 is very different too as regards her external power from the Britain of 1939 or even 1945.³⁸

Dealing with these obligations in an era of colonial emancipation plagued successive governments, and those within the CO, later the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), especially.³⁹ Associated States even faced problems of appellations, with

³⁶ Response for Geoffrey Rippon in D. Blain, Gibraltar and General Dept. to D.H. Colvin, European Integration Dept., 4 August 1972, FCO 86/23.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Margery Perham, Reith lecture for the BBC, *The Colonial Reckoning*, 1961, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00hbd7j> [accessed 17 March 2016].

³⁹ The mid-1960s was a period of upheaval for overseas affairs departments. The Commonwealth Relations Office (CRO) merged with the CO in 1966 to form the Commonwealth Office, which then merged with the Foreign Office in 1968 to form the FCO.

colonial being replaced by a more tactful and dignified term, such as territory or dependency, that did not have a notional slur.⁴⁰

Smaller territories and how they related to Britain's international standing also presented complications. In 1978, Parliamentary Under-Secretary at the FCO, Ted Rowlands gave a speech on 'Britain's Other Foreign Policy' on the Dependent Territories. Rowlands contrasted the traditional view of the "diplomat as the polished negotiator" with "the reality" – "the Governor of the Falkland Islands tramps around rural hamlets to meet residents; Anguillans take pot-shots at the unprotected house of our Commissioner; combating illegal immigration from China to Hong Kong, and Diego Garcia."⁴¹ The speech additionally posited how to actually tackle these issues, with a fear of becoming a "latter day Pontius Pilate, and washing our hands of problems."⁴² There was a clear implication evident, and a sense of responsibility towards these territories that remained. Yet, neither parliamentary groups nor governments were willing to address the issues at hand, they "merely just kept trying to keep things afloat."⁴³

While harmonising smaller states within imperial policy was difficult, the question became known at the FCO as the 'smaller territories problem' in "places too small to stand on their own."⁴⁴ Permanent Under-Secretary at the CO, Sir Hilton Poynton,

⁴⁰ Letter from Neil Marten, MP for Banbury, 28 May 1969, LCC 1/2/3, Conservative Party Archives, Bodleian Library, Oxford. Interestingly, classifying colonial territories was problematic. At the CO, protected state could not be employed because this was already applied to Brunei implying that protected states had a different status with the CO. Sir Harold Roper, HoC, Volume 603, Column 1613, 17 April 1959.

⁴¹ Speech by Rowlands, 17 February 1978, FCO 44/1611.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ T.C.D. Jerrom, CO to B.L. Barder, UK Mission to the UN, 25 March 1966, FO 371/189819.

acknowledged in 1959 that the task of “Empire-unbuilding [was] a difficult one.”⁴⁵ Poynton was particularly devoted to the smaller territories for which independence was ruled out by the CO as they were too small or too poor.⁴⁶ Poynton would not tolerate an abdication of Britain’s overseas responsibilities and worried about “being asked to ‘give up’ territories just because they are thought to be a nuisance to the Treasury or others!” (underscoring the tensions between different offices of state).⁴⁷ However, the amount of attention those smaller territories consumed within Whitehall, having their own department within the FCO, which was “sympathetic to their needs”, was indicative of a need to bring decolonisation to a conclusion - just not precipitously.⁴⁸

Concurrent to imperial questions, smaller states would also hinder the work undertaken by British diplomats at the UN as they would inherently devalue the institution and the significance of UN resolutions.⁴⁹ However, this jarred with the paternal role that Britain had molded for itself by giving self-determination to those states that wanted it. The goodwill that Britain had engendered towards the UN’s cardinal principle was offered in 1966 as “having applied [the principle of self-determination] to 700 million people we are almost in a position to call it our own.”⁵⁰ Official policy, towards smaller territories and those larger, was that “the [British] Government respects the wishes of the people of the British Dependent Territories to determine their own future in accordance with the UN Charter.”⁵¹ In an interview in 1968 with *London Line* (a weekly

⁴⁵ Minute by Poynton, 23 November 1959, CO 1036/331 reproduced in Ronald Hyam and Wm. Roger Louis (eds), *The Conservative Government and the End of Empire, 1957-1964* (London, 2000), 721.

⁴⁶ ‘Sir Hilton Poynton’, Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-62163?rskey=A529vY&result=1> [accessed 12 February 2020].

⁴⁷ Minute, 23 November 1959.

⁴⁸ Notes on Dependent Territories, 28 July 1972, FCO 86/21.

⁴⁹ Evan Luard, FCO, to Ivor Richard, UK Mission at the UN, 17 May 1977, FCO 40/746.

⁵⁰ Jerrom to Barder, FCO 371/189819.

⁵¹ FCO Letter from Miss B. Brett Brooks, Hong Kong Department, to L. Trachtenberg, LSE, 27 November 1981, FCO 40/1237.

TV magazine programme produced by the CO and later FCO from 1966 to 1973), Commonwealth Secretary, George Thomson, was asked what the problems blocking independence were. The reply (“that many lack adequate material and human resources to enable them to maintain an independent existence”) echoed the views of many contemporary officials and ministers.⁵²

This is evident insofar as many smaller colonies were reliant upon a single product, which in turn was vulnerable to market fluctuations in price. For example, the Falkland Islands and wool; and, the Caribbean territories and sugar. Nevertheless, efforts were undertaken to mitigate these problems with single-crop economies. One, which will be analysed in Chapter 3, was the 1976 Shackleton Report, which undertook a thorough economic and social study of the Falkland Islands with an assessment of how to make the islands self-sufficient and promote economic development. In a surprise for the British Government, and contrary to popular belief, the Falkland Islands at this time created a budget surplus. While the report was widely debated in Parliament, it was not until after the 1982 Falklands War that the recommendations were fully implemented. The war galvanised MPs to re-evaluate the British relationship towards dependencies with Minister of State for Foreign & Commonwealth Affairs, Baroness Young, proclaiming “re-engagement rather than disengagement.”⁵³ While some overtures were made, often external influences were needed to stimulate development.

As well as market fluctuations, world power fluctuations led to a disadvantageous view of many smaller territories. For instance, the Spanish transition to democracy from

⁵² George Thomson, Interview with *London Line*, 29 August 1968, FCO 49/122.

⁵³ Killingray & Taylor, *Overseas Territories*, 11.

1975, and the end of the Cold War in 1991, saw Gibraltar become less valuable as a strategic tool in Westminster. The geopolitical concerns had changed and contested Gibraltar sovereignty created difficulty with an important EU partner. One issue analogous across many of the BOTs remains rival sovereignty: Argentina continues to claim the Falkland Islands, South Sandwich Islands, South Georgia and parts of Queen Elizabeth Land (the British Antarctic Territory); Spain claims the isthmus of Gibraltar; the BIOT is claimed by both Mauritius and the Seychelles; and, Akrotiri and Dhekelia – the Royal Air Force (RAF) bases on Cyprus – are claimed by the government in Nicosia. Maintaining an imperial presence is fraught with difficulty and has proven to be fractious for contemporary British foreign policy.

A stubborn issue facing the BOTs is identity and race. This is most striking with the British Nationality Act in 1981 when a new citizenship act was drafted to change the nationality of residents of the BOT, conferring British Dependent Territories Nationality, a change from British citizenship, to persons who were part of the “debris of empire.”⁵⁴ The Act was a response to the leaseback of Hong Kong to China in 1997, in order to stop the population settling in the UK and claiming British citizenship.⁵⁵ The Nationality Act changed the laws that had been preserved since the days of empire in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries whereby a British citizen was “any person born within His Majesty’s dominions and allegiance.”⁵⁶ This was amended in 1948 to

⁵⁴ Maverick right-wing MP, Enoch Powell, infamous for his opposition to Commonwealth immigration, described the bill as “neglecting these peoples” and it was his wish that the bill be amended to include the peoples of St. Helena, Pitcairn Islands and Montserrat so that the populations of all dependencies could seek British citizenship. Standing Committee F, HoC, Volume 3, Column 1333, 14 April 1981.

⁵⁵ Nicholas Ridley (Minister of State, FCO)’s speech to the HoC, 2 December 1980, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/61> [accessed 20 May 2015].

⁵⁶ British Nationality and Status of Aliens Act, 1914. Sourced from http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1914/17/pdfs/ukpga_19140017_en.pdf [accessed 27 February 2018].

Citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies, which allowed Commonwealth countries to establish their own citizenship. In response to stricter immigration laws sought by the Conservative Monday Club, revisions brought forth the Commonwealth Immigrants Act of 1962, which stipulated that Commonwealth citizens without a connection to the UK would be subject to immigration control.⁵⁷ Further immigration restrictions were brought in with the Commonwealth Immigrants Act of 1968, due to concerns of Kenyan-Asians moving to the UK after Kenya's Africanization Policy.⁵⁸ In 1971, the Immigration Act was passed which brought in the Right of Abode (lifting restrictions on those with familial links) but reduced 'New Commonwealth' immigration and relaxed 'Old Commonwealth' immigration as they would be affected by British accession to the EEC.⁵⁹

However, it was the 1981 change in law that was the most drastic as it brought in *jus sanguinis* (law of blood) and overhauled the idea that birthplace conferred citizenship. Increasing immigration from ex-colonial states necessitated a rethink. The Act, which was amended and updated subsequently, most notably with the Falkland Islands in 1983, magnified these racial issues. While it was acceptable to apply Britishness to selective territories, only 12 years earlier non-whites were not granted the same privilege in the BIOT. As discussed further in Chapter 4, the forcible removal of the *Ilois* (a French creole word meaning islanders) from Diego Garcia highlighted the racial

⁵⁷ Commonwealth Immigrants Act 1962, <https://web.archive.org/web/20110927012831/http://www.britishcitizen.info/CIA1962.pdf> [accessed 24 October 2019].

⁵⁸ Commonwealth Immigrants Act 1968, <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1968/9/contents/enacted> [accessed 24 October 2019].

⁵⁹ Immigration Act 1971, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1971/77/contents> [accessed 24 October 2019].

hierarchy that existed in colonial thought and how that was continued in territories still attached to Britain.

As small states reached their reckoning, Foreign Secretary, Jim Callaghan, signed the paper in 1975 for “accelerated decolonisation” wherever possible as “their continued dependence involved a significant political cost; it means we are liable to have to take the rap for locally engendered crises and accept international criticism for ‘colonialism’.”⁶⁰ This was acted upon. Kiribati, Tuvalu, the Solomon Islands and Dominica soon became independent; overtures were put to the PRC to cede back Hong Kong; Rhodesia-Zimbabwe ended the tumultuous years in the wake of the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) of 1965; and Brunei became fully independent in 1984. Jim Callaghan’s paper partially worked, yet Dependent Territories remain part of the Whitehall scene.

The Empire still manifests itself in numerous ways and imperial legacies remain, especially in tangible and residual cultural edifices. Flags of all BOTs bear the Union Flag, but so do those of Australia, New Zealand and Hawaii; statues of British statesmen and monarchs pepper former colonies; and vestiges of colonial rule can be found in judicial and political systems (the Westminster system being a benchmark of democracy exported to many countries). The Commonwealth is probably the most literal continuation of the Empire as it brought together former colonies to promote social virtues and democracy. Decolonisation is not a linear concept - ideas of neo-colonialism imply that imperialism is with us in one respect; also, it is possible that

⁶⁰ Callaghan to Fourteen Administrators and Twenty-five Heads of Mission, 13 June 1975, FCO 32/115 cited in McIntyre, *Winding up*, 257.

decolonisation *is* still happening. If we couple these with the notion of an empire that has changed after the wave of decolonisation, then it can be established that empire is still a palpable part of the world system. This will be explored in this thesis looking at the endurance of colonialism and retention of colonies past decolonisation and the reasons for that retention. By employing a theoretical model in the analysis of the case studies, the factors determining their retention will be revealed. The thesis will therefore facilitate an understanding of the role post-war colonialism took during decolonisation and the effect this had in the colonies, the metropole, and globally. Before examining the historiography of decolonisation in detail in Chapter 2 and analysing the case studies in Chapters 3-5, the next chapter provides further contextualisation through discussing terminology, the existing literature on the BOTs, and the background history of the Falkland Islands, Diego Garcia/BIOT, and Brunei.

Chapter One: Methodologies & Historiographies

Terminology and General Literature

The term remnant has been used thus far to mean territories of the British Empire that continued a formal attachment to Britain after the great wave of decolonisation in the 1960s. Within their historiography, these are colonies that once formed part of the network of the British Empire and have still not fully decolonised. This single term must encompass the heterogeneity among these colonies whose ties to Britain persist for several different reasons. The term “remnants” used by Judd is in contrast to Darwin’s less flattering use of “limpet colonies”. The remaining colonies have also been given the term ‘outposts’ by Winchester indicating their remoteness. Perhaps the most evocative is ‘quaint relics’ by Aldrich and Connell, conjuring up images of a twee imperialism belying the true nature of the relationship.¹ The most engaging is Douglas’s ‘imperial flotsam’ for the Pacific Islands which harks back to the naval empire that has now seen its demise.²

While the term outposts suits some of the BOTs in far-flung places such as Pitcairn, South Georgia, and St. Helena, others such as Gibraltar feel much closer to ‘home’ and, if we include parts of the UK such as Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Crown Dependencies of the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man, then it can be argued there are remnants of imperialism closer to the metropole than initially assumed. Whereas, a limpet colony evokes images of parasitically clinging to Britain against the wishes of

¹ Denis Judd, *Empire: The British Imperial Experience from 1765 to Present* (London, 2012); Simon Winchester, *Outposts: Journeys to the Surviving Relics of the British Empire* (London, 2003), 1; Robert Aldrich and John Connell, *The Last Colonies* (Cambridge, 1998), 1; John Darwin, *Britain and Decolonisation: The Retreat from Empire in the Post-War World* (Basingstoke, 1988), 307-314.

² Bronwen Douglas, ‘Imperial Flotsam? The British in the Pacific Islands’, in Robin Winks (ed), *Oxford History of the British Empire; Vol. V: Historiography* (Oxford, 1999), 366-378.

the metropole. Though many authors have chosen different descriptions for the BOTs, this thesis will use remnants as it indicates a quantity left behind after the greater part has been removed.

The appellation ‘colony’ is used extensively in this thesis, and while it is a contentious term it is used throughout to refer to places that were politically linked to the UK before 1983. After this date, all colonies became British Dependent Territories (BDTs) with the change in nationality laws. This changed again in 2002 when all BDTs became BOTs with all residents being conferred full British citizenship.³ The term colony is used also by the UN, and the Committee of 24 has always given territory administered by another country the term colony.⁴ Where honorific titles are used in the thesis they indicate the contemporary position that person held, and the same applies with colonial territories which use their Anglicised name until independence.

An area that needs to be acknowledged is how this study defines imperialism and what that means ‘after decolonisation’. It may be easy to assume that imperialism is the economic and political control of the territory by means of colonisation but as it has been stated earlier there is no single aspect to the decolonisation process, so theorising around the issue should not be any less complex. Simon Smith effectively debated the concept of decolonisation in his most recent work on the Gulf States after the British withdrawal east of Suez.⁵ He grapples with the multiple concepts of decolonisation, as

³ See FCO, *The Overseas Territories: Security, Success and Sustainability* (London, 2012), https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/14929/ot-wp-0612.pdf [accessed May 2019].

⁴ See UN Committee of 24, <https://www.un.org/en/decolonization/specialcommittee.shtml>, [accessed September 2019].

⁵ Simon C. Smith, *Britain and the Arab Gulf after Empire: Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates, 1971-1981*, (Abingdon, 2019), 1-25.

well as informal empire, and provides an innovative account of imperialism after empires through his analysis of how empire was a palpable part of British foreign policy long after disassociation. This is directly relevant to this thesis as it contends with the notion of decolonisation and also how that was not necessarily conclusive with the enduring economic relationships important for the UK after formal decolonisation. This underscores the significance of maintaining association when beneficial to the UK domestic economy.

One of the issues in defining the term ‘imperialism’ (or indeed ‘decolonisation’) is that there are many definitions for it – this was acknowledged by the imperial historian Sir Keith Hancock: “I once counted up to ten different meanings given to the term Imperialism by ten different writers...to some, it meant federation, to others it meant military expansion, to others it meant dominion over palm and pine.”⁶ These do not include further works on neo-colonialism first posited by Kwame Nkrumah in the 1960s.⁷ Neo-colonial theory argues that the cessation of political control “[still results in] foreign capital [being] used for the exploitation rather than for the development of the less developed parts of the world” and thus developing countries become economically dependent on the metropole.⁸ Additionally, Darwin has contended that the advent of new sources, geopolitical change after 1945, changing perceptions of the ‘Third World’, human rights and humanitarianism, as well as globalisation, have all begged the question of decolonisation for whom?⁹

⁶ Cited in Katherine West, ‘Theorising about Imperialism: A Methodological Note’, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 1, 2 (1973): 150.

⁷ Kwame Nkrumah, *Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism* (London, 1965).

⁸ *Ibid.*, x.

⁹ John Darwin, ‘Last Days of Empire’ in Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo & António Costa Pinto (eds), *The Ends of European Empires: Cases and Comparisons*, (Basingstoke, 2015), 268-269.

Neo-colonialism is a form of imperialism, evident mainly in Africa, but also through the presence of multinational oil companies in the Middle East and Southeast Asia (for example). The arrival of the multinationals in the post-colonial situation, however, was more a reaction to the process, rather than the catalyst for decolonisation itself. This is evident with Royal Dutch Shell in Brunei and will be fully explored as part of a case study in this thesis. Shell's business dealings within the protected state allowed an arm of imperialism to continue after it was clear that Brunei would be an 'independent' Sultanate, but only after this was assured in the wake of insurrection within the country post-1962. Imperialism can also, still, mean the literal practice of colonialism, or "[t]he policy or practice of acquiring full or partial political control over another country, occupying it with settlers."¹⁰ Again, this is widely accepted to be a system that was largely finished by the mid-twentieth century but there are parts of the British Empire that were colonised through settlement that still remain attached to London, namely the Falkland Islands – the population of which is descended from Scottish and Welsh sheep farmers who settled there in the nineteenth century.

An outline of the overarching literature on the remnants as a collective will be undertaken here, with territory-specific historiography for the case studies considered later in this chapter. Imperial remnant literature varies according to the remnant and the topic. For instance, much has been written about the Falklands War as well as the subject of identity within studies on Gibraltar, yet some areas like Bermuda, Diego Garcia and the smaller Caribbean islands lack any substantial imperial history scholarship. Literature that brings the remnants together is few and far between. Aldrich

¹⁰ Oxford English Dictionary, <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/colonialism> [accessed May 2015].

and Connell did much to counter this in *The Last Colonies* which thematically worked through the imperial remnants. However, while its relatively recent publication date (1998) and scope (focusing on all empires) provide useful parameters, it offers little depth. It is here that this thesis differs, using contemporary primary sources with a more thorough examination of why territories have been retained or took longer to decolonise, becoming independent later than the ‘Wind of Change’ period of the 1960s (which also justifies the inclusion of Brunei).¹¹ A recent addition has been Cawley’s *Colonies in Conflict*, but its narrative approach and lack of historiographical analysis makes it more like an almanac than an in-depth analytical scholarship.¹² Drower’s *Britain’s Dependent Territories: A Fistful of Islands* is a more scholarly study, highlighting the on-going issues surrounding BOTs with regards to nationalism and economic potential. However, the 1992 publication date necessarily means it lacks recent historiographical debates and does not include any of the recently released and declassified FCO material, with the focus of the study weighing heavily on British political decisions and domestic opinion. Drower does, however, reach interesting conclusions that Britain must “realistically come to accept it is living in an age of colonial permanence.”¹³ But how to tackle the causes of this permanence remains unresolved and thus, whilst unique in its reach, Drower’s book leaves much unanswered. Recent scholarship has been undertaken by Parsons in his chapter in *The Oxford Handbook of the Ends of Empire*, which succinctly summarises the history of the remnants, their links to the UK and why they remain attached.¹⁴ Parsons’ approach has historicised the remnants and allowed new discussion of their role in imperial

¹¹ Aldrich & Connell, *The Last Colonies*.

¹² Charles Cawley, *Colonies in Conflict: A History of the British Overseas Territories* (Newcastle, 2015).

¹³ George Drower, *Britain’s Dependent Territories, A Fistful of Islands* (London, 1992), 4.

¹⁴ Michal Parsons, ‘Remnants of Empire’, in Martin Thomas and Andrew S. Thompson (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of the Ends of Empire* (Oxford, 2018), 678–696.

history and has promoted further scholarship. The present study adds depth to Parsons' work with a wider range of primary material to understand the role of retention during decolonisation. More focused is Harmer's work on identity in the BOTs, which analyses the kinship links between the metropole and overseas territories (in this case the British Virgin Islands [BVI] and St. Helena) to understand how local identities are understood in relation to the UK.¹⁵ Harmer has also researched more extensively on how these identities are formed in relation to ethics and power and how these impact upon the peoples of the BOTs.¹⁶ These perspectives have been incorporated into this thesis to analyse notions of kith and kinship.

Part of the explanation for this relative neglect lies in historians concentrating on the "important" colonies. With the opening of relevant archival deposits there is a change underway, "imperial history is undergoing metamorphosis: the end of the empire now looks much more exciting."¹⁷ Since smaller states and colonies have been neglected in imperial history and "have concerns and problems not shared by larger states [...] which may mean that they are ignored" allows this study to be distinctive in its approach.¹⁸ The disregard for smaller colonies makes a review of literature challenging, with scholarship approaching the topic thematically, and in broad strokes, rather than focusing on individual colonies for which little research may exist. This is beneficial to the thesis since the primary material has remained unused and negates the effects of having limited secondary material. Historiography is formed by the *zeitgeist*, and recent

¹⁵ Nichola Harmer, Jamie Gaskarth & Richard Gibb, 'Distant Relations: Identity and Materiality in Elite Discourse on Britain's Overseas Territories', *Global Society*, 29, 4 (2015): 510-529.

¹⁶ Nichola Harmer, 'Distant Relations: A Study of Identity, Ethics, and Power in the Relationship between Britain and the United Kingdom Overseas Territories', PhD thesis, University of Plymouth, December 2012.

¹⁷ Sarah Stockwell, *The British Empire: Themes and Perspectives* (Oxford, 2008), 269.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

political developments combined with methodological change have produced a new shift in imperial history focusing upon the understudied, and so this study of the remnants fits that bill and represents a timely approach.

The works previously cited have provided historiographical accounts specific to imperial remnants, but further literature can be found in more general books on decolonisation. However, these are broad scopes of history and, ironically, can be myopic in their outlook. Porter's, *The Lion's Share* acknowledges the remnants as a conclusion to the British Empire seeing them as "onerous" because in economic exchanges "[Britain] gets nothing in return." He goes on to call them "irritating, and nothing more."¹⁹ White's *Decolonisation* also mentions the "embarrassing remnants" but fleetingly, and McIntyre's *British Decolonisation* does not mention them at all.²⁰ These are a few of the tomes on British imperialism and decolonisation providing some evidence why 'Empire' lasted after the late-1960s, yet more substantial work needs to be done to bring the remnants fully into the imperial history narrative. Darwin's *The Empire Project* (2009) and *Britain and Decolonisation: The Retreat from Empire in the Post-War World* (1988) both conclude with the residues of British imperialism, but lack framing as to how these territories situate themselves within the imperial system. This thesis, frames, analyses, and contemporises remnants and does not make them an addendum to a larger piece of work.

¹⁹ Porter, *Lion's Share*, 327.

²⁰ White, *Decolonisation*, 57-58.

Research Approaches and Methods

In terms of research methodology, the thesis primarily draws upon government sources from the National Archives of the United Kingdom (TNA); predominantly records generated by the FCO, Treasury and the Ministry of Defence. These are supplemented by primary material from other archives: the US Department of State (through their digitised collections), the Falkland Islands digitised archives, the Bank of England records, and colonial records from the Bodleian Library, Oxford. Parliamentary debates from Hansard and articles from various newspapers enhance the source base further.

Using British government records for the thesis provides an account of the reaction to the retention of the colonies studied. While the aim of the thesis is a comprehensive investigation of retention through the 3 Is, which frames the analysis through a top-down approach (focusing on structures and institutions) as well as a bottom-up approach (a perspective away from institutions and structures), the British perspective is valuable in order to begin situating the case studies within imperial history. The thesis' aim is to locate these remnants within imperial history and using metropolitan sources achieves this. Yet, while considerations within the remaining territories are analysed from this British perspective, it does not overlook or devalue sources from the overseas territories themselves, or other sources consulted. Research in all locations was not feasible due to funding restrictions and travel concerns, aside from the fact it is impossible to obtain access to Diego Garcia. To overcome these limitations, the Falkland Islands case study utilises digitised resources as well as contemporary newspapers and periodicals which contain Islanders' views. For Diego Garcia, meanwhile, interviews and collections of third-party organisations, such as British-based charities which support Chagossians in the UK, provide a 'local' voice to enhance

the Internal section of Chapter 4. This also gets round a challenging research barrier. Self-determination and territorial concerns mean that the Diego Garcia question has evolved into a politically and culturally sensitive topic. The recent High Court cases, and a recent ruling at the International Court of Justice (ICJ), have meant that many TNA files are redacted. Public access to legal material, newspaper articles, as well as documentaries available through the UK Chagos Support Association has countered these restrictions.

Meanwhile, the material on international affairs, as well as the files generated by colonial governments migrated to London, provide additional information on these remnants alongside the UK imperial government sources.²¹ These facilitate analysis from not just a British metropolitan perspective and the UK government files themselves provide plenty of dialogue with actors ‘on the ground’ in the overseas territories as well as supranational bodies like the UN and other great powers, notably the US. Fuller analysis has also been made possible by the new twenty year-rule in the UK meaning that primary-source material, notwithstanding some redactions and exemptions (on Brunei as well as Diego Garcia), is now available well into the 1980s. As this was the decade when Brunei became independent, and the Falklands War occurred, analysis of these events can be properly positioned.

Government sources are valuable for exploring imperial history, allowing factual and accurate information to be gained and are easily accessible to the researcher. They facilitate exploration of the nuances in government, how policy was applied, and the

²¹ For example, the published *Foreign Relations of the United States* volumes, the US National Security Council (NSC) and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) online archives and digitised UN and Non-Aligned Movement material plus the occasional WikiLeaks and records collected by the National Security Archive online.

opinions of different offices of state in the process of colonial retention. The British state was not homogenous and differing perspectives offered decision makers from Westminster to Whitehall distinct positions. This examination will be evident in the case-study chapters with the complexities of government evident through their approaches to colonial retention. Nevertheless, these sources have a bias, with emphasis on British actors and actions. While internal positions can be examined through recently-released FCO files from the colonies (the so-called Migrated Archive – see below), a complete record is still hard to draw. This means colonial records at TNA need to be triangulated against other sources, especially when relating to the internal political and economic perspective (for example, using the Falkland Islands Newsletter to compare with the narrative from the metropole, allowing exploration of the metropolitan-peripheral dynamic).

Some of the government records used form part of the FCO 141 file series, the Colonial Migrated Archive. Released in periodic tranches between April 2012 and November 2013 they form documents returned to the UK from newly created independent states at the end of empire. These ‘lost files’ relating to many ex-colonies trouble historians as they highlight the ease with which government departments can withhold historical records.²² In this thesis, they are used within the case study of Diego Garcia; the BIOT which was included in the first tranche of documents released and also part of the documents relating to the Seychelles, as well as Brunei. Using them here allows further light to be shone on British intentions during decolonisation, especially when used in conjunction with more ‘traditional’ FCO files. The migrated archives have allowed a

²² David Anderson, ‘Mau Mau in the High Court and the “Lost” British Empire Archives: Colonial Conspiracy or Bureaucratic Bungle’, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 39, 5 (2011): 13.

more comprehensive picture of decolonisation, and ergo, retention, to be explored. As Phillips writes, “It is ironic that the migrated archives, originally intended to be concealed from public view, should help throw light into these shadowy historiographical recesses.”²³

The use of government records is obviously helpful for diplomatic historians, helping reveal internal decision-making processes and the rationale behind policies. A challenge that must be overcome by the researcher, however, is bridging the gap between high and low politics, or how foreign policy impacts on other political arenas.²⁴

The evolution of documents over time has also changed the approach of historians with a “wider mosaic of the numerous types of government papers and other primary sources” which must be consulted in order to write diplomatic history.²⁵ Tosh also argues this through understanding that research is not about finding *the* authoritative source but to amass as much information from as many areas as possible.²⁶ Doing so allows historians to be more holistic in their approach and provides a more rigorous methodological base from which to work. This has been achieved by using a variety of primary material additional to that from the FCO. Sources from the Bank of England have assisted in examination of economic arguments, as well as Treasury files and those of the Board of Trade. Cabinet Office files, as well as those from the Conservative Party archives at the Bodleian, have aided metropolitan political perspectives. Digital

²³ David Phillips, ‘The “Migrated Archives” and a Forgotten Corner of Empire: The British Borneo Territories’, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 44, 6 (2016): 1003.

²⁴ Kristina Spohr Readman, ‘Memoranda’ in Miriam Dobson and Benjamin Ziemann (eds), *Reading Primary Sources: The Interpretation of Texts from Nineteenth and Twentieth Century History* (Abingdon, 2009), 127.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 136.

²⁶ John Tosh, *The Pursuit of History* (Harlow, 2002), 98.

resources, such as the US Office of the Historian material, additionally supports analysis of international affairs and the US-UK bilateral relationship.

The sources drawn upon for the thesis are varied and so attention must be paid to the problems inherent within archival work. As well as being familiar with the recurrent themes of sources and their pitfalls, diplomatic history has also “been built on the ambiguities of diplomatic documents.”²⁷ The language of documents is often difficult to navigate and this clouds the judgement of the historian in producing an objective answer to the historical questions asked. While ‘top-down’ history, as part of a global historical movement, is now considered old-fashioned, and western in its focus, there are a “few historians committing themselves to comparative and connective approaches.”²⁸ The aim of the thesis is to employ this comparative and connective approach by employing and bringing together case studies which will help overcome a ‘top-down’ approach and result in a more holistic examination. These approaches are necessary here as part of an emerging literature on the BOTs, and while the archival focus is from above this has been mitigated by an approach which is cognisant of perspectives from the colonies themselves, plus from those of wider transnational actors.

The thesis is theoretical in its approach and relies upon comparison in order to understand the case studies through the period of decolonisation and beyond. This synthesis means that it will be reflective in understanding the connections created and how they help situate Britain’s historical place in the world. Comparison of case studies

²⁷ Richard Evans, *In Defence of History* (London, 1997), 131.

²⁸ Richard Drayton and David Motadel, ‘Discussion: The Futures of Global History’, *Journal of Global History*, 13, 1 (2018): 8.

allows a greater understanding of how certain colonies remained attached despite decolonisation. While comparative studies encounter problems of definition across culture and place, the use of a rigid theoretical structure counters this by standardising the approach.

Case Studies

The case studies examined are the Falklands, Diego Garcia (part of the BIOT), and Brunei. Common amongst these is their relative absence within the study of imperial history. For example, studies of the Falklands have focused on valuable discussions on the 1982 conflict and Islander identity post-1982, but there has been little focus on pre-1982 history outside the causes of war. Diego Garcia is often approached from the discipline of security studies but has not generally been framed within the history of Britain's defence role east of Suez or in UK politics. Brunei's history is under-researched in the Empire story as are the reasons for its ongoing attachments to Britain after 1963.

Employing three distinct territories to study the retention of colonies during decolonisation advances their history and situates them better within histories of empires and decolonisation. Other 'remnants' of the British Empire, whilst more than capable of being analysed within the 3Is framework, were not chosen because of either their existing discussions within imperial history or methodological issues. For example, there are existing comprehensive historiographies of Hong Kong and Gibraltar within the British Empire, their populations' identity and their geopolitical

importance.²⁹ This means that fresh approaches and new examinations would be harder to achieve. Methodologically, tax havens such as the Cayman Islands or the British Virgin Islands cannot be properly examined for reasons of accessing sensitive material on economic links to the UK, and which is not available through traditional archives. These factors directed the thesis to become a thorough examination of territories that have not been fully discussed within the British imperial system and explaining why they were retained rather than focusing upon those hitherto explored in depth or which are difficult to examine because of restrictions on public access to primary sources.

Additionally, Brunei, the Falklands and the BIOT are a representative sample of imperial remnants after 1963, covering a wide geographical span and the variety of circumstances which explain why blanket decolonisation did not occur in the 1960s and 1970s. They facilitate discussion, therefore, of how factors that contributed to decolonisation can be reversed to explain continued colonisation. Internal interpretations which place emphasis on nationalism and identity fit the Falkland Islands and their pro-colonial nationalism; the metropole's financial benefits that were gained from Brunei, a remnant until 1984, will show how imperial factors maintained links during an economically difficult time for Britain; and, international factors (for Diego Garcia especially) will highlight how colonisation was beneficial in some instances in light of the Cold War and the protection of important trade routes. This section will outline each of the case studies, their history and literature to provide background in order to analyse the reasons for their retention in subsequent chapters.

²⁹ See Stephen Constantine, *Community and Identity in Modern Gibraltar since 1704*, (Manchester, 2009); Edward G. Archer, *Gibraltar: Identity and Empire*, (London, 2006); Priscilla Roberts & Odd Arne Westad, *China, Hong Kong, and the Long 1970s: Global Perspectives*, (London, 2017).

The Falkland Islands have a complex history and it is a confusing journey to retrace. The Islands were possibly first seen by Italian explorer Amerigo Vespucci but other recorded sightings from the sixteenth century by Portuguese, British, Spanish and Dutch sailors have also been documented. They were claimed for the French king in 1764 but soon after were sold to Spain. The UK's claim of sovereignty dates to 1765 after which a settlement was established from 1766 to 1774.³⁰ The British temporarily quit the Islands in 1774, owing to the financial pressures of the American Revolution but, crucially, left a plaque asserting their right to sovereignty. After Argentina proclaimed independence from Spain in 1810, it established a settlement that was destroyed in 1831 by a US warship. In 1833, British occupation was resumed and has been maintained since.³¹ The competing claims over the Islands have led to an uncooperative Argentina claiming that under the 'territorial integrity' clause of UN Resolution 1514 (which codified granting independence to colonial peoples in 1960) their presence before 1833 supersedes British claims to the islands, and sovereignty 'arose' for the British from conflict against Argentinian sovereign territory.

The British "line to take" on sovereignty issues originated from early-nineteenth century claims, as "it was the North Americans, not the British, who physically ejected the Argentines in 1831 and officially rejected their claims to the islands."³² The controversy over sovereignty was left until 1963 when President Umberto Illia, thirty-fourth President of Argentina, first registered Argentina's claim to the UN. Increasing

³⁰ Andrés Marroquín, 'The Falkland Islands: Prosperity in the Face of Adversity', *Round Table*, 103, 4 (2014): 413.

³¹ T.M. Franck & P. Hoffman, 'The Right of Self-Determination in Very Small Places', *NYU Journal of International Politics and Law*, 8, 3 (1975): 382.

³² FCO Research Note: Falkland Islands, Historical Aspects of British and Argentine Claims Pre-1833, November 1982, FCO 7/4902.

decolonisation, and the changing composition at the UN, influenced Argentina's decision to be more explicit in claiming sovereignty. This sovereignty was claimed as an inheritance from the Spanish Empire, whereas the British claimed the Islands due to continual colonisation since 1833 and have respected the will of the people in self-determining their wish to remain British. As recently as 2013, a referendum on sovereignty was held in which only three people voted against the resolution which resulted in a categorical vote to remain a BOT by 99.8 per cent.³³ Few countries have ever questioned the British claim to the Falklands and as a UK diplomat advised in 1982: "if the international community were to discount 149 years of history, there would hardly be an international boundary which did not immediately become subject to dispute."³⁴ Having an obscure history, with little clarity on who discovered the islands, has clouded judgement over sovereignty even further. Framing that against decolonisation, self-determination, and identity further disguises the proud attachments Islanders have to the UK and misunderstands how they remain a BOT to this day.

Scholarship of the Falkland Islands is limited and the studies that have been undertaken are largely concerned with geopolitics and the causes of the Argentine invasion in 1982. Lawrence Freedman, the official historian of the Falklands War, has undertaken scholarship on the factors that contributed to the conflict and the outcomes of the campaign. Freedman's comprehensive book, *The Official History of the Falklands Campaign*, draws on a range of primary material to rationalise the conflict's causal factors and outlines a thorough debate over nationality and identity. However, as an official history, it is focussed on the consequences for the Conservative Party and the

³³ Results of the Falkland Islands Referendum, <http://www.falklands.gov.fk/results-of-the-referendum-on-the-political-status-of-the-falkland-islands/> [accessed 13 May 2015].

³⁴ Letter from the Permanent Representative of the UK to the UN Security Council, 28 April 1982, FCO 7/4902.

politics of war in the 1980s. This has nevertheless contributed to the Falkland Islands historiography and is a valuable resource for this thesis. A more recent addition to the scholarship is Mercau's examination of British imperial legacies and colonial discourse on the Falkland Islands. This has used current methodological approaches, including research on the Islands themselves, clarifying why Britain and Argentina went to war in 1982 and how that derived from British imperial legacies.³⁵ Mercau's strength is analysis of identity and Britishness and this is useful in understanding the role of a British identity influencing both British policy and Falkland Islanders' responses to that. Nevertheless, the work is not framed within the historiography of decolonisation and does not explain why the Islands remain a remnant of empire. The imperial history of the Falkland Islands has been examined by González with an impressive scope on the question of sovereignty at the UN in the 1960s and how the issue situated itself in decolonisation.³⁶ Donaghy expanded on this and examined the political positions of Argentina and the UK in the 1970s with a focus on the bilateral talks to reach an agreement.³⁷ However, the impressive scope of González's and Donaghy's scholarship does not tackle the aim of this thesis which is to understand colonial permanence.

Other considerations are explored in existing examinations of the Falkland Islands, through a focus on geopolitical factors within the South Atlantic Region. Perceiving the Falkland Islands as a "strategic gateway" to the Antarctic in an increasingly

³⁵ Ezequial Mercau, 'Empire Redux: The Falklands and the End of Greater Britain', PhD Thesis, University of Copenhagen, 2015; Ezequial Mercau, *The Falklands War: An Imperial History* (Cambridge, 2019).

³⁶ Martín Abel González, *The Genesis of the Falkland (Malvinas) Conflict* (Basingstoke, 2013).

³⁷ Aaron Donaghy, *The British Government and the Falkland Islands, 1974-79* (Basingstoke, 2014).

globalised world has value for the study of retention.³⁸ However, these studies tend to be more contemporary focussed and while situating the Falkland Islands within a wider geographical framework can help in studying the retention of colonies this does not historicise them. An area where the history of place and space has valuably contributed is the study of the Falklands in their “physical and imaginative connections.”³⁹ The role of place and how that has informed the cultural geography of the Falkland Islands has much credence in exploring kith and kinship. The similarities of the UK and the Falklands as island nations is mirrored in ethnicity and rhetoric so it is little surprise that Margaret Thatcher described the Falkland Islanders as both an “island race” and “our boys.”⁴⁰ Further links between the geographical and historical have been noted in the coincidence that “they [the Falkland Islands] occupied precisely the same latitude in their Southern Hemisphere as the British did in theirs, Port Stanley was the Hemel Hempstead of the southern world. The Falkland Islanders were us, but they were in a look-glass reverse.”⁴¹ Linking these factors helps to examine retention with the nexus of British identity, nationalism and race as contributing factors to the retention of the Falkland Islands during the process of decolonisation.⁴²

The second case study, the BIOT, was created on 8 November 1965 and included the Chagos Archipelago plus the three islands of Aldabra, Desroches and Farquhar (which were subsequently ceded to the Seychelles on its independence in 1976). In the 1960s

³⁸ Klaus Dodds, ‘Stormy Waters: Britain, the Falkland Islands and UK-Argentine Relations’, *International Affairs*, 88, 4 (2012): 683-700; Klaus Dodds, ‘The Falkland Islands as a “Strategic Gateway”’, *RUSI Journal*, 157, 6 (2012): 18-25; Klaus Dodds and Alan D. Hemmings, ‘Britain and the British Antarctic Territory in the Wider Geopolitics of the Antarctic and the Southern Ocean’, *International Affairs*, 89, 6 (2013): 1429-1444.

³⁹ Klaus Dodds & Stephen A. Royle, ‘The Historical Geography of Islands: Rethinking Islands’, *Journal of Historical Geography*, 29, 4 (2003): 491.

⁴⁰ Klaus Dodds, ‘God Save the Falklands: Postcolonial Geographies of the Falklands/Malvinas’, in Rod Edmund & Vanessa Smith (eds), *Islands in History and Representation* (London, 2003), 182.

⁴¹ Jonathan Raban, *Coasting* (London, 1986), 108.

⁴² Klaus Dodds, *Pink Ice: Britain and the South Atlantic Empire* (London, 2002), 37.

Britain relinquished many territories, with over twenty colonies becoming independent states, yet Britain also “quietly acquired a new one.”⁴³ The geopolitical situation justified the BIOT’s creation – British retraction from the Indian Ocean and a reduction in defence forces meant protection of littoral countries and the Cold War provided an opportunity to retain a colony. The territory was created by a Statutory Instrument, which legally separated the islands to form a new colony which today spans 58 islands and 64,000 sq. km of ocean.⁴⁴ In order to establish the colony under Royal Prerogative £3 million was paid to Mauritius for detachment of islands which legally bound recognition of the BIOT, and this has caused problems in recent territorial debates.⁴⁵ Since 1971, Diego Garcia has been solely used for US defence purposes, but it is still administered by the British government. The forced population removal, undertaken from 1968-1973 has cast a dark shadow over the territory and this will be examined in Chapter 3. Mauritius still claims the islands and has formally lodged a complaint with the British government while the UK insists that the Chagos Archipelago will be returned when it is no longer needed for defence purposes.⁴⁶ The ICJ ruled in February 2019 that the UK should return the islands to Mauritius, something the UK government has thus far refused to do.⁴⁷

Until recently, the Chagossian right to return and sovereignty was denied but this changed after the UK suffered defeat at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) – by 94 votes to 15 in June 2017. The Assembly voted to send the case to the ICJ for a

⁴³ John Madeley, ‘Diego Garcia: An Indian Ocean Storm-Centre’, *Round Table*, 71, 283 (1981): 253.

⁴⁴ Statutory Instrument No. 1920, 8 November 1965, FCO 141/1406.

⁴⁵ History of the BIOT, <https://biot.gov.io/about/history/> [accessed 05 February 2019].

⁴⁶ Foreign Affairs Committee, 6 July 2008, <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmselect/cmfaff/147/14708.htm#a39> [accessed 05 February 2019].

⁴⁷ ICJ Judgements, <https://www.icj-cij.org/files/case-related/169/169-20190225-01-00-EN.pdf> [accessed 13 May 2019].

decision on the legal status of the Chagos Islands which ruled that the Islands must be returned to Mauritius thus ending British colonisation in the region. This has also led to other countries voicing concerns at military use of colonial territory. In Cyprus, where three per cent of the territory is still under British military occupation, Attorney-General Costas Clerides, the Cypriot representative at the ICJ, commented that “serious matters are being raised, which affect and concern all cases where something similar has happened.”⁴⁸

Literature on the BIOT, much like the other case studies, is limited, with attention focused on defence in the Indian Ocean or the removal of the population after its creation. Both are valid lines of enquiry on the BIOT. The defence angle has a US orientation in its analysis which provides a foundation of scholarship on which to build a historical narrative. However, the literature generally fails to place the BIOT within the history of the Empire and decolonisation. Perhaps the most comprehensive work is Vine’s *Island of Shame: The Secret History of the US Military Base on Diego Garcia*, which not only situates the military base as part of US strategic interests but also includes extensive field-work and interviews with members of the Chagossian diaspora.⁴⁹ Additionally, Sand’s *United States and Britain in Diego Garcia* nimbly analyses the political and legal issues facing the BIOT.⁵⁰ Both provide sound analysis of the creation of the colony and subsequent military base but lack differing perspectives to rationalise the decisions taken. For instance, the lack of attention paid

⁴⁸ *Cypriot Mail*, 1 September 2018, <https://cyprus-mail.com/2018/09/01/mauritius-territorial-claim-against-uk-of-interest-to-cyprus/> [accessed 26 September 2018].

⁴⁹ David Vine, *Island of Shame: The Secret History of the US Military Base on Diego Garcia* (Princeton, 2011).

⁵⁰ Peter Sand, *United States and Britain in Diego Garcia: The Future of a Controversial Base* (New York, 2009).

to Britain's decision to withdraw from east of Suez means that population removal and US lease of the base are not properly contextualised.

An important scholarly development for the BIOT is understanding the colony through the UK-US defence partnership. During the Cold War, the geopolitical significance of the Indian Ocean, and its littoral countries, was enhanced in the context of British decolonisation.⁵¹ The region was important for world shipping and British decolonisation left a defence vacuum that needed to be filled. Alongside the UK-US 'special relationship', which is important in understanding the creation of the BIOT, it is unsurprising that defence and the strategic UK-US partnership has been an important analytical frame.⁵² US foreign policy provides background for the creation and retention of the BIOT in the context of global security, the fight against communism and Soviet encroachments into eastern Africa and the Middle East.⁵³ Diego Garcia enabled the United States to "influence major shifts in the global balance of power" given the east-west split and polarisation in the Cold War.⁵⁴ Nevertheless, the changes at the end of the Cold War means there has been less scholarship on Diego Garcia's significance. There has been acknowledgement of the base's role in the 2003 Iraq War and the War in Afghanistan, especially around detention and torture of detainees, yet

⁵¹ Yoichi Kibata, 'Towards a New Okinawa in the Indian Ocean: Diego Garcia and Anglo-American relations in the 1960s', in Antony Best (ed), *Britain's Retreat from East Asia, 1905-1980* (London, 2016).

⁵² Peter Harris, 'Decolonising the Special Relationship: Diego Garcia, the Chagossians, and Anglo-American Relations', *Review of International Studies*, 39, 3,(2013): 707-727.

⁵³ Andrew S. Erickson, Ladwig C. Walter III & Justin D. Mikolay, 'Diego Garcia and the United States' Emerging Indian Ocean Strategy', *Asian Security*, 6, 3 (2010): 214-237; Mark B. Salter and Can E. Mutlu, 'Securitisation and Diego Garcia', *Review of International Studies*, 39, 4 (2013): 815-834; Peter Harris, 'America's Other Guantánamo: British Foreign Policy and the US Base on Diego Garcia', *The Political Quarterly*, 86, 4 (2015): 507-514.

⁵⁴ M. Bezboruah, *US Strategy in the Indian Ocean: The International Response* (New York, 1977).

wider historical analysis cannot be undertaken due to archival rules on document access.⁵⁵

More recent scholarship has analysed the rights of Chagossians and their diaspora since expulsion from the islands in the 1970s, and provides valuable work on an under-analysed area of British imperial policy.⁵⁶ Understanding this through a lens of racism and poverty has been explicit, with Madeley's *Diego Garcia: A Contrast to the Falklands* providing a "blunt instrument bringing this home."⁵⁷ Ten years after the "abandonment" of the Chagossians, the UK went to war with Argentina to protect the residence rights of islanders in the South Atlantic whereas the former were classified as temporary migrants without rights of abode (even though Chagossians could prove resident family members going back generations).⁵⁸ Whether this is explicit racism is impossible to be clear on, but the contrasts highlighted in the scholarship emphasise the different perception of peoples within the Empire based upon race and class. Nevertheless, even though human rights is an important angle to examine alleged human rights abuses need to be understood within geopolitical and international security frameworks to understand why expulsion was pursued. Jeffrey's scholarship is important for the Chagossian diaspora in Mauritius, the Seychelles and the UK with her

⁵⁵ Under the George Bush Jr. administration, a new facility was built on the island named "Camp Justice." With an upgrade of submarine and wartime facilities, there was also acknowledgement of the island's role in the CIA's rendition programme. See, David Vine, *Mother Jones*, 22 August 2008, <https://www.motherjones.com/politics/2008/08/homesick-camp-justice/> [accessed 15 May 2019]; BBC News, 7 July 2004, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/3873291.stm [accessed 15 May 2019]; and Catherine Lutz (ed), *The Bases of Empire: The Global Struggle against U.S. Military Posts* (New York, 2009).

⁵⁶ See David Vine, 'Taking on Empires: Reparations, the Rights of Return, and the People of Diego Garcia', *A Critical Journal of Black Politics, Culture and Society*, 10, 4 (2008): 327-343.

⁵⁷ J. Madeley, *Diego Garcia: A Contrast to the Falklands* (London, 1985).

⁵⁸ Alison Mountz, 'Political Geography II: Islands and Archipelagos', *Progress in Human Geography*, 39, 5 (2015): 636-646.

analysis of Chagossian culture and legal cases brought before the UK government.⁵⁹ However, while this scholarship is useful for this thesis, such work tends to be sociological in nature and framed within the literature on migration and diaspora. Additional scholarship by David Snoxell, former High Commissioner to Mauritius, provides a unique perspective on Chagossian removal due to his close diplomatic relationship to the region.⁶⁰

Brunei has tended to be overlooked in the existing literature on decolonisation. Scholarship tends to relegate Brunei to the footnotes, and, much like Brunei in a geographical sense, its larger neighbours, Indonesia and Malaysia, dwarf it. This oversight neglects an important part of the Empire and does not fully account for the history of colonialism and decolonisation in Southeast Asia. Furthermore, the role of neo-colonialism in Brunei remains under-researched. While the protection of oil resources is acknowledged as a legitimate reason for Brunei's refusal to join the Federation of Malaysia in 1963, alternative considerations aside from natural resources can be proposed. There was actually a wider financial aspect to the Anglo-Bruneian relationship which grew out of oil revenues. The Sultan's considerable wealth and contribution to the UK Sterling Area meant that his government had leverage in negotiations and exploited this to make it harder for Britain to disengage. As it was personal wealth, the Sultan could easily withdraw the reserves very quickly, which

⁵⁹ See Laura Jeffrey, *Chagos Islanders in Mauritius and the UK: Forced Displacement and Onward Migration* (Manchester, 2011); Laura Jeffrey, 'Unusual Immigrants, or, Chagos Islanders and their Confrontations with British Citizenship', *Anthropology in Action*, 18, 2 (2011): 33-44; Laura Jeffrey & Rebecca Rotter, "'We no longer have faith and trust in anyone": Misadventures in Community Consultation on the Future of the Chagos Archipelago', *International Development Planning Review*, 38, 4 (2016): 383-404.

⁶⁰ David Snoxell, 'Expulsion from Chagos: Regaining Paradise', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 36, 1 (2008): 119-129.

troubled the British government as support of Sterling was needed in a volatile economic climate.

The subject of this thesis - analysing imperialism *after* decolonisation - makes Brunei a suitable case study as it was not fully decolonised until 1984, twenty-one years after it refused to join the Federation of Malaysia. Brunei, a small country with a population of 390,000 (at the time of writing), was once part of British-controlled Borneo alongside Labuan, Sarawak and North Borneo. As Phillips points out, in the whole 700-page Twentieth Century volume of *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, Brunei alongside the other Borneo Territories receive less attention than the tiny Caribbean territory of St. Kitts & Nevis.⁶¹ During the nineteenth-century Brunei was in the later stages of decline and between 1840 and 1890 the Brooke regime in Sarawak reduced the Sultanate to two small enclaves separated by Limbang.⁶² However, throughout the loss of territory, a strong sense of local identity and national pride remained in Brunei resulting in a bolstered Sultan under British protection which will be evident in Chapter 5.⁶³

The imperial history of Brunei is not one of simply a move from protectorate to independence. There was constitutional change over time, which saw a move from the dominance of the White Rajahs from the 1840s to British protection after 1888 to the end of the residency system in 1959 providing greater autonomy over internal affairs. Before the British protectorate, Brunei rose to prominence on Borneo, becoming a

⁶¹ Phillips, “‘Migrated Archives’”: 1002.

⁶² A.J. Stockwell, ‘Britain and Brunei, 1945-1963: Imperial Retreat and Royal Ascendancy’, *Modern Asian Studies*, 38, 4 (2004): 785-819.

⁶³ Lim Joo-Jock, ‘Brunei: Prospects for a “Protectorate”’, *Southeast Asian Affairs*, 3, 1 (1976): 149-164.

powerful state in the region. Yet, internal conflicts and Spanish intrusions reduced the Bruneian Empire and its influence by the nineteenth century. During the Napoleonic Wars, British occupation of Java brought Brunei into direct contact with the UK and this trade and influence would have a lasting effect on the Sultanate. In the 1830s, James Brooke, a British army officer, set sail for Borneo and landed in Kuching, then part of the Bruneian Empire, in 1838. The settlement was overrun by a rebellion against Bruneian rule and, on meeting the Sultan, Brooke agreed to help suppress the rebellion. In return, the Sultan awarded Brooke the governorship of Sarawak in 1841, a position held by his descendants until it was ceded to the British Crown in 1946. Brooke and his descendants expanded Sarawak, taking over Labuan and Limbang, leaving Brunei with the two enclaves which make up Brunei to this day.⁶⁴ Brunei became a British protectorate in 1888 in response to the Sultan's plea to stop Brooke-ruled Sarawak encroaching on Bruneian territory, even though in 1890 Charles Brooke, James's nephew, annexed Limbang which the British government took no action to stop. By the late-nineteenth century, the Brooke Raj offered the Sultan a pension and to absorb the remaining Bruneian territory into Sarawak, and, while this was not entertained, the British government understood that there had to be a resolution of Brunei's ambiguous status. In 1906, at the request of Brunei to protect itself against further Brooke encroachment, a British Resident was installed at the Sultan's court to advise on all administrative matters in the State. That British officer would come to wield much influence in the Sultanate. After the Japanese occupation during World War Two, there was an element of joint administration between Brunei and Sarawak, but Brunei

⁶⁴ R.E. Stubbs, 'Two Colonial Office Memoranda on the History of Brunei', *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 41, 2 (1968): 83-116.

retained its status as a separate British-protected state whose residency system did not end until 1959 when the British Resident was replaced by a High Commissioner.

The 1959 constitution ending the residency was meant to initiate the integration of the Bornean territories, but Brunei's refusal to join a federation meant it stayed a protected state after the formation of Malaysia in 1963. The 1959 constitution and treaty were amended in 1971, after discussions in the late-1960s, and this gave Brunei full autonomy over its internal affairs with Britain maintaining responsibility for external affairs. This treaty was further modified in 1979, looking forward to Brunei becoming a fully independent nation from 31 December 1983. This trajectory highlights the protracted road towards independence and might suggest a neo-colonialist role at the end of Empire. Brunei was, importantly, never a full colony of the British Empire – after 1906, the Resident only exercised his authority in the name of the Sultan, not the British monarchy or Parliament, in a system akin to the British-protected Malay States.⁶⁵ Brunei's history within the Empire runs concurrent to British influence within Southeast Asia and the colonisation of the Straits Settlements and the Borneo Territories. However, like the British-protected sultanates of the Malay Peninsula, Brunei was situated outside of these directly ruled colonies. Unlike the mainland Malay States, however, which were incorporated into the Malayan Union after 1946, the Federation of Malaya after 1948 (which became an independent state in 1957) and ultimately the Federation of Malaysia after 1963, Brunei remained a separate British protectorate until its independence in 1984. This 'independence' in 1984 was notwithstanding the retained Gurkha battalion which the Sultan still pays for, as well

⁶⁵ See Simon C. Smith, *British Relations with the Malay Rulers from Decentralization to Malayan Independence, 1930-57* (Kuala Lumpur, 1995), 43-44.

as SAS use of the jungles as training facilities.⁶⁶ Additionally, Brunei did not leave the Sterling Area until 2001 and economic links are still deep-rooted through Shell and ongoing financial connections.

There is a dearth of literature on Brunei and what scholarship there is tends to focus on banking and the economic links with the UK that expanded in the post-1963 period. Saunders' *History of Brunei* provides an account of Bruneian history but lacks analysis into the 1970s period owing to an absence of archival material, and it has a large focus on the pre-1959 era.⁶⁷ Oil and natural resources have been examined in the existing scholarship to explore the Bruneian role outside of Malaysia after 1963 as has the role of internal security after the 1962 anti-Malaysia insurrection and how this impacted on internal political development. The link between security and oil has resulted in scholarly exploration of why Brunei did not become independent until 1984.⁶⁸ However, the date of this scholarship (the early-1980s) means that archival access is limited, and so the UK-Brunei relationship is not explored after the mid-1970s. Harun's *Rebellion in Brunei* links economic and geopolitical strands together but is scant on primary sources and does not provide a thorough investigative account. Likewise, Poulgrain's *Genesis of Konfrontasi* contributes to this literature, but his conspiratorial account of oil and the 1962 insurrection has been critiqued for lack of analysis of

⁶⁶ British Forces Brunei (BFB) is an important garrison in the British military and alongside the SAS's use of Brunei, the Sultanate houses one of the three bases east of Suez (Diego Garcia and HMS Juffair [Bahrain] being the others). The military agreement is renewed every five years (the next renewal is due in early 2025). A prime purpose of the Brunei deployment is jungle training for all members of the British Army. 'The British Army in Brunei', <https://www.army.mod.uk/deployments/brunei/> [accessed 10 December 2019].

⁶⁷ Saunders, *A History of Brunei*

⁶⁸ See Hamzah Ahmad, 'Oil and Security in Brunei', *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, 2, 2 (1980): 182-191; B.A. Hamzah, 'Oil and Independence in Brunei: A Perspective', *Southeast Asian Affairs*, 2, 2 (1981): 93-99.

primary material.⁶⁹ Stockwell's scholarship has also explored how British officials were keen to offload this embarrassing commitment in the late-1950s and early-1960s through constitutional reform and incorporation into 'Greater Malaysia', yet Stockwell underscores how Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien III refused both with the Sultan subsequently hailed as the "architect of modern Brunei."⁷⁰ The aim of this thesis is to build on Stockwell's work and understand the often difficult British-Brunei relationship beyond 1963 by using official records into the 1980s.

Brunei's internal affairs have attracted attention from scholars, and this work focusses upon limited constitutional development. Abdullah and Bakar have both provided valuable contributions to the body of literature through their PhD theses, but they lack objectivity as both were funded by the Sultanate, and their scopes (looking at constitutional development through the 1960s and 1970s) make a detailed analysis hard to uncover.⁷¹ Bruneian scholarship has previously suffered from limited primary material as many later records were redacted in the UK National Archives owing to political sensitivity. This meant an inability to examine sources fully to build a comprehensive picture of the British-Brunei relationship. This thesis has used the Migrated Archives and is also timely as many withheld files have now been released (albeit with some redactions). This allows a more comprehensive and less restricted analysis of Brunei's eventual move to independence.

⁶⁹ Harun Abdul Majid, *Rebellion in Brunei: the 1962 Revolt, Imperialism, Confrontation and Oil* (London, 2007); Greg Poulgrain, *The Genesis of Konfrontasi Malaysia, Brunei and Indonesia, 1945-1965* (London, 1998); Nicholas J. White, *British Business in Post-Colonial Malaysia, 1957-70: 'neo-colonialism' or 'disengagement'?* (Abingdon, 2004), 33-34.

⁷⁰ Stockwell, 'Britain and Brunei, 1945-1963': 819.

⁷¹ Nani Suryani Haji Abu Bakar, 'Brunei's Political Development between 1966 and 1984: Challenges and Difficulties over its Security and Survival', PhD Thesis, University of Leeds, 2006; Muhammed Hadi Abdullah, 'Brunei's Political Development and the Formation of Malaysia: 1961-1967', PhD Thesis, University of Hull, 2002.

For all three case studies, the literature needs to bring these territories into the wider history of imperialism and decolonisation. A more holistic and nuanced approach as to why they remained colonies past the ‘wave’ of decolonisation is missing, and this thesis aims to situate these case studies within that wider history. The three theoretical considerations (the Internal, Imperial and International) will complement the literature on the BOTs and will be synthesised with recently declassified archival material. This means that these case studies can be understood as part of a Fifth British Empire allowing colonial retention to be understood as an important and overlooked dimension of imperial history.

Chapter Two: The 3 Is of Colonial Retention

Introduction

This chapter expands upon the theoretical framework and also demonstrates in more depth how the historiographical framework used to explain decolonisation can equally be applied to the retention of colonies beyond the ‘Wind of Change’ in the 1960s. Imperial historians have integrated internal, imperial and international arguments to explain decolonisation.¹ The purpose of this chapter is to show that these historiographical perspectives can be employed conversely to the norm to understand the retention of colonies. Thus, the factors that propelled decolonisation also drove retention as maintenance of control was also affected by colonial nationalism, strategy, and economics. Apparent in these considerations will be the similarities between retention and decolonisation, such as the role of the periphery and the lack of agency from London in forming colonial policy. Building on existing scholarship and expanding the analytical frames can explain why other peoples and territories stayed under British control past the surge of decolonisation in the 1960s.

There will be discussion of the existing literature on decolonisation to show how this will be applied in the thesis to assess how the Internal, Imperial and International factors can be employed to explain a continuing imperial role. The Internal examination of colonial nationalism will show that in certain cases identity politics resisted decolonisation and strengthened attachments to the metropole. This contrasts with the accepted notion that identity politics led to inevitable independence. The Imperial analysis of metropolitan considerations will be used in the case studies to show that

¹ E.g. Darwin, *End of the British Empire*; Hyam, *Britain's Declining Empire*; White, *Decolonisation*.

post-war governments were not wholly anti-colonial and that tangible benefits were perceived in the maintenance of colonial rule. International aspects demonstrate that the Cold War rendered the maintenance of colonial rule important and could be geopolitically advantageous. Each of these analytical frames will subsequently be presented in the case-study chapters providing a comprehensive framework to explain the reasons *why* colonies were retained, and how that route was taken.

The Internal Dimension

The Internal level of analysis relates specifically to developments within the colonies themselves, and the idea that nationality, identity, and local concerns could influence imperial policy back in the metropole. As Darwin posits, “the onslaught of colonial nationalism swept the board” in the post-World War Two era, providing an obvious explanation of decolonisation.² Nevertheless, the variety and diversity of the British Empire meant that this was a complex story, and nationalism developed in different ways in different locations. The following section will summarise the important literature in relation to these points outlining nationalism as a phenomenon and how cultural factors influenced the development of nationalism. The role of internal developments will be utilised in understanding peripheral events and their interactive relationship with the metropole. Specifically, how did the metropole react to events in the colonies and how did colonial politics and identity have a bearing on sustaining the imperial relationship?

Decolonisation and the Periphery

Existing works emphasise how nationalism informed the movement of colonies from an “old orientation of the imperial era, [to] their discovery of new interests.”³ Political developments in the periphery coalesced with a global zeitgeist of anti-colonialism and proved inexorable in creating anti-colonial sentiment. Anti-colonial nationalism is a useful tool to analyse decolonisation because the metropole apparently could no longer

² Darwin, *The End of the British Empire*, 85.

³ Adapting Robinson’s work, Darwin argues that the breakdown of collaboration in the periphery allowed mass nationalism to form. Without the support of local interests there was an exponential disintegration in the ability to govern. Ronald Robinson, ‘Non-European foundations of European Imperialism: sketch for a theory of collaboration’, in Roger Owen and Bob Sutcliffe (eds), *Studies in the Theory of Imperialism* (London, 1972), 117-42; John Darwin, *Britain and Decolonisation: The Retreat from Empire in the Post-War World* (London, 1988), 167-221.

sustain imperial rule. This dynamic and the interactions between the internal and imperial emphasises that the metropole could not ignore developments in the periphery. Appreciating the importance of nationalism in decolonisation permits understanding of how a lack of nationalism or a colonial identity which sympathised with metropolitan society and culture caused colonial retention.

This historiographical development contended that decisions within the periphery of Empire had far greater weight in understanding decolonisation and shifted attention away from the metropolitan 'Official Mind'.⁴ Throup argued that historians did not place enough focus on social interactions from below, with too much emphasis on politics and policies in the metropole. For Throup, there was no rationale and order to the end of empire. Rather, CO and FO policy was based on metropolitan reaction to peripheral affairs.⁵ As Hyam argues, ending empire was not a one-way process and the two elements of metropolitan policy and anti-colonial nationalism needed to come together in effective conjunction.⁶ Anti-colonial nationalism drove Westminster to decolonise with the metropole catching up to events in the colonies, removing agency from London.

Füredi asserts that "decolonisation cannot be understood as the product merely of imperial policy, or of anti-colonial struggles. Elementary logic dictates that every actor in a relationship has an important role in the drama."⁷ But the fact that the UK was

⁴ After Ronald Robinson, John Gallagher and Alice Denny (eds), *Africa and the Victorians: The Official Mind of Imperialism* (London, 1961), the 'Official Mind' of imperialism relates to the ideas and intentions of policy-makers at the imperial centre in London.

⁵ David Throup, *Economic and Social Origins of the Mau Mau* (Athens, 1987). See also David Throup, 'The Historiography of Decolonization', Seminar Paper, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, London, 31 January 1991.

⁶ Hyam, *Britain's Declining Empire*, 403.

⁷ Frank Füredi, *Colonial Wars and the Politics of Third World Nationalism* (London, 1994), 7.

willing to declare colonial emergencies in Malaya and Cyprus, and undertake wars confronting nationalism in African colonies as well, implies that the British were reluctant decolonisers. Britain only gave up its Empire when it was forced to do so because of radical anti-colonial nationalism. Ergo, decolonisation was caused by peripheral interactions and considerations.

However, it is not possible to look at the internal dimension so myopically, with influences outside of the periphery ultimately bearing on the decolonisation process. As Throup unwittingly stresses, decolonisation could not have happened without interventions from the metropole and this is evident in Kenya. The social and political foundations of Mau Mau stemmed from the ‘second colonial occupation’ after World War Two, where the loss of India shifted policy to the intensified development of Africa thus helping mass nationalism develop.⁸ Metropolitan intrusiveness unwittingly generated nationalist movements in Africa making the periphery an important driver in decolonisation.

These issues will be explored further within the case-study chapters, underscoring how the metropole was influenced by local realities. In contrast to growing anti-British sentiment in late-colonial Africa, however, the Falklands developed a stronger pro-British nationalism over time, which in turn created metropolitan inertia as successive governments struggled to respond. Alternatively, the lack of democratic advance in Brunei thwarted anti-colonial nationalism as the UK’s inability to intervene in internal affairs determined the Sultanate’s retention as a protected state after the creation of Malaysia in 1963. On Diego Garcia, an absence of internal politics, because the

⁸ Throup, *Mau Mau*.

population was removed, obviously meant that Britain had no local nationalism to react to - only in exile did the Chagossians develop a sense of national identity.

The existing scholarship also stresses the lack of uniformity and singular cause of nationalism. Porter and Stockwell argue that “it was not nationalism but *competing* nationalism” which had the strongest bearing on the trajectories of colonies.⁹ Understanding the competing internal issues also helps explain the retention of some colonies after the great wave of decolonisation in the 1960s. The peripheral role in decolonisation is evident in Southern Rhodesia with the UDI proclaimed in 1965 to protect Britishness and also white minority rule.¹⁰ Southern Rhodesian pro-colonial white nationalism developed in response to the decolonisation of Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia to prevent the black majority sharing power with white settlers.

Nevertheless, a shortcoming of nationalism as a cause for decolonisation is that it does not explain areas that remained attached to European metropolises, or at least colonies that did not develop strong anti-imperial nationalist movements. The case studies will highlight this, underscoring that colonial politics could work in reverse, challenging the orthodox ideas presented in previous scholarship. White’s work acknowledges the importance of nationalism and highlights changing colonial societies, leading on to decolonisation, but also how alternative nationalisms could maintain the status quo.¹¹

⁹A.N. Porter and A.J. Stockwell, *British Imperial Policy and Decolonisation, 1938-64: Vol. 2* (London, 1987), 50.

¹⁰ Donal Lowry ‘Rhodesia: 1890-1980: The Lost Dominion’ in Robert Bickers (ed), *Settlers and Expatriates: Britons over the Seas* (Oxford, 2010).

¹¹ White, *Decolonisation*, 82.

'We know who we are, because we know who we are not'

There is a synergy between nationalism and identity and this section will extrapolate these ideas. Nationalism and identity form the foundation of the nation-state through ethnicity and race and these concepts are also connected to self-determination as a fully recognised universal principle “that people should have the right to determine their own affairs.” In turn, “each nation should be sovereign over its own affairs.”¹²

But nationalism and the nation are not necessarily ‘givens’ or ‘natural’ phenomena; they are socially constructed. Anderson described a nation as “an imagined political community” and in a colonial situation the imagined nation was fostered paradoxically by the imperial power through the development of a common language, uniform infrastructure and common education and legal systems (among other factors).¹³ By the same token, the BOTs can imagine themselves as part of a ‘Greater Britain’ rather than as separate nations, strengthening attachments and undercutting cultural heterogeneity.¹⁴ Anderson’s “nation-ness” as a “cultural artefact” is important here as the push-and-pull between metropole and periphery creates a hybridity of identity.¹⁵ This notion that citizens can have a local identity alongside a wider British identity is influenced by geography and economics, as well as cultural practices such as use of the English language. As there is no incompatibility between a local and a British identity, citizens’ perspectives on the UK as a cultural touchstone does not prevent individuals developing, for instance, a local Falklander identity which is bound to a wider Greater Britain.

¹² Phillip Spencer & Howard Wollman, *Nations and Nationalism: A Reader* (London, 2002), 127.

¹³ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London, 1983), 7.

¹⁴ Harmer, Gaskarth & Gibb, ‘Distant Relations’: 511.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* 513.

In this, BOT identity has often been formed by dependence upon the metropole and those colonies that have an enduring economic and familial link tend to have a greater affinity to the UK. The BVIs emphasise economic dependence as a means of constructing their identity and St. Helena similarly has strong economic links that do much to bolster a sense of Britishness.¹⁶ Historically, British patriotism was used to bind these relationships, as the then Deputy-Governor of the BVI, explained about the 1970s, “we were all taught songs like ‘Rule Britannia’ and ‘Ye Mariners of England and Native Seas’. There was even one they taught us ‘Oh for roast beef of old England and oh for Old England roast beef’ and none of us had any idea what roast beef was!”¹⁷

Anderson’s work can be used to analyse this culture with the bonds tying overseas territories to the metropole fostering an imagined nation-state. However, the nation-state for the remnants of Empire was not the local colony but rather the metropole and London creating an affinity to citizens in the UK. The “deep, horizontal comradeship” and “fraternity” that Anderson posits was the link that endured.¹⁸ Through this, the ‘imagined community’ was not people in the same colony but people in the metropole. Harmer provides the example of a St. Helenian who stated that people “truly believe they are British through and through; they are as British as somebody living up in Liverpool or London or Southampton.”¹⁹ The use of language is indicative of this British identity, using ‘up’ as if part of the UK, and not as a separate territory in association with it.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Harmer, ‘Distant Relations’, 211.

¹⁸ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 6.

¹⁹ Harmer, *Distant Relations*, 183.

Billig has also explored identity construction, viewing nationalism as the “endemic condition” in nations with “a continual flagging, or reminding, of nationhood.”²⁰ Billig’s idea that the everyday creates kinship links (songs in the BVI, red post-boxes in Gibraltar, or the use of the pound sterling in the Falkland Islands) provides the “metonymic image...it is not the flag being waved with fervent passion, but the flag that hangs unnoticed on the public building” that reminds citizens of their place in the world and attachments to the UK.²¹

The issue of colonial identity cementing the imperial relationship is explored in Gibraltar by Constantine. By establishing that identity in Gibraltar is formed from the population ‘consuming Britishness’ through services such as health care and education supports Anderson’s and Billig’s scholarship.²² The consuming of Britishness can be seen in other colonial remnants and bolsters identity creating kith and kinship between peoples. What this introduces is the theme of the ‘Other’ formed in response to another culture. This emphasises external differences to formulate an identity as a counter to other identities and reinforces positions of dominance and subordination. It can be acknowledged that “expressions of identity may [therefore] be influenced by issues of marginality, peripherality, and otherness”.²³ The concept of the ‘Other’ here influences identity, but it is right to assume that these relationships are symbiotic and the identity in turn influences the feeling of ‘Otherness’. This is linked geographically as the social

²⁰ Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (New York, 1995), 8. Banal nationalism, for Billig, is the representation of the everyday through national cultural belongings. National identity is formulated by flags at sporting events, national anthems and currency. Identity manifestation through language such as the national news, the monikers given to symbols of government and the weather are all barometers. These phenomena are “banal” because they are subliminal and Billig’s work extends from Anderson’s *Imagined Communities*.

²¹ Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, 8.

²² Stephen Constantine, *Community and Identity: The Making of Modern Gibraltar since 1774* (Manchester, 2009), 406-429.

²³ Harmer, Gaskarth & Gibb, ‘Distant Relations’, 3.

and literal boundaries that make up a ‘nation’ are constructs which oppose the boundaries of the ‘Other’. Simply put, the tangible and impalpable are influenced by what a society is not.²⁴

Subjects take pride in the British state, the monarchy and its institutions – the system of government, the language and, what Constantine sees as the most important, democratic politics. These create historical myths, conflating the tangible to the abstract notions of identity.²⁵ The use of these institutions creates a stronger nationalism which is not fully embraced until the status quo is threatened by ‘the Other’. For example, the Franco government’s economic aggression galvanised Gibraltar’s population to be firmer in their loyalty to crown and country. Constantine compares Gibraltarian identity to Scotland and how (until recently at least) many Scottish people retained a strong ethnic identity within a broader national framework of the UK.²⁶ A better comparator for the overseas territories within the UK is probably Northern Ireland where a strong identity, coupled with the creation of myths, is found amongst Ulster protestants - hybridity is common, especially amongst hegemonic settler cultures (an obvious parallel being the Falklands).²⁷ Moreover, despite some loyalist affinities with

²⁴ Linda Colley, ‘Britishness and Otherness: An Argument’, *Journal of British Studies*, 31, 4 (1992): 311. First introduced in the eighteenth century through philosophical ideas of ‘The Self’, the concept of ‘The Other’ found relevance in imperial history through post-colonial critical literary and cultural studies, specifically in Edward Said’s classic text, *Orientalism* (London, 1978).

²⁵ Constantine, *Community and Identity*, 407.

²⁶ Stephen Constantine, ‘Monarchy and Constructing Identity in “British” Gibraltar, c.1800 to Present’, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 34, 1 (2006): 23-44. More recently, however, Bryan Glass presents a slightly different take in his analysis of Scotland within the British Empire, concluding that the Scottish bourgeoisie maintained a high-level of interest in the Empire and the union throughout decolonisation. Empire and Britain went “hand-in-hand” and the break-up of the former impacted the latter, partly explaining the rise in Scottish nationalism from the 1970s (after not during the ‘Wind of Change’). *The Scottish Nation at Empire’s End* (Basingstoke, 2014), 142-160. This contrasts with Tom Devine who argued that the increasing estrangement between ‘Scottishness’ and ‘Britishness’ resulted more from the decline of the popular welfare state in the 1980s rather than the end of empire. ‘The Break-up of Britain? Scotland and the End of Empire’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 16 (2006): 163-180.

²⁷ F.C. McGrath, ‘Settler Nationalism: Ulster Unionism and Postcolonial Theory’, *Irish Studies Review*, 20, 4 (2012): 463-485.

Rhodesia's separatist settlers, the prospect of decolonisation through absorption into Eire during the 1950s and 1960s tended to harden unionist sentiment.²⁸ As Constantine acknowledges, if a nation is imagined so too is Britishness and the allegiance to crown and country that coexist with that.

The exploitation of monarchy and other national symbols are further representations of Billig's banal nationalism. The idea that identity is latent through the everyday is relevant to decolonisation. The use of 'we' and 'us' in conversation links back to Anderson's work that 'we' are the entire product and have a place in one society by using the everyday. Bank notes are used by a population every day, bearing nationalist symbols which are highly symbolic, and national days are widespread and use the cohesion of a population to celebrate the past. These form in the unconscious mind and are so familiar that they are consumed routinely with the identity rooted deeply in structures of race and language creating powerful identities. These emotional signs are akin to 'club membership' and "the National Flag, the National Anthem and the National Emblem are the three symbols through which an independent country proclaims its identity and sovereignty, and as such, they command instantaneous respect and loyalty."²⁹ Many retained colonies still use these symbols - the Union Flag, 'God Save the Queen' - as their seal that they belong to a British Empire and this common affinity can explain how populations (of British descent particularly as in the Falklands), seemingly isolated from the pressures of globalisation, remain so attached to the inventing country.

²⁸ Donal Lowry, 'Ulster Resistance and Loyalist Rebellion in the Empire' in Keith Jeffrey (ed), *An Irish Empire? Aspects of Ireland and the British Empire* (Manchester 1996), 191-215; Phillip Ollerenshaw, 'Northern Ireland and the British Empire-Commonwealth, 1923-61', *Irish Historical Studies*, 36, 142 (2008): 242 .

²⁹ Eric Hobsbawm, 'Introduction' in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge, 1983), 11.

The Empire was “built on waves of migration of British people” and the export of Britishness to the settler colonies at least.³⁰ This movement of peoples “engendered new, more transnational ways of thinking”, allowing territories such as the Falklands to routinely use British symbolism as a barometer of identity.³¹ This transnationalism can be further broken down into three areas: the economic (through remittance networks), the emotional (kinship), and the cultural (through languages and flags). This trifecta of identity enabled a constructed ‘British World’ to form, which rejected full independence and self-determined to remain (at least partially) attached to the UK using a local patriotism. But this culture of attachment is not just a phenomenon encountered in predominantly ‘White’ colonies. Even in BOTs with non-White populations UN and other pressures to decolonise have been resisted. As a 1980s Montserratian poem declared:

Recently there have been talks of independence
But to the majority this is utter nonsense
Be careful on whom you place your dependence
For God’s sake, banish the thought of independence.³²

By appreciating how symbols reaffirmed a sense of British identity and also how these deep attachments to the metropole were influenced by the presence of an ‘Other’, colonial retention rather than decolonisation can be understood for the case studies. Or, whether a lack of such facets begat other factors that dictated retention instead. Banal nationalism and kinship with the UK plus the presence of an Argentinian ‘Other’ is important in examining the Falklands. For Diego Garcia, the removal of the population meant that nationalism and identity developed outside the colony, which contrasts with

³⁰ P.J. Marshall, *The Cambridge Illustrated History of the British Empire* (Cambridge, 2001), 254.

³¹ Kent Fedorowich and Andrew Thompson, *Empire, Migration, and Identity in the British World* (Manchester, 2015), 6.

³² Tony Thorndike, ‘The Future of the Caribbean Dependencies’, *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*, 31, 3 (1989): 117.

other retained territories. In Brunei, political developments hindered the formation of nationalism, but there was ‘Othering’ in response to Malaysia and Indonesia. This encouraged Brunei to continue its protective agreement with Britain – demonstrating that ‘kith and kinship’ and ‘Whiteness’ were not the sole determinants of local affinities with and attachments to Britain.

The Imperial Dimension

The Imperial factors in decolonisation focus upon decisions made in the metropole. While it is accepted that there was an on-going imperial detachment from the mid-1950s onwards, there remained considerable domestic political concerns with the Empire. Political attitudes post-1945 showed a commitment to the Empire with a remarkable bi-partisanship in government, but by the 1960s this political situation had changed. The first Conservative government application to the EEC in 1961 allowed the Labour Party to be the party of the Commonwealth and showed a Conservative Party pivoting towards Europe. The Conservatives (once the party of Empire), paradoxically grasped the realities of colonial rule – it was a burden too big for the Exchequer to bear and the move to Europe appeared sensible in the contemporary climate.³³

As well as domestic political considerations, economic factors also played a role in the end of Empire. The late-1960s and early-1970s was a fiscally challenging time for the British. The devaluation of Sterling in 1967 and a rising defence bill sounded the death knell of British financial imperialism. The additional announcement of military withdrawal east of Suez the following year revealed the late-1960s as a period when domestic considerations were a significant influence on British power and rule. The 1956 Suez Crisis is viewed as a watershed moment in twentieth-century British history, yet the fiscal reassessment and the retreat east of Suez in 1971 was probably psychologically a harder reality to take on board.³⁴

³³ See Holland, *European Decolonization*, 191-210 which argues that accelerated decolonisation resulted from the ‘cost-benefit analysis’ undertaken in the late-1950s, which took into account economic, strategic and geopolitical concerns.

But disposing of overseas commitments entirely was not always easy for London, even if it was sensible in terms of saving money given concerns over the economic viability of smaller territories as independent nation states. Being smaller reduced their access to resources and raised questions over “[the small state or colony’s] functional relationship with the level of resources.”³⁵ As far back as 1943, Colonial Secretary, Oliver Stanley, declared “if self-government is to be successful and enduring, it must rest upon firm economic and social infra-structure.”³⁶ Concerns about economic viability played a considerable role in metropolitan attitudes towards decolonisation and provided the foundation for the continuation of empire because there was little way to decolonise small territories without federating them into larger areas (which as Chapter 5 shows failed in the case of Brunei).

The Imperial analysis will examine the agency of the UK government in driving the decolonisation process and deciding upon which territories became nation states and which remained part of the Empire. By allowing colonies to be independent when they wished (based on the right to self-determination) meant the UK removed its agency and allowed colonies to be instrumental over their own affairs. Even if colonies were not deemed attractive by state agents, the metropole still influenced which colonies remained attached to the UK.

³⁴ Saki Dockrill, *Britain’s Retreat from East of Suez: The Choice between Europe and the World* (Basingstoke, 2002); P.L. Pham, *Ending East of Suez* (Oxford, 2010). On the relative insignificance of the Suez Crisis see Tore T. Peterson, ‘Post-Suez Consequences: Anglo-American Relations in the Middle East from Eisenhower to Nixon’ in Simon C. Smith (ed), *Reassessing Suez 1956: New Perspectives on the Crisis and Its Aftermath* (Aldershot, 2008), 215-227; A.J. Stockwell, ‘Suez 1956 and the Moral Disarmament of the British Empire’ in Smith, *Reassessing Suez*, 227-239.

³⁵ G.C. Abbott, ‘Size, Viability, Nationalism, and Politico-Economic Development’, *International Journal*, 5, 1 (1970): 59.

³⁶ Cited in G.C. Abbott, ‘The Associated States and Independence’, *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*, 23, 1 (1981): 71.

Disengagement and UK Politics

This analysis of factors driving decolonisation in the metropole will examine post-World War Two imperial policy and disengagement. This considers that the key dynamic in decolonisation was imperial policies and politics which, after a rejuvenation of Empire, caused a gradual shift away from the Empire from the late-1950s and into the 1960s. These metropolitan reassessments took the form of economic disengagement with a shift in British economic priorities from its Empire towards Western industrial countries. This also occurred alongside strategic shifts, which is apparent through changing defence roles, especially after the Suez Crisis in 1956.

Preceding disengagement, however, there was an imperial revival after World War Two. The adverse balance of payments situation resulting from the war meant that colonies needed to become commodity producers for metropolitan benefit, with Stafford Cripps, Minister for Economic Affairs, identifying the need to “change our outlook and our habits of colonial development.”³⁷ This revival of Empire was evident in Southeast Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East, and marked a commitment to the Empire which was apparent through expansion of the staffing strength of the CO, particularly its economic section.³⁸ There was also a strategic aspect to the revitalisation of the Empire. Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin, believed in the idea that Britain and its Empire could be a ‘third force’ (alongside the US and USSR) and provide a strategic space between the two superpowers.³⁹ The fulcrum of this ‘third force’ would be the

³⁷ Speech by Sir Stafford Cripps to the Africa Governor’s Conference, 12 November 1947. Reproduced in. White, *Decolonisation*, 148.

³⁸ Many “giant corporate bodies” were established at this time to oversee colonial production such as the Overseas Food Corporation and the Colonial Development Corporation. K.O. Morgan, ‘Imperialists at Bay: British Labour and Decolonization’, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 27, 2 (1999): 237.

³⁹ See Anne Deighton, ‘Entente Neo-Coloniale? Ernest Bevin and the Proposals for an Anglo-French Third World Power, 1945-1949’, *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, 17, 4 (2006): 835-852.

Middle East and Africa, with British colonies and client states providing the resources for an international strategy to stop subservience to the US.

Nevertheless, Labour's defeat in 1951 was the beginning of the end of this "short lived" recommitment to Empire.⁴⁰ This did not write off the Empire during the 1950s, however, and as Heinlein states, "it never occurred to policy-makers to consider complete withdrawal from any specific area."⁴¹ Indeed, Churchill and his government carried on many of Labour's assurances in using the Empire to support Sterling and economic recovery.⁴² This was indicative in Winston Churchill's commitment to the Malayan Emergency inherited from Labour where Oliver Lyttleton, Colonial Secretary, injected firmness into the colonial regime.⁴³ Churchill also envisaged a reinvigorated Parliament Square in 1954 at the centre of the British Empire, coupled with a further expansion and reorganisation of the CO in the 1950s. These points highlight an imperial policy not on the wane but just "getting into its stride."⁴⁴

However, colonial policy was not all-consuming and other domestic and foreign affairs took precedence in the era. Mawby acknowledges this: "[empire] was cast to the margins ... a Conservative Party journal (published in the early twenty-first century as a retrospective look at the twentieth century), *The Conservative Century*, included nothing of imperial policy."⁴⁵ The downgrading of imperial policy was already evident

⁴⁰ White, *Decolonisation*, 33.

⁴¹ Frank Heinlein, *British Government Policy and Decolonisation, 1945-1963: Scrutinising the Official Mind* (Abingdon, 2000), 87.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 89.

⁴³ A.J. Stockwell, 'British Imperial Policy and Decolonization in Malaya, 1942-1952', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 13, 1 (1984): 70.

⁴⁴ Stephen Ashton, 'Keeping Change within Bounds: A Whitehall Reassessment' in Lynn (ed) *The British Empire in the 1950s*, 35.

⁴⁵ Spencer Mawby, *The Transformation & Decline of the British Empire: Decolonisation After the First World War* (London, 2015), 45.

in Churchill's second government (1951-55) with Alan Lennox-Boyd, Colonial Secretary after 1954, being told by fellow Conservative MPs not to take public statements in the Commons relating to colonial policy too seriously. MPs were appealing to voters on domestic matters and did not want to bring colonial issues too far into the political arena.⁴⁶ Rather than imperial issues consuming political rhetoric, much was done to distract and lessen the domestic impact of colonial events. The focus on domestic policy was evident in the popular welfare state, which was accepted by both Labour and Conservative parties, and distracted from imperial decline. Also, as decolonisation occurred during an economically-prosperous period, and with the welfare state reinforcing the 'never-had-it-so-good' era, this resulted in colonial issues being less important in London.⁴⁷ As A.P. Thornton mused, "as the welfare state lived, so the empire died."⁴⁸

Moreover, Britain's imperial ambitions in the 1950s were apparently ruptured in 1956. The Suez Crisis, where Gamal Abdel Nasser nationalised the Suez Canal removing it from British and French administration, has been viewed a significant turning point. Lapping claims it was "the single most significant initiative by the main imperial powers that speeded up the end of Empire process."⁴⁹ Since the Canal's construction in 1869, it formed a cornerstone of the Empire and British defence, and Egyptian nationalisation triggered a reaction in London (in partnership with Paris and Tel Aviv) to rectify the loss with force. This was a large miscalculation. The invasion led to a furious reaction from Washington and keenly reminded the British that they "lacked

⁴⁶ Hyam, *Britain's Declining Empire*, 403.

⁴⁷ Fifties Britain, <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/fifties-britain/> [accessed 25 October 2019].

⁴⁸ A.P. Thornton, *The Imperial Idea and its Enemies*, cited in Darwin, *The End of the British Empire*, 14.

⁴⁹ Brian Lapping, 'Did Suez Hasten the End of Empire?', *Contemporary Record*, 1, 2 (1987): 33.

the resources of financial muscle, military power and geopolitical leverage” and ended the idea of a tripartite world system.⁵⁰ The collapse of Sterling following the invasion also prompted President Eisenhower to refuse financial help unless the British retreated, further underscoring the humiliation.⁵¹ In response, the Conservative Party moved to replace the Prime Minister with one which was more closely aligned to Washington. This brought Harold Macmillan to the premiership in 1957, who was confronted with the task of exploring new techniques for exercising Britain’s middle-power capacities in a world which was radically different from when the Conservative Party came back to power in 1951.⁵²

After 1957, British policies shifted to ‘disengagement’ from imperial rule. This movement away from the colonial empire marked Holland’s third main stage in the ‘imperial strategies’ at the end of Empire.⁵³ Following on from the post-war crisis and the “acute dependency” on the United States, and then the commodity boom during the Korean War, Holland identified that the UK was reoriented towards the Anglo-American Alliance after Suez. The changing metropole responded to the shifting economic and strategic considerations in London – colonialism was supposedly dysfunctional to the necessities of Britain.⁵⁴

Economic reorientation arose because “[the second colonial occupation] had not conjured up the much hoped for magical, ‘multiplier effect’ for the metropolitan

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Darwin, *Unfinished Empire*, 363.

⁵² Holland, *European Decolonization*, 200.

⁵³ R. F. Holland in ‘The Imperial Factor in British Strategies from Attlee to Macmillan, 1945-1963’, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 12, 2 (1984): 165-186.

⁵⁴ Ibid. 204.

economy.”⁵⁵ The changing patterns in British trade reduced the amount of investment being placed into the colonial economy and this was evident in the City of London where colonial development was not funded due to the poor prospects of investments in underdeveloped areas.⁵⁶ This economic shift is stressed by Cain & Hopkins, who identified a move in trade from the colonial economy to the dynamic centres of Western Europe, North America and Japan.⁵⁷ This shift, compounded by the decline of Sterling as an international currency, prompted ‘gentlemanly capitalists’ in the City to move investments away from the Commonwealth and the Empire.⁵⁸ The reduction in trade within the imperial economy meant that trade became concentrated on the dollar area to balance trade and, as Schenk identified, the movement in the City from Sterling to the Eurodollar (the offshore US Dollar) was indicative of this trend.⁵⁹

On this line of argument, the economic pivot influenced metropolitan politics, and this is most evident when Macmillan became Prime Minister in 1957 (after being Chancellor of the Exchequer from 1955, thus aware of the ‘drain’ colonies had on the Exchequer) when he called for a ‘profit-and-loss’ account for each colonial possession. The outcome of this review revealed that decolonisation could occur with little impact on British financial interests. As a result, Hopkins argues, Macmillan’s comprehensive election victory in 1959 allowed the Empire to unravel “without remission.”⁶⁰ The economic reality seemingly pushed the British government to make its first application

⁵⁵ White, *Decolonisation*, 34.

⁵⁶ See D.J. Morgan, *The Official History of Colonial Development, Volume 3: A Reassessment of British Aid Policy, 1951-1965* (London, 1980), 157-207.

⁵⁷ P.J. Cain and A.G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism, 1688-2000* (Abingdon, 2001), 672.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 676.

⁵⁹ Catherine Schenk, *The Decline of Sterling: Managing the Retreat of an International Currency, 1945-1992* (Cambridge, 2010), 207.

⁶⁰ A.G. Hopkins, ‘Macmillan’s Audit of Empire, 1957’ in Peter Clarke and Clive Trebilcock (eds), *Understanding Decline: Perceptions and Realities of British Economic Performance* (Cambridge, 1997).

to the EEC in 1961 because of the burgeoning Western European market.⁶¹ The political shift, where territories were pushed to independence as Britain belatedly asked for entry into the EEC, was part of a broader reappraisal in national policy.⁶² While the 1961 application was not successful (Charles de Gaulle, President of France, vetoed the British application in 1963), the 1967 application and final entry in 1973 appeared to confirm that British thinking had irreversibly shifted away from Empire.

Metropolitan policies in the 1950s also geo-strategically disengaged from empire. The same year as the economic assessment, Macmillan called for a shift in resources from conventional armed forces to nuclear weaponry. The British were aware that they were far behind the US and USSR in nuclear development and Macmillan hoped to rectify this (which had clear implications for British overseas military commitments).⁶³ This move to atomic capability indicated a metropolitan shift in defence, away from the conventional Empire to a more dynamic military deterrent (and this culminated in the Nassau agreement in 1962, which provided US nuclear weapons for British Polaris submarines). In 1958, a major report on 'The position of the United Kingdom in the World' was produced which gloomily forecasted that Britain's relative power would decline, and the Transatlantic partnership should be the core of foreign policy.⁶⁴ These strategic shifts would appear to highlight a remarkable transformation of metropolitan policies after the Suez Crisis with Macmillan presiding over a profound change in geopolitical focus only a few years after Churchill's re-commitment to the Empire.

⁶¹ Catherine Schenk, 'Decolonization and European Economic Integration: The Free Trade Area Negotiations, 1956-58', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 24, 3 (1996): 444-463.

⁶² Holland, *European Decolonization*, 209.

⁶³ D. Goldsworthy (ed), *The Conservative Government and the End of Empire, 1951-1957* (London, 1994) cited in White, *Decolonisation*, 40.

⁶⁴ Hyam, *Britain's Declining Empire*, 408.

Disengagement arguably reached its zenith in 1960 with the ‘Wind of Change’ speech, which is now synonymous with post-war decolonisation. Macmillan’s tour of Africa in 1960 recognised that Africa’s decolonisation was inevitable; while the speech was wrapped up in the politics of nationalism and the Cold War, underlying this were significant changes in metropolitan policies.⁶⁵ In the early-1960s there was an upsurge in independence, notably in east and central Africa where previously white settlers and big business interests allied to the Tory Party – such was the seemingly dramatic shift in British priorities from the 1980s and beyond which Macmillan had engineered.

However, disengagement did not end in 1960, and throughout the 1960s there was evidence of further retractions and shifting perspectives in Britain’s world role. Harold Wilson’s first term as Prime Minister (1964-70) witnessed the decision to withdraw troops east of the Suez Canal, which was formally announced in January 1968 (following on from a painful devaluation of Sterling by 14.3 per cent in November 1967). As Dockrill argues, this was disengagement from one of the cornerstones of British defence policy, alongside the defence of Western Europe and the nuclear deterrent, and so the withdrawal was a sea-change.⁶⁶ This was inevitable as economic problems were mounting throughout the 1960s and Britain was spending seven per cent of its annual GDP to maintain its 400,000 personnel across the globe (see Figure 1).⁶⁷ While troops had already been withdrawn from Aden and assurances made to Gulf rulers that military withdrawal would not befall those protectorates, the devaluation proved decisive. This resulted in a shift in British power, away from the Empire and

⁶⁵ See Stephen Howe, ‘Crosswinds and Countercurrents: Macmillan’s Africa in the Long View of African Decolonization’ in L.J. Butler and Sarah Stockwell (eds), *The Wind of Change: Harold Macmillan and British Decolonization* (London, 2013), 252-266.

⁶⁶ Saki Dockrill, ‘Britain’s Power and Influence: Dealing with Three Roles and the Wilson Government’s Defence Debate’, *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, 11, 1 (2000): 212.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

focusing on Europeanisation and US-UK relations. Defence Secretary Denis Healey announced that troops would be withdrawn in 1971 from Southeast Asia, the Persian Gulf, and the Maldives to save on the “ever growing and stretched military budget.”⁶⁸ This abrupt reassessment of Britain’s place in the world suggested that after decolonisation these defence links were no longer desirable. **However, the unsustainability of a military presence was not necessarily an absolute and, as Simon Smith recognises, there remained strong links between the UK and the Gulf States into the 1980s.**⁶⁹

Edward Heath’s unexpected victory in the 1970 general election brought a new perspective on Britain’s world role, and Heath tried to temper the withdrawal east of Suez. However, the economic practicality to alter course meant it was not feasible to recommit and the costs facing the British government still increased past the east of Suez announcement and implementation. Heath also finally brought the UK into the EEC in 1973, but this was still on the basis of a defence outlook that went beyond Europe. This was evident in Heath’s negotiation of the Five Powers Defence Agreement (FPDA) in 1971 with New Zealand, Australia, Malaysia and Singapore as a way to underwrite defence in Southeast Asia (though with a massively reduced physical presence on the part of the UK).⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Pham, *Ending East of Suez*, 5.

⁶⁹ See Smith, *Britain and the Arab Gulf after Empire*, 168-174.

⁷⁰ Andrea Benvenuti, ‘The Heath Government and British Defence Policy in Southeast Asia at the End of Empire (1970-71)’, *Twentieth Century British History*, 20, 1 (2009): 55-73. The Five Power Defence Agreements were signed in 1971 between the UK, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia and Singapore. Following the termination of the Anglo-Malayan Defence Agreement as part of the withdrawal east of Suez, the powers consulted each other in case of attack, but also shared defence co-operation and undertook land and naval exercises together. As part of the Agreements, the UK retained small number of personnel in Malaysia and Singapore. See, Karl Hack, *Defence and Decolonisation in Southeast Asia: Britain, Malaya and Singapore, 1941-1968* (Richmond, 2001), 36-7.

How then can politics be mapped onto this framework of imperial policy from 1945? Party affiliations and policies towards the Empire were never monolithic, nor were they bi-partisan throughout the period. Colonial attitudes and policy oscillated within Westminster, as much as between governments and political parties. The political scene during decolonisation was therefore eclectic with little coherency when analysing metropolitan reactions.

The 'traditional' party of the Empire, the Conservatives, were nonetheless pragmatic and flexible on imperial matters. This was shown earlier with the 1950s commitment to Britain's colonies as a vehicle to overcome problems of Sterling. It was the Conservative blunder of Suez that forced a reassessment of Britain's imperial role, and this produced a retreat from an imperial role in light of economic and strategic shifts. The era 1951-64 was one of Conservative Party rule, and it was these successive governments that had to make the principal decisions in relation to the Empire. However, schisms were evident. The appointment of a liberal-leaning Iain Macleod as Secretary of State for the Colonies in 1959 upset many Conservative Party MPs, especially as he privately wished to be the last Colonial Secretary.⁷¹ His position on Eastern Africa was radical, and his announcement in 1960 of Tanganyikan independence in 1962 or 1963 shocked many in government as it was out-of-step with what the government had announced.⁷² Additionally, the right-leaning wing of the Conservative Party reacted with shock at Macmillan's Wind of Change speech. The formation of the 1961 Monday Club (made up of more right-wing members) wanted to

⁷¹ Morgan, 'Imperialists at Bay: British Labour and Decolonization', 247.

⁷² Peter Docking, "'The Wind has been Gathering Force": Iain Macleod and his Policy Change on Tanganyika', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 46, 2 (2018): 367.

approach imperial policy with a more gradual departure.⁷³ The factionalised Conservative Party demonstrated the crisis of identity surrounding British imperial and geopolitical decline and the reaction to these events had effects into the 1970s and 1980s. Thatcher's exploitation of the Falklands Conflict in 1982 discussed in the next chapter as an opportunity to reverse the Conservative Party's role in imperial decline was a notable example

In contrast, the Labour Party, which had to react to colonial policy in opposition from 1951 to 1964, has been perceived as opposed to imperialism. Yet, this simple argument ignores that there was no linear 'left' narrative when discussing colonial policy. Attlee, a pro-imperial Labour Prime Minister, oversaw the decolonisation of India, Burma and Palestine, but his 'new imperialism' was a move towards strengthening the Empire. The founding of the civil rights advocacy group, the Movement for Colonial Freedom (MCF) in 1954 highlighted that, in reality, the Labour Party was factionalised. However, the influence the MCF had on official Labour Party policy, especially when considering that the majority of decolonisation occurred when the Conservative Party was in power, is debateable.⁷⁴ Even though the MCF was never fully endorsed by the Labour Party, many of its MPs joined and it enjoyed trade union support. This indicates that rather than a cohesive left, there was a discordant Labour Party that held no coherent party line between its radical wing and more centrist members.⁷⁵ This view is supported by Frank, Horner & Stewart whose work on the Labour Party and imperialism highlights how the Party was formed of pro-imperial and anti-imperial

⁷³ Kevin Hickson, *Britain's Conservative Right since 1945: Traditional Toryism in a Cold Climate* (Gewerbestrasse, 2020), 35.

⁷⁴ Stephen Howe, *Anticolonialism in British Politics*.

⁷⁵ P.S. Gupta, *Imperialism and the British Labour Movement* (London, 1975); Rhiannon Vickers, *The Labour Party and the World, Volume 2: Labour's Foreign Policy since 1951* (Manchester, 2011).

MPs, thus making a coherent colonial policy difficult to achieve.⁷⁶ Vickers has recently built on these ideas and argues that the international issues caused divisions within the Labour Party and this led to a lack of coherency in overseas policy.⁷⁷ Factionalism, however, was “an exception rather than a rule” and liberalism prevailed in approaches to colonial policy.⁷⁸ Howe identifies the left as not hopelessly fractured with “anti-colonialism perhaps the only issue on which [the left] appeared to secure unequivocal victories”.⁷⁹

Nevertheless, issues of factionalism led the Labour Party to reject entry into the EEC in 1961 and instead promote Commonwealth ties. The 1967 application to the EEC, under a Labour government, was also factionalised with many left-wing MPs against membership and concerned at Britain losing its paternal role as *primus inter pares* in the Commonwealth which the Labour Party idealised as a cornerstone of its ethical overseas policy. The 1967 EEC application split the Labour Party and despite a three-line whip, 36 MPs voted against entry, with 51 abstaining.⁸⁰

Nor was the Conservative Party of the 1960s and 1970s entirely pro-European - as indeed the discussion above of Heath’s hankering after an ongoing east of Suez role reveals. The Conservative Party’s move towards Europe is indeed paradoxical, when looked at retrospectively, as it evolved over time to become the party that was opposed to European integration. The Labour Party, on the other hand, supported the idea of a

⁷⁶ Billy Frank, Craig Horner and David Stewart, ‘Introduction’ in Billy Frank, Craig Horner and David Stewart (eds), *The British Labour Movement and Imperialism* (Newcastle, 2010), 1-9.

⁷⁷ Vickers, *Labour Party and the World*, 219.

⁷⁸ Richard Whiting, ‘The Empire and British Politics’ in A. Thompson (ed), *Britain’s Experience of Empire in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford, 2012), 161-210. Cited in Spencer Mawby, *The Transformation and Decline of the British Empire*, 50.

⁷⁹ Stephen Howe, *Anti-colonialism in British Politics*.

⁸⁰ See Vickers, *Labour Party and the World*, 83.

common market and became ‘pro-European’ by the early twenty-first century. This was manifest in the 2016 EU Referendum where many members of the Conservative Party looked to a UK independent from the EU, dreaming of a revitalized Commonwealth as a trade surrogate for Europe.⁸¹ This points to the fact that these large issues concerning Britain’s place in the world were never clear cut on either side of the aisle and complexities can be found in party-political attitudes towards empire and decolonisation.

This idealisation of the Commonwealth by both Labour and Tory MPs and the fact that certain overseas territories did not decolonise, or, like Brunei, did so belatedly after the main wave of decolonisation in the late-1950s and early-1960s suggests that disengagement was not as absolute as Holland or Cain & Hopkins suggest. The numerous post-imperial interventions after the east of Suez announcement, ranging from 300 British troops sent to Anguilla in 1969 to intervention in the Sierra Leone civil war in 2000-1, and more substantial conflicts such as the invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003, sustained Britain’s ‘imperial’ role. This is notwithstanding humanitarian deployments, anti-drug smuggling and regular training exercises across the globe, which all indicate a country that has not shirked from a world-role but rather re-orientated the relationship highlighting that colonial relationships remained important to Britain for geostrategic and psychological reasons.⁸² Decolonisation was more nuanced than a simple British rejection of empire for a European and/or Atlantic role and a neat pattern of imperial policy cannot apply broadly across all territories.

⁸¹ See Benjamin Grob-Fitzgibbon, *Continental Drift: Britain and Europe from the End of Empire to the Rise of Euroscepticism* (Cambridge, 2016).

⁸² Ashley Jackson, ‘Imperial Defence in the Post-Imperial Era’ in Greg Kennedy (ed), *Imperial Defence: The Old World Order, 1856-1956* (London, 2008), 303-332.

Neo-Colonialism

The dream of maintaining influence and a world role through the Commonwealth might indeed suggest that disengagement did not occur in the 1950s and 1960s. Rather than the metropole driving decolonisation through economic and military disengagement there remained large-scale British investments in the former Empire with imperialism continuing in a different guise. This concept, associated with Marxist theorists, is known as neo-colonialism, using the propertied and political classes in the colonies as a means of continuing imperialism in an informal manner. Maintaining investments and markets was undertaken through decolonisation by transferring power to accommodating nationalists and thus keeping influence in independent states.

Scholarship of neo-colonialism acknowledges that increasing globalism meant formal political control was less important, and the continuation of foreign investment in the Global South highlighted that imperialism survived decolonisation. The notion that ex-colonies and the Global South were dependent on the metropole even after the period of imperialism is realised in the economic structures of former colonies after political decolonisation. They were intertwined, meaning political independence and the perpetuation of economic dependence were well suited in the capitalist age.⁸³ Kenya was an example where neo-colonial structured policies worked. The plantation owners and commercial sectors outmanoeuvred white settlers to keep the open economy intact. The close links with the Conservative Party and financial interests meant that decolonisation was managed to preserve these economic links. On independence, Jomo

⁸³ H. Magdoff, 'Imperialism without Colonies' in Owen and Sutcliffe (eds) *Studies in the Theory of Imperialism* (London, 1973), 167.

Kenyatta, the first Prime Minister of Kenya, assured expatriate businessmen that despite a socialist economy their investments were secure.⁸⁴

However, the main drawback of dependency theory in the context of this thesis is that neo-colonialism cannot be evident in colonies that remained attached to the metropole (as this meant formal colonialism and not a newer, less formal manifestation) and the ‘dots on the map’ that remain indicate continuing political control and not political disengagement. However, the concept of neo-colonialism can still be of relevance here, especially in Chapter 5 and the examination of Brunei. The Sultanate’s gradual decolonisation after 1959 can be seen as a process that entrenched UK economic links with Crown Agent management of Bruneian foreign currency holdings, indicating a move to secure investments before full decolonisation occurred. Moreover, after full independence in 1984, economic connections endured, and indeed strengthened through the continued role of Shell, and military links to the present (see page 266). Additionally, the Bruneian legal system is based on English Common Law (while following Sharia) and the education system literally follows the same organisation as England and Wales. It could be argued, therefore, that through delayed decolonisation there remained compliant nationalists in Brunei who secured British investments in a quasi-colonial setting. Brunei was perhaps a neo-colonial remnant.

However, neo-colonial interpretations assume that fiscal policy and the defence of big business trumps all. White rejects neo-colonialism in his work on British business in

⁸⁴ For further work on the British-Kenyan relationship see Poppy Cullen, *Kenya and Britain after Independence: Beyond Neo-Colonialism* (London, 2017). Cullen exposes the limitations of neo-colonial theory, however, by stressing the agency of Kenyan governmental elites in shaping the post-colonial relationship.

post-colonial Malaysia, which was no match for “the tenacious Malaysian state.”⁸⁵ Businesses were fearful of the nationalisation of industries by the regime in Kuala Lumpur and so rather than metropolitan edicts dictating policy it was the Malaysians using the British for their own means. This chimes with Fieldhouse’s earlier work on the giant food and consumer goods multinational, Unilever, which was apprehensive about decolonisation throughout the developing world because it was expected to harm business prospects.⁸⁶ However, as rigorous as these works are, one size does not fit all. Darwin has, in all of his works, argued that there was no “monolithic colonial policy”, and this is no different here. Decolonisation was multifaceted, and the British Empire was a complex entity. Economic factors played a significant role but were not the singular cause that determined why some colonies decolonised and others did not.

This is evident in the swift retraction of imperial control coming, largely, in the twenty years after 1945. But, that retraction was not homogenised. Not all colonies were at similar stages of development and so imperial historians should not treat the Falkland Islands, Kenya, Malaysia or Zimbabwe the same. Protecting business interests was important, but so too were other concerns. The case study chapters will be mindful of these concerns and understand the role the colonies had in their relationship with Britain as well as understanding the differences between them. Rather than Britain dictating the relationship, colonial and semi-colonial actors themselves manipulated Britain for maintenance of the bond (as was evident, often to the irritation of UK policymakers, in both the Falklands and Brunei).

⁸⁵ White, *British Business in Post-Colonial Malaysia*, 212.

⁸⁶ D.K. Fieldhouse, *Unilever Overseas: The anatomy of a Multinational Company, 1895-1965* (London, 1978).

Neo-colonialism also neglects geo-strategic concerns. Cyprus, Malta and Gibraltar, for example, were not colonies of economic dependence, but ‘fortress colonies’ and the Gulf and former Trucial States (now the United Arab Emirates) maintained defence links with the UK until the 1970s. Indeed, defence links endured in Central America until the 1980s with an “intractable” military withdrawal from Belize, which was difficult to fulfil due to Guatemala’s territorial claim over the territory.⁸⁷ The Cold War provided practical reasons for enduring imperial control that relied not just on economic benefits. The strategic factor cannot be overlooked and straddles both the imperial and international factors when analysing retention. Defence strategy helps in appreciating other factors that the metropole was concerned with in its imperial policy in both pushing decolonisation (for example, in the original UK plans for the creation of ‘Greater Malaysia’) or in an ongoing British colonial presence in the Indian Ocean at Diego Garcia.

A focus on culture also offers a way to challenge neo-colonialism. It can be argued that strong cultural links and soft power were means of embedding relations as much as economic ties. Language, media, judicial and political systems, and education all provide links between former colonies and these, while hard to quantify, elevate the metropole’s impact beyond economics and into an understanding of cultural manifestations having a palpable influence. Orientalist perspectives show the cultural landscape as one that still rested on a hierarchy with the ex-colonial power as ‘superior’ to the ex-colonies.⁸⁸ This moves past an economic argument to show that language, for example, maintained these links. This is evident in the Anglophone Caribbean, where

⁸⁷ Ash Rossiter, ‘Getting out of Belize: Britain’s Intractable Military Exit from Central America’, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 46, 4 (2018): 784-813.

⁸⁸ Said, *Orientalism*.

Johnson argues, the history curriculum was Euro-centric until the 1970s providing a cultural link between the metropole and the ex-periphery of empire.⁸⁹ There is a parallel here with the education legacies in Brunei discussed above. The use of language and cultural exchanges is most evident in the enduring UK relationship with the Commonwealth, and the next section will examine the benefits and problems of the post-colonial organisation.

The Commonwealth

The Commonwealth formed an international North-South bloc with its membership increasing as more and more colonies became independent. Darwin has stressed the importance of the Commonwealth for Britain through the maintenance of close capital, technical, cultural and defence links which inflated the importance of the post-colonial club for British mandarins and ministers. This applied equally to the Tories as much as it did to Labour, and Darwin has challenged the disengagement thesis of Holland and Cain & Hopkins by arguing that Macmillan's decolonisation policy was not necessarily a discontinuity with Churchill's global-power philosophy – closer association with Western Europe and the special relationship with Washington was not incompatible in Macmillan's thinking with the retention of a wider world role through Britain's leadership of the multi-racial Commonwealth which was supposed to be "empire by other means".⁹⁰ This continuity was certainly evident in party manifestos. The 1955 Tory version wanted to "guide Colonial peoples along the road to self-government within the framework of the Commonwealth and Empire."⁹¹ The role of the

⁸⁹ Howard Johnson, 'Decolonising the History Curriculum in the Anglophone Caribbean', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 30, 1 (2002): 27-60.

⁹⁰ Darwin, *Britain and Decolonisation*, 299; John Darwin, 'Fear of Falling: British Politics and - Imperial Decline since 1900', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 36 (1986): 27-43; Darwin, *End of the British Empire*, 27-28.

⁹¹ 1955 Conservative Party Manifesto, Conservative Party Archives, Bodleian Library, Oxford, AP20/19/1-18.

Commonwealth as a link between the Empire and the post-colonial world softened the blow of decolonisation, even if it was not immune from the pressures of “former idealism”.⁹²

Therefore, situating the Commonwealth in a metropolitan perspective, and as a partial preservation of imperialism highlights the role the “unique and multi-dimensional voluntary association” had on retention.⁹³ The world was not just bipolar, but “was more multipolar and multi-dimensional” and the complexities of the Commonwealth in a de-colonial world will be explored in this thesis – especially in Chapter 4.⁹⁴ Decolonised states belonging to both the Commonwealth and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and tension between the Old and New Commonwealth created a complex organisation that was strained along many lines and which, despite initial hopes of buttressing world power and cushioning colonial decline, Britain became disillusioned with by the 1970s.⁹⁵

The Commonwealth can trace its history back to 1926 with the Balfour Declaration. Yet, it is the creation of the New Commonwealth in the 1960s, when recently decolonised predominantly non-white states joined the organisation which is our main concern. The 1960s was a turbulent decade for Commonwealth affairs: the frictions between the Old and New Commonwealth, alongside South Africa’s departure in 1961, the first and second British EEC application, and post 1965-Rhodesia created “a focal

⁹² Krishnan Srinivasan, ‘Nobody’s Commonwealth? The Commonwealth in Britain’s Post-Imperial Adjustment’, *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics*, 44, 2 (2006): 266.

⁹³ Sue Onslow, ‘The Commonwealth and the Cold War, Neutralism and Non-Alignment’, *The International History Review*, 37, 5 (2015): 1075.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ S.R. Ashton, ‘British Government Perspectives on the Commonwealth, 1964-1971: An Asset or a Liability?’, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 35, 1 (2007): 74.

point for bitter recrimination in which the Commonwealth was almost in a state of undeclared war with itself.”⁹⁶ Perspectives in the Global South also added pressures to the Commonwealth with accession to the post-colonial community making members choose sides in the Cold War.⁹⁷ These issues severely strained intra-Commonwealth relations and the Commonwealth became nothing more than a “talking-shop”, “a third world lobby” and the “ghost of empire” in Britain.⁹⁸

The post-colonial club was divided by Cold War affiliations. Nevertheless, the Wilson government in the 1960s saw Britain’s frontiers stretching to the Himalayas, highlighting the Commonwealth’s geopolitical significance (even if Wilson overemphasised its importance and his commitment to the extension of Commonwealth trade as an alternative to Europe did not work).⁹⁹ Wilson’s questioning of “the right sort of Europe?” suggested he still saw the Commonwealth as important to Britain as a means of world-wide influence.¹⁰⁰ Economically, however, the British government’s movement to Europe indicated the future of British policies. Aside from political issues, racial divisions as well as member-state size (the security of smaller states was a particular concern) created additional problems.¹⁰¹ As Parr asks, how could Britain lead a Commonwealth when it was pulled in so many directions?¹⁰²

⁹⁶ Ibid., 74.

⁹⁷ Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of our Times* (Cambridge, 2012), 98.

⁹⁸ David Low, *Eclipse of Empire* (Cambridge, 1991), 332.

⁹⁹ Helen Parr, ‘Britain, America, East of Suez, and the EEC: Finding a Role in British Foreign Policy, 1964-1967’, *Contemporary British History*, 20, 3 (2006): 403-421.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ David McIntyre, *The Significance of the Commonwealth 1965-1990* (London, 1991), 8.

¹⁰² Parr, ‘Britain, America, East of Suez, and the EEC’, 410.

But, despite the blows of the Rhodesian crisis, South Africa's departure, and the devaluation of Sterling in 1967, there was still some strength to the organisation.¹⁰³ As Ashton argues, the Commonwealth played an important role in cushioning the British in a new era of superpower politics and enabled Britain to exert some influence over its ex-colonies.¹⁰⁴ For the Labour Party, the Commonwealth "was an acceptable vehicle through which a benevolent British influence could continue to be diffused."¹⁰⁵ The Commonwealth had a purpose outside the bi-polar Cold War, and, in bringing together disparate states it became an important neutral diplomatic actor.¹⁰⁶

But this didn't do much for Britain. The Commonwealth survived the 1960s shocks. Nevertheless, discussion papers from the time pointed to the crises the transnational body was facing. As Humphrey Berkley, Conservative MP for Lancaster, asked in September 1966, "Can the Commonwealth Survive?" 'Yes' was the answer, but only if "reality replaced mythology."¹⁰⁷ The reality was seized upon by Harold Wilson, who galvanised the Commonwealth through creating the secretariat in 1965 and condemned Conservatives for letting it "come near to disintegration."¹⁰⁸ But the Labour cabinet was split over the role of the Commonwealth symbolising the uncertainty over what role Britain should have in the post-colonial world. Minister of Overseas Development, Barbara Castle, was concerned by Commonwealth forces being used in *Konfrontasi* in

¹⁰³ Phillip Alexander, 'A Tale of Two Smiths: The Transformation of Commonwealth Policy, 1964-1970', *Contemporary British History*, 20, 3 (2006): 317.

¹⁰⁴ Ashton, 'British Government Perspectives on the Commonwealth', 88.

¹⁰⁵ Darwin, *End of the British Empire*, 27.

¹⁰⁶ Onslow, 'The Commonwealth and the Cold War', 1075. As Onslow argues, the Commonwealth was important in African nation-state building, supporting racial justice in Southern Africa and was a valuable actor in political and economic diplomacy during the Cold War.

¹⁰⁷ Humphry Berkeley, 'Can the Commonwealth Survive?', September 1966, Perham Papers, Bodleian Libraries, Oxford, MSSPERHAM.

¹⁰⁸ Alexander, 'Tale of Two Smiths', 305.

Southeast Asia because of potential accusations of a neo-colonial agenda.¹⁰⁹ However, Denis Healey, Defence Secretary, linked the participation of the Commonwealth in *Konfrontasi* as a way of providing the US with assistance in halting the spread of communism.¹¹⁰

Yet, with retention of certain colonies, some member states protested (most notably over the BIOT discussed in Chapter 4) because this jarred with self-determination and their own struggles for independence. The many countries of the Commonwealth had differing allegiances (India belonged to the Non-Aligned Movement, and Australia and New Zealand had their defence treaty dating from 1951 with the US) and this showed a dis-united organisation. The different loyalties exposed Britain's difficulties in managing the Commonwealth against its other international obligations. An anonymous 1962 editorial in *The Times* dubbed the Commonwealth a "gigantic farce" and Macmillan had been notably keen to avoid Commonwealth meetings because of the trouble they could cause.¹¹¹ These indicate that the reality of the Commonwealth never matched British ambitions.¹¹² As will be evident in Chapter 4, British strategic and geopolitical concerns often trumped protests from Commonwealth member-states.

The aim of the imperial level of analysis is to gauge the agency of the British and their value as actors within the process of decolonisation, and ergo colonial retention as well. Utilising the role of party-political debate, economic and strategic links, and the

¹⁰⁹ Ibid. *Konfrontasi* (Confrontation) between Indonesia and British-backed Malaysia lasted from 1963 to 1966 with the bulk of military assistance being provided by the UK as part of the Anglo-Malaysian Defence Agreement. *Konfrontasi* is analysed in more depth in Chapter 5.

¹¹⁰ Alexander, 'Tale of Two Smiths', 305.

¹¹¹ David McIntyre, 'Britain and the Creation of the Commonwealth Secretariat', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 28, 1 (2000): 137.

¹¹² Ashton, 'British Government Perspectives on the Commonwealth', 90-91.

Commonwealth allows us to assess how far British actors led colonial retention, and this will be further explored in the case studies. This also affords the opportunity to question the sequences in post-war imperialism and decolonisation. The arguments that historians present of London disengaging from an imperial role will be challenged especially through the BIOT. With a colony created after the disengagement period demonstrates that decolonisation was a not a process of ministers acknowledging defeat. Moreover, with disarray within the Commonwealth and the multi-racial organisation not living up to British expectations, being able to fall back on certain valuable overseas outposts, especially if they cemented the Anglo-American relationship, was advantageous as a means of preserving a world role. Simultaneously, however, as the Falklands and Brunei will show, London found it hard to disengage from those stubborn areas that did not want to be independent.

The International Dimension

International pressures played a significant role in dictating imperial policy in the post-World War Two period. After 1945, there was widespread condemnation of imperialism at the UN as well as US criticism of colonialism, with empires perceived to be redundant in a changing geopolitical landscape. The UN provides an intra-governmental perspective on imperialism and concurrently allows views of newly independent countries to be explored. The shifting dynamic of the UN from the traditional East-West dynamic towards a North-South divide resulted in the organisation being more anti-colonial and thus an important global actor when assessing decolonisation.¹¹³ The US, with its growing economic and military power, is important to understand the shifting power balance and its influence on decolonisation.

Nevertheless, international factors are not clear cut in explaining decolonisation. This is evident with US anti-colonialism, which was not linear and wavered in the post-war world, owing to geopolitical considerations and the benefits that could be obtained from the continuation of European colonialism. While the US was rhetorically an anti-colonial nation, Washington realised that a strong alliance was needed with the European imperial powers to counteract the threat of communism during the early Cold War. *Realpolitik* trumped US values in the immediate post-1945 years.

The International frame of analysis contrasts with the Imperial level as it removes agency from the British government. Extrapolating how external affairs impacted on decolonisation and how the US came to tacitly approve of colonialism if geopolitically

¹¹³ Thomas Weiss, 'Moving Beyond the North-South Theatre', *Third World Quarterly*, 30, 2 (2009): 271.

beneficial helps understand retention. As with the discussion of the Internal and Imperial levels not all colonies were the same and appreciating the differences between remnants helps understand the different ways that retained colonies were viewed by international actors.

Anti-Colonial America and the Cold War

There was apparently a synergy between anti-colonialism and US world power in the post-war period. But, after 1945, the US had a pragmatic approach to empire. This was based upon concessions and compromise with the US government anticipating that decolonisation would leave a vacuum which could be occupied by the USSR. As Westad argues, American anti-colonial instincts would be tempered by Cold War concerns in foreign policy.¹¹⁴ Louis and Robinson contend that the waxing and waning of US support for British imperialism effectively underwrote the empire in a form of managed decline.¹¹⁵ Get something in here from Darwin and decolonisations. By underwriting the empire, a bulwark formed against Soviet influence and revived the Empire after World War Two. Nevertheless, the mid-1950s did mark a change. The Empire looked redundant given US fears of rising communism in colonies that remained attached ‘too long’ which would push colonies towards Soviet influence. This influenced decolonisation and the British government’s reaction to it with Macmillan’s ‘Wind of Change’ speech geared towards preventing the expansion of Soviet influence in Africa. Rather than British agency in imperial policy, external influences affected how Britain approached its colonies and which territories should be decolonised by the late-1950s and early-1960s. This close US-UK post-war relationship is evident through the cultivation of the ‘special relationship’ and, as Ovendale argues, US policy applied

¹¹⁴ Odd Arne Westad, *The Cold War: A World History* (London, 2017), 265.

¹¹⁵ Louis & Robinson, ‘The Imperialism of Decolonization’, 462-511.

little pressure to British imperial policy which under Macmillan seemed to be committed to managed decolonisation.¹¹⁶

Moreover, in the immediate post-war period the continued existence of the British Empire was advantageous for US global security while simultaneously contributing to the recovery of the British economy (in turn a key element in the world-wide struggle against Soviet expansionism). This confluence of Anglo-American interests was recognised in a British cabinet paper of January 1948 which asserted that “the Soviet authorities carry on perpetual propaganda against the ‘Imperialist exploitation of colonial peoples’.”¹¹⁷ Indeed, the relationship with Washington was beneficial to the British as US support allowed Sterling to remain an important hard currency. The 1956 Suez Crisis would actually further enhance this relationship. While initially angering the US government, when looked at in a long-term narrative of US-UK relations it brought the UK and US in tandem with each other in the region. As Smith argues for the Middle East, “Britain was prepared neither to relinquish its residual interests ... nor become subservient to the United States. For its part, America continued to perceive a significant role for the British.”¹¹⁸ Far from being anti-colonial it was at the behest of the US government that the British Empire endured. Overriding this was US concern over military strategy and extraction of key resources that played a large role in how, and when, colonies would become independent. With oil being a key strategic resource,

¹¹⁶ Ritchie Ovendale, ‘Macmillan and the Wind of Change in Africa, 1957-1960’, *Historical Journal*, 38, 2 (1995): 455-477. This built upon John Hargreaves, *Decolonisation in Africa* (London, 1988), 186-7 which proposed that if Britain remained too close to ‘imperial residues’ in Africa then the damage to the ‘special relationship’ would be far-reaching. But Ovendale modifies Hargreaves in arguing that accelerated decolonisation in ‘settler’ Africa was initiated by the Macmillan government in response to US strategies for maintaining Western influence.

¹¹⁷ Review of Soviet Policy: Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 4 January 1948, CAB 129/23.

¹¹⁸ Simon C. Smith, *Ending Empire in the Middle East: Britain, the United States and Post-war Decolonization, 1945-73* (Abingdon, 2012), 67.

the US feared Soviet disruption of key supply lines for itself and its allies especially in the Indian Ocean.¹¹⁹ Decolonisation intersected with this fear which made colonialism necessary in order to protect key natural resources. As such, McCourt asserts that Britain “punched above its weight” in the 1950s and 1960s and was not solely a European power subservient to the US government.¹²⁰

There is also much evidence to support the idea that the US was apathetic toward British overseas policy, as long as it did not affect Washington’s interests. Southeast Asia provides an example of limited US intervention and implicit support of British-managed decolonisation.¹²¹ In the creation of Malaysia, Dean Rusk, US Secretary of State, told President Kennedy in 1963 that “the United States has not participated in the negotiations, nor have we been formally consulted. We have, however, followed these developments closely, and since we have not objected, the British have assumed our tacit approval...we assume no responsibility in this area.”¹²² Indeed, Washington welcomed decolonisation as long as it maintained influence and was on its terms. This was clear in the independence of the Philippines in 1946, in which defence and economic agreements were signed to stop communist influence and preserve US dominance.¹²³

¹¹⁹ Westad, *The Global Cold War*, 267.

¹²⁰ David McCourt, *Britain and World Power since 1945: Constructing a Nation's Role in International Politics* (Ann Arbor, 2014), 3.

¹²¹ A.J. Stockwell, ‘The United States and Britain’s Decolonization of Malaya, 1942-57’ in David Ryan & Victor Pungong (eds), *The United States and Decolonisation: Power and Freedom* (London, 2000), 189.

¹²² Memorandum from Rusk to President Kennedy, 17 January 1963, *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1961-1963*, Vol. XIX, South Asia, Document 240.

¹²³ See Robert Shaffer, ‘“Partially Disguised Imperialism”: American Critical Internationalists and Philippine Independence’, *Journal of American-East Asian Relations*, 19, 3-4 (2012): 235-262.

By recognising pragmatic US perceptions of colonialism and the variations in how Washington's decolonisation policy was applied means colonial retention can be explored through this theoretical consideration. Recognising covert approval of colonialism beneath the veneer of anti-colonialism permits exploration of geopolitics in relation to the paradoxes of decolonisation. Namely, colonialism was sometimes the preferred option and actually helped strategic and resource facilitation during the Cold War. This is contrary to the accepted approach that US Cold War pressures assisted decolonisation.

US-UK Relations

The US-UK relationship also provides an additional dimension to understand how international factors contributed to colonial retention. While relations with the UK may initially seem to fall into imperial considerations, this broadly connects the imperial to the international, further complicating the delineations of each 'I' presented. Understanding the relationship within an international context allows additional analysis of US influence on colonial policy, and in turn how that translated into British retention of colonies benefitting the bilateral relationship.

The relationships between US Presidents and UK Prime Ministers had a substantial influence on British foreign policy. The warm partnerships between Prime Minister Harold Macmillan and President John F. Kennedy, and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and President Ronald Reagan, bookended "diplomatic hibernation."¹²⁴ After the 'Anglo-American schism' of Suez, the 'special relationship' became a diplomatic priority. The US focus on Africa allowed attention to be diverted and in 1957, after the

¹²⁴ Jonathan Colman, *A 'Special Relationship', Harold Wilson, Lyndon B. Johnson and Anglo-American Relations 'at the Summit', 1964-1968* (Manchester, 2004), 168.

Suez Crisis, Foreign Secretary Selwyn Lloyd declared the 'special relationship' restored.¹²⁵

However, the accepted cordial relations between President Kennedy and Harold Macmillan did not transpire into coherent policy and British influence over the US remained limited. While there was alignment over the threat of communism and US acknowledgment of Britain's historic role in the Middle East, the US had doubts about British military efficacy in the region.¹²⁶ The UK-US relations in the early-1960s also suffered over defence relations. These became strained over Skybolt, a US-developed nuclear weapons programme which Britain joined in 1960 but was cancelled by Washington in 1962. The different objectives of both countries meant that coherent policy was difficult to achieve, especially concerning the Empire and the future role of British influence.

The Johnson-Wilson relationship has garnered substantial scholarship, especially over US dismay at the devaluation of Sterling in 1967 and the accelerated withdrawal east of Suez announced in January 1968. Economic instability resulted in a reduced defence force which "undermined the entire American agenda for British foreign policy commitments after July 1966."¹²⁷ London's unilateralism and the prioritisation of its own geopolitical and economic interests, including the refusal by the Wilson government to commit to the Vietnam War, placed a serious strain on relations between Washington and London.¹²⁸ This lack of diplomatic support from Britain had an impact

¹²⁵ Hyam, *Britain's Declining Empire*, 303.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 116.

¹²⁷ Jeremy Fielding, 'Coping with Decline, US Policy towards the British Defense Reviews of 1966', *Diplomatic History*, 23, 4 (1999): 656.

¹²⁸ John Dumbrell, 'The Johnson Administration and the British Labour Government: Vietnam, the Pound and East of Suez', *Journal of American Studies*, 30, 2 (1996): 231.

later in Wilson's government insofar as the US did not reciprocate with support for Sterling. As Baylis argues "the biggest difference between the two capitals in the middle to late 1960s was Vietnam" and this would have repercussions on British imperial policy as a result.¹²⁹ By Washington refusing to help with Sterling, the east of Suez withdrawal became necessary and left the British with no choice but to relinquish a world role. By the end of President Johnson's tenure, the "White House was more inclined to regard Britain simply as one ally among many, rather than a state with whom there was some kind of 'special' relationship."¹³⁰

However, bilateral defence relations remained strong. While military and diplomatic support did not transpire in Vietnam, the period saw British orders of Polaris nuclear missiles from the US plus the purchase of large amounts of US military equipment.¹³¹ Indeed, the Labour Party was happy to work in close harmony with the United States over nuclear defence and the Wilson government strengthened this aspect of bilateral relations.¹³² The US-UK relationship, as with other aspects of the theoretical considerations considered in this thesis, needs to be looked at broadly, and focusing on the minutiae of foreign policy belies the larger narrative that there was a long-term depth to UK-US relations that transcended administrations and governments. As Chapter 4 will elucidate further, Diego Garcia proved to be an extensive defence partnership encompassing US lease of British territory in which the US could station troops as part of its Cold War strategy. The lease endured through administrations and

¹²⁹ John Baylis, *Anglo-American Defence Relations, 1939-1980* (London, 1981), 94.

¹³⁰ Colman, *Special Relationship*, 168.

¹³¹ Alan Dobson, 'Labour or Conservative: Does it Matter in Anglo-American Relations?', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 25, 4 (1990): 387-407.

¹³² Baylis, *Anglo-American Defence Relations*, 82.

brought closer association in bilateral defence agreements with UK governments welcoming US military expansion of the facility.

Nevertheless, in the 1970s, the ‘special relationship’ did weaken. Even though Heath “was determined to play [Britain’s] part ... in countering threats to the stability outside Europe” the decision to withdraw forces east of Suez was not significantly halted.¹³³ The 1971 Defence Review approached the Persian Gulf with a view to maintain defence links, but, much to the disappointment of the Nixon administration, it conclusively terminated arrangements with Gulf rulers when the costs were realised.¹³⁴ Heath’s more European outlook on foreign policy coupled with Nixon’s policy of détente, and the legacy of the Johnson and Wilson preceding years, brought about divisions between the leaders. Upon Wilson’s return as Prime Minister in 1974 relations were more cordial. However, repeated threats from the US government to limit nuclear cooperation as a means to stop continued British defence cuts highlighted the lack of agency Britain wielded in the relationship. Declining British diplomatic global influence, including influence over the US, and the lack of US understanding over the IMF loan in 1976 (under Jim Callaghan’s prime ministership) resulted in Washington appearing apathetic to British woes. The UK had to borrow \$3.9 billion after an exchange rate crisis which saw the value of Sterling fall dramatically against the Dollar. Deviously, Washington actually encouraged crisis in the British economy to force the Labour government to change how it managed the national economy.¹³⁵ As we will see in Chapters 3 and 5, Britain’s financial crisis in the mid-1970s, and not being able to rely on Washington to bail the UK out, had indirect and contrasting impacts upon the remnant Empire – the

¹³³ Ibid., 100.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ See Kathleen Burk, ‘The Americans, The Germans and the British: The 1976 IMF Crisis’, *Twentieth Century British History*, 5, 3 (1994): 351-369.

Bank of England and the Treasury put a brake on Brunei's constitutional progress because of its huge Sterling reserves, while the Shackleton Report on the Falklands was pooh-poohed in Whitehall for fear that the Exchequer would be called upon to finance colonial economic development with uncertain rewards. Yet, while the 'special relationship' did not look promising in the 1970s, the case study chapters that follow, especially Chapter 4 on the BIOT, will explore areas where policy aligned. Looking at the retention of colonies highlights that the US-UK partnership was consistent in many areas, especially with regards to overseas defence and geopolitical concerns.

By the election of Jimmy Carter, relations remained steady. As Robb argues, the external factors during Carter's presidency – the Iranian Revolution, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and a general heating up of the Cold War – meant that the 'special relationship' became increasingly more important.¹³⁶ The "sacrosanct area of nuclear and intelligence cooperation" remained strong, and the sale of T4 Trident nuclear missiles to the UK showed an increasingly closer relationship.¹³⁷ Margaret Thatcher's election in 1979 further supported good relations with the Prime Minister's explicit approval of Carter's Iran policy.¹³⁸ Thatcher's relationship with Reagan after 1981 is regarded as one of the closest in the post-war era. However, while generally the US-UK 'special relationship' remained strong, Reagan's non-support for Britain in the

¹³⁶ Thomas Robb, *Jimmy Carter and the Anglo-American 'Special Relationship'* (Edinburgh, 2017), 4.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 155.

initial stages of the Falklands War (discussed more fully in the next chapter) and the US invasion of Grenada in 1983 did place strains on the relationship.¹³⁹

While there were peaks and troughs in the ‘special relationship’, it became particularly unbalanced during a geopolitically and economically volatile period in the 1970s. Kissinger’s words to President Nixon summed up the US attitude: “You have to operate on the assumption that Great Britain is through.”¹⁴⁰ Nevertheless, assessment of the case studies will provide opportunity to counter this view of an unequal relationship. Colonial retention, of the BIOT especially, worked in the UK’s favour and went some way to offset the ‘unequal’ partnership, particularly in the wake of the UK withdrawal east of Suez after 1971.

The United Nations, the Committee of 24, and Decolonisation

Self-determination was enshrined by the UN from its inception, but the international body has never stated “how the inhabitants of colonial territories are to exercise their right.”¹⁴¹ Failing to codify this into international law has caused confusion about how colonial peoples are to utilise the edict to exercise their rights. Even though self-

¹³⁹ Sally-Ann Treharne, *Reagan and Thatcher's Special Relationship, Latin America and Anglo-American Relations* (Edinburgh, 2015), 40. The US invasion of Grenada, a Commonwealth member since independence in 1974, with no prior UK knowledge, led to a tense phone call where Reagan apologised to Thatcher. The transcript is available at: <https://www.margarethatcher.org/document/109426> [accessed 4 April 2018]. See also Gary Williams, “‘Shrouded in Some Mystery’: The Governor General’s Invitation and the 1983 Grenada Intervention”, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 44, 1 (2016):140-162; Gary Williams, “‘Keeping a Line Open’: Britain and the 1979 Coup in Grenada”, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 39, 3 (2011): 479-508; Robert J. Beck, ‘The Grenada invasion, International Law and the Scoon Invitation: A 30 Year Retrospective’, *Round Table*, 102, 3 (2013): 281-290.

¹⁴⁰ Thomas Robb, ‘Henry Kissinger, Great Britain and the Year of Europe: The “Tangled Skein”’, *Contemporary British History*, 24, 3 (2010): 297-318.

¹⁴¹ Helen Quane, ‘The United Nations and the Evolving Right to Self-Determination’, *The International and Comparative Law Quarterly*, 47, 3 (1998): 550.

determination was enshrined in the UN charter many remnants do not want independence.

The UNGA largely opposed British colonialism, at least from the mid-1950s. In the years preceding this “the British largely succeeded in keeping the UN off its colonial turf.”¹⁴² The original charter of 1945 included a ‘Declaration regarding Non-Self-Governing Territories’ making the UN a guardian of colonial territories with the aim of them becoming independent nations liberated from European imperialism.¹⁴³ This brings to the fore the UN’s influence on decolonisation and its attitudes towards colonial retention. As retention was antithetical to the UN’s self-determination mission, continuing colonial rule necessarily contravened the UN Charter. However, some colonies adhered to the notion of self-determination and actually exploited that concept to justify remaining attached to the metropole which left the UN in a bind on how to resolve colonial disputes. This will be evident in Chapter 3 with UK acknowledgement of self-determination by peoples on the Falkland Islands, which was employed to counter Argentinian territorial integrity claims.

The UN was formed in a Eurocentric mind-set. But, when the organisation’s anti-colonial rhetoric manifested itself in expanded decolonisation, the organisation’s dynamic changed so that “by 1955 the process of decolonisation, which marked the post-1945 political arena, began to be reflected in the membership of the United Nations.”¹⁴⁴ The expansion from fifty-one to sixty-seven countries in the 1950s created

¹⁴² A.J. Stockwell, ‘British Decolonisation: The Record and the Records’, *Contemporary European History*, 15, 4 (2006): 579.

¹⁴³ The United Nations Charter, <https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/ctc/uncharter.pdf> [accessed November 2017].

¹⁴⁴ David Kay, ‘The Politics of Decolonisation: The New Nations and the United Nations Political Process’, *International Organization*, 21, 4 (1967): 789.

a “Frankenstein’s monster in its colonial guise.”¹⁴⁵ As former colonies became independent states and joined the ranks of the UN, delegations from the Global South were in a position to make the violence and structural inequalities of colonial rule visible to the world.¹⁴⁶ This propelled the UN to pass the cardinal Resolution 1514 in December 1960, calling for a speedy and unconditional end to colonialism.¹⁴⁷ The following year, the UN Special Committee of 17 (later 24) on Decolonisation was established, reaffirming the right for all peoples to be free from colonialism. The Committee monitored Resolution 1514 and produced annual reviews of non-self-governing territories. As decolonisation progressed, so did the UN and its outlook on global affairs.

The “unabashed decolonisation” first declared in Article 1514 ran parallel with superpower rivalry. In their public rhetoric both the US and the USSR (while arguably possessing colonies themselves) attacked imperialism in all forms and this rivalry influenced decolonisation as the superpowers vied for the attention of newly-independent states. With colonial officials trying to shield Empires from the expansion of international supervision, they carefully manipulated terms like ‘self-government’ and ‘dependency’ to demonstrate how the UN fell short of its own ideals.¹⁴⁸ Although the UK was represented on the Committee of 24 from its inception, it proved an irritant

¹⁴⁵ Wm. Roger Louis. ‘Public Enemy Number One: The British Empire in the Dock at the United Nations’, in Lynn, *British Empire in the 1950s*, 187.

¹⁴⁶ Jessica Lynn Pearson, ‘Defending Empire at the United Nations: The Politics of International Colonial Oversight in the Era of Decolonisation’, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 45, 3 (2017): 542.

¹⁴⁷ Resolution 1514 proclaimed that “all peoples have the right to self-determination; by virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.” Every single colonial power abstained from the vote, yet it still passed with a majority of eighty-nine and represented a significant milestone in the ideological justification of decolonisation since it codified the right to independence for the first time. 1514 also tied into resolutions regarding human rights and the elimination of racial discrimination which were passed in 1969.

¹⁴⁸ Pearson, ‘Defending Empire’, 539.

for British officials who viewed the Committee as “psychotic” in its obsession with decolonisation.¹⁴⁹ In 1968, the CO’s Sir Hilton Poynton observed that “we have practically come to an end with our programme of decolonisation and we shall soon be left with territories too small and unviable to achieve independence. Our continued presence in the Committee of 24 erodes our authority and confuses responsibilities.”¹⁵⁰ In his interview with *London Line* Commonwealth Secretary George Thomson expressed similar sentiments in response to the question, “Britain has come in for a lot of criticism over its decolonisation policies in the UN Committee of 24. Do you think this is justified?” Thomson’s reply was:

Our record is second to none in this field. But...we are dealing with the small remaining core of British dependencies, which, mainly because of their size, present special problems: and many of who do not desire independence. I fear the Committee of 24 often takes an unrealistic view of the purely practical problems of decolonisation...we find only too frequently a double standard is applied. Take Gibraltar, for example. Not only has the Committee backed one colonial power, Spain, against another in a purely bilateral dispute over Gibraltar, but the General Assembly has chosen to ignore the basic charter principle by which we ourselves are guided...It seems ironic that so much attention should be focused on these relatively small colonies of ours where people lie easy in bed at night, while the tragic plight of millions in the Soviet Empire has been ignored.¹⁵¹

Hence, officials and ministers in London had much chagrin with the UNGA and its apparent double standards towards colonialism and human rights. The UN Committee was regarded as militant in its approach to decolonisation, which to add fuel to the fire of British disaffection was supported by the Soviet Union. At the end of 1967, *Pravda* ran an article ‘The Temperature is Rising’, supporting the Committee of 24 as “an important part of the anti-colonial struggle.”¹⁵²

¹⁴⁹ Louis, ‘Public Enemy Number One’, 199.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 213.

¹⁵¹ Interview for *London Line*, 29 August 1968, FCO 49/122.

¹⁵² Letter from British Embassy, Moscow, 1 January 1968, FCO 58/57.

The Committee's meddling in colonial affairs was particularly resented by UK policy-makers because it maintained that unpreparedness should not be used as a veil for delaying independence. The British viewed the Committee as "obnoxious" but were forced to hide these feelings to not disrupt the larger UN project and Britain's involvement with it. "[H]ow do we keep supporting the United Nations to the hilt?" asked Thomson because "we cannot avoid unacceptable resolutions and galling defects by absenting ourselves from the Committee."¹⁵³ There was no respite from the attacks and even the most sympathetic of countries with the UK's position were obliged to vote with the militants, which was "humiliating and embarrassing" for British diplomats.¹⁵⁴ With the General Assembly pushing for target-dates to end colonialism (in 1961 Khrushchev proposed the end of 1962, and Nigeria proposed 1970) modifications satisfactory to the British were made that permitted UN monitoring of colonies. However, as Hyam argues, a chain of developments had started at the UN which Britain could not ignore. If the UK did not speed up decolonisation it would look like it was ignoring Resolution 1514.¹⁵⁵ The interaction between these colonies, the UN, and the British will be analysed in the case-study chapters to demonstrate that no colony was immune from UN pressure, but equally no colony was immune from British manipulation of the concept of self-determination.

Britain in the mid- to late-1960s balanced whether to continue being 'Public Enemy Number One' at the UN or be an abiding member. Sir Paul Gore-Booth, Permanent Under-Secretary at the FCO, believed by 1966 that the Committee was dishonest and dangerous to be associated with: the "wretched Committee", as a CO official called it

¹⁵³ Letter from Thomson to George Brown, Foreign Secretary, 9 February 1968, FCO 60/20.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Hyam, *Britain's Declining Empire*, 305.

in 1964, had “forced itself into a position of influence on all questions of decolonisation.”¹⁵⁶ Debates in the House of Commons likewise expressed misgivings at continued British membership. Eldon Griffiths, Conservative MP for Bury St Edmunds, protested:

I accept that there needs to be a balance between the advantages of remaining and the advantages of going, but... there are at least two arguments in favour of the "empty chair"[.] The first is that nothing is to be gained by simply providing an Aunt Sally, and the second is that the staff of our Mission in New York are already over-extended and could do much better work than going to this rather biased Committee.¹⁵⁷

Britain resigned from the Committee of 24 in 1971, to the relief of many in the FCO. By the 1970s the anti-colonial movement had run out of steam and was struck by “public boredom”, as Louis put it.¹⁵⁸ With small island territories like Fiji and Mauritius achieving independence, and with many others in the Caribbean and Pacific on their way to independence, the Committee of 24 reduced its remit. Remaining colonies such as the Falklands, Gibraltar, and the smaller territories in the Caribbean, did not elicit much concern outside the Committee, or at least not enough for the British to protest against the Committee’s judgements. The decision to leave implies a belief that colonial affairs were on the way to being resolved as continued membership was not necessary and indicated that further colonial matters could be resolved by Britain alone. Nevertheless, in some cases the UN push had promoted independence quicker than intended by the imperial power. In Fiji, for example, a multi-ethnic society (split between indigenous Fijians and a large migrated Indian population), and with strong attachments to Britain, had previously decelerated decolonisation. Kelly & Kaplan

¹⁵⁶ Louis, ‘Public Enemy Number One’, 199. 200.

¹⁵⁷ United Nations Committee of 24, HoC, Volume 782, Column 24, 5 May 1969.

¹⁵⁸ Louis, ‘Public Enemy Number One’, 200.

explain the accelerated British withdrawal – with independence coming suddenly in 1970 – through international pressures and from the UN especially.¹⁵⁹

Moreover, UN scrutiny of colonial affairs did continue after Britain left the Committee. Regular ‘country reports’ on the remaining territories continued to be created and noticeably the UNGA had much to say on the Anglo-Argentine relationship towards the Falkland Islands in the 1970s. It can also be argued that the burden of belonging to the Committee of 24 was too much. Giving ‘control’ away to an international organisation when protests were levelled at losing control and sovereignty to the EEC in the 1970s influenced British decision-making. The UK had a world role, a seat on the Security Council and diplomatic clout.¹⁶⁰ Based on these ‘realities’ it was demeaning for the UK to be told when to decolonise and by whom.

As such, one question that lingers is how much direct effect the UN actually had over colonial policy? Kelly & Kaplan’s assertions, for example, are contradicted by FCO correspondence in 1970 which revealed that there was “not a single enquiry from the Committee of 24 about Fiji”.¹⁶¹ There were clear intentions for universal decolonisation and self-determination from within the UN. But, as Pearson argues, Article 2 (7) of the UN Charter prohibited the organisation interfering in the domestic affairs of a member state and this impacted on decolonisation as there was little direct action the UN could take given the restrictions of its own Charter.¹⁶² The UN realised that self-government

¹⁵⁹ John Kelly & Martha Kaplan, *Represented Communities: Fiji and World Decolonisation* (Chicago, 2001).

¹⁶⁰ ‘No Time for Britain to Shrink from a World Role’, *The Guardian*, 17 September 1979.

¹⁶¹ J.D.B. Shaw to E.J. Emery on a proposal that representatives from the Committee of 24 might be invited to Fiji’s independence celebrations, 2 July 1970, FCO 32/630 cited in Brij V. Lal (ed), *British Documents on the End of Empire, Series B, Vol. 10: Fiji* (London, 2006), 501-503.

¹⁶² Pearson, ‘Defending Empire at the United Nations’, 542.

was not just about negotiations between the metropole and the colony, but needed to demonstrate to the international community that it was adhering to criteria set by joint committees made up of representatives of both imperial governments and anti-colonial states.¹⁶³ As *The Guardian* sceptically pontificated in 1972, “how many people have won their freedom as a result of UN pressure?”¹⁶⁴ The phenomenon of colonial retention, then, may well have a lot to do with the weakness and contradictions of the UN.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ ‘Colonists of the World, Renege’, *The Guardian*, 30 October 1972.

Conclusion

This historiographical chapter has drawn the key debates underlying the thesis. To understand the questions posed, these principles and debates will be inverted in accordance with the primary research question of the thesis: namely, why did certain colonies remain attached to the metropole? Thus, the questions that the historiography of decolonisation address can be reformulated: how did Internal, Imperial and International factors influence colonial retention and not decolonisation? Keen awareness of the complex interplay of factors will show that retention was conditional on developments in the periphery, as much as it was on events in the metropole and at a global power-political level.

In order to develop this inversion and be aware of the complexity, the case studies are attentive to clear analysis through the parameters of the 3 'Is'. The case-study chapters that follow will challenge orthodox accounts through enquiring why preservation of colonial relationships remained past the 'wave' of decolonisation that ran until 1965. This will form a reference point for arguments considered and allow crosschecking of the case studies, thus synthesising the debates.

The Internal dimension considers the role of local identity and its formation in preserving colonial relationships. Analysing the weight of internal considerations and their interaction with metropolitan developments provides criteria to measure the degree to which peripheral affairs drove retention. The Imperial perspective, meanwhile, will analyse the role of metropolitan politics in driving retention including the economic and strategic factors that made relinquishing control difficult, or indeed undesirable. Also included in the Imperial dimension are Commonwealth relations and

the impact these had on retention. This assesses imperial agency as an operating factor in colonial retention. International considerations will examine the UN, US, and the Cold War's impact on the process of colonial retention. It will be established how far the remnants were influenced by global geopolitical influences.

However, theoretical perspectives are so not so easily delineated. For instance, the Internal aspect is closely interlinked with the International dimension through UN positions on self-determination, which, in turn, affects the assertion of identities sometimes contrary to decolonisation. International considerations, meanwhile, created pressures on officials in the metropole on how to enact imperial policy in the geopolitical arena of the Cold War. On the other hand, ample evidence has been presented on imperial decision-making reacting to peripheral nationalist movements with London arguably playing 'catch up'. Conversely, London was often powerless or hamstrung by local political movements in the remnants of Empire that wished to maintain the colonial connection. This was the case in the Falkland Islands (Chapter 3) and Brunei (Chapter 5) where local political developments maintained imperial linkages against British government wishes.¹⁶⁵ Alternatively, pro-British sentiments or a lack of opposition to colonial rule reinforced imperial predilections not to abandon 'unviable' smaller territories to the maelstrom of international politics and economics

¹⁶⁵ There are parallels here with Anguilla. The failure of the West Indies Federation in 1962 moved the British government to form the West Indies Associated State, comprised of Antigua, Dominica, Saint Christopher-Nevis-Anguilla, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent. The moves towards independence for the separate states was not always smooth as local nationalism rejected association. In Anguilla, the St. Kitts police force were ejected in 1967, and Anguilla declared its independence after a referendum. The Anguillan Revolution promoted independence from the other associated states but also a wish to return to British colonial rule. Negotiations for a peaceful resolution failed, and British troops intervened in March 1969. In 1971, the Anguilla Act was passed which led to direct British rule over the island and in 1980 Anguilla formally became a BOT. See Spencer Mawby, *Ordering Independence: The End of Empire in the Anglophone Caribbean, 1947-1969* (London, 2012), 222-231; Spencer Mawby, 'Overwhelmed in a Very Small Place: The Wilson Government and the Crisis in Anguilla', *Twentieth Century British History*, 23, 2 (2012): 246-274.

and might allow the envisioning of imperial scenarios in which colonial retention could be strategically or economically advantageous in the longer term (as in the case of Diego Garcia discussed in Chapter 4 and in the slowing down of Brunei's decolonisation examined in Chapter 5). One thing is clear: there is no one overarching theory that can be applied broadly to decolonisation – the process was far too varied, too quick in its unravelling and not adaptive enough in a bi-polar world. The same applies to colonial retention and each case study must be considered on merit.

Such intersections and complexities need to be considered when comparing the case studies in order to understand retention. As the thesis needs to appreciate each 'I' to build a case, the analysis will be mindful that individual factors beget other influences. The differing pace of change meant some remnants were influenced by imperial considerations as well as internal domestic factors. For example, Brunei was under pressure from the metropole to decolonise, yet its internal powerbroker – the Sultan - manipulated that position keeping it within a colonial relationship until 1984. The Falklands also held a strong internal position in resistance to decolonisation and through lobbying the metropolitan government forced an imperial reaction to international events. Finally, Diego Garcia, which when placed in the Cold War context proved susceptible to US pressures for ongoing colonialism but was also not immune from imperial considerations in London and internal issues concerning the former residents' rights (and the development of a Chagossian identity in exile).

Hence, the thesis as a whole enables the readers to be aware of the theoretical approaches to the end of the Empire and how these can be equally be applied to the retention of colonies. By focusing on three case studies a widespread picture can be

drawn on decolonisation in the twentieth-century existing alongside a process of colonial retention. Although there will be lots of contextual information in the following three chapters specific to the case studies, this will not be a simple narrative but will employ the academic framework of the 3 Is to interrogate the remnants of Empire.

Chapter Three: The Falkland Islands

Introduction

“The Falklands thing was a fight between two bald men over a comb”¹

The 1982 Falklands War was a watershed moment in the history of the Falkland Islands and it marked a conclusion to the sovereignty debates that had proved problematic for the Islanders and the British government since the 1960s. Albeit a brief conflict, British victory accorded the Islanders full British citizenship in 1983 (after this had previously been rescinded in 1981 - see page 135). Additionally, the “socio-economic situation improved through British investments made after the war, and the liberalisation of economic measures that had been stalled through fear of angering Argentina.” Moreover, instigation of fishing licenses “transformed the Falkland Island’s society and economy” and, importantly, no discussions of the sovereignty dispute would ever be entered into with “any Argentine government ever again.”² In 1985, the enactment of a new constitution promoted internal self-government and powers have continued to be devolved to the Islanders and party politics promoted.

Such developments were unthinkable, and difficult to fulfil, in the years leading up to 1982. The strongest signifier of British rule was Margaret Thatcher’s speech in Stanley in January 1983 which proudly proclaimed British victory as “restoring British sovereignty and British administration to a people of British stock who were British, were loyal British, and wished to remain British on a British island...Today again the Union Jack flies over Port Stanley, and

¹ Translated from *dos calvos peleando por un peine* in Spanish. This characterisation by the Argentinian writer Jorge Luis Borges emphasises the apparent absurdity of the conflict in 1982, bringing forward the notion that the Islands were of little value to either Britain or Argentina other than for jingoistic and rhetorical purposes.

² Dodds, *Pink Ice*, 185.

may it ever fly there.”³ As well as stressing the right of British sovereignty, it signified a reversal in British government attitudes in that the population were now recognised as British after years of ambiguity. The preceding years were marked by vacillating support of sovereignty and clandestine acceptance that ultimate sovereignty would transfer to Argentina *eventually*. This prevailing view was even acknowledged by the US government, which noted in 1979 that there could be no avoiding “the eventual end of Britain’s admittedly anachronistic colonial rule.”⁴ The 1982 conflict produced a notable transformation and brought about a ‘new imperialism’ for the Falkland Islands (a ‘second colonial occupation’ much later but nevertheless akin to the reassertion of British power after World War Two) or a “reinvansion” as McCourt characterised it.⁵ This ruptures the traditional perception of decolonisation. The “reinvansion” reoriented the UK-Falklands relationship and again emphasises Darwin’s disappointment at trying to find a logical pattern in British decolonisation after 1945.⁶

The discussion of the Internal factor will explore Falkland Islander identity and how this affected British sovereignty. The largely mono-racial population is mostly descended from Scottish and Welsh sheep farmers with UK residents forming their nearest ethnic kin. Issues of ethnicity and nationality created an identity that conflicted with anti-colonial nationalism which struggled for independence in the later-twentieth century. Existing scholarship recognises, by and large, that rising nationalism produced an assertion of cultural identity which moved dependent peoples away from the metropole. But there are instances of counter-nationalism, that is, the development of a stronger and greater attachment to the metropole – centripetal

³ Margaret Thatcher’s Speech in Port Stanley, 10 January 1983, Margaret Thatcher Foundation, <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/105227> [accessed 28 October 2019].

⁴ Air-gram from the Embassy in Argentina to State Department, 16 May 1979, *FRUS, 1981-1988*, Vol. XIII Conflict in the South Atlantic, Document A-36.

⁵ David McCourt, ‘Role-playing and Identity Affirmation in International Politics: Britain’s Reinvansion of the Falklands, 1982’, *Review of International Studies*, 37, 4 (2011): 1599-1621.

⁶ Darwin, *British Decolonisation*, 206.

rather than centrifugal forces influencing colonial politics. This developed in the Falklands, and this potent pro-colonial nationalism impacted British decision-making in a conflict between decolonisation and retention of peoples descended from British stock. This first section will also explore the British Nationality Act of 1981 and the impact this had on the Falkland Islanders, as well as their identity and actions through the Falklands Lobby.

Discussion of the Imperial factor will examine the role of the British government as an actor in the relationship. This will analyse economic factors, as well as considering British political attitudes towards the Falklands and its representation in Westminster during the era of decolonisation. Analysing the 1976-1977 Falkland Islands Economic Review (hereafter the Shackleton Report) provides insight into how the Falklands were perceived in government circles preceding the 1982 conflict. The geographic remoteness of the Islands restricted economic development producing a dilemma for the British Government – the extent to which metropolitan economic investment should be put in and what might be got out. As Freedman writes, a briefing note was left for the incoming Thatcher government in 1979 describing the Falklands as “a remote set of islands, with a dwindling population and limited economic prospects, [which] was reliant on resources from a neighbouring country.”⁷ Hardly a glowing report in the in-tray of a new government.

Nevertheless, the resource issue will be explored and the degree to which potential oil fields on the Falklands’ continental shelf were considered an economic asset. Natural resources provided an opportunity to develop the economy of the islands and overcome the economic stasis. Furthermore, politics in London was significant. Political party roles in dictating the course of the colony’s development will be evident as changes from Labour to Conservative

⁷ Cited in Lawrence Freedman, *The Official History of the Falklands Campaign* (Abingdon, 2005), 99.

governments in the 1970s shifted future policy towards the Falkland Islands. Additionally, the incorporation of the CO into the FCO meant that the Falklands reduced in priority in favour of larger international problems, and this bureaucratic inertia will also be examined in the Imperial section.

The discussion of International factors, meanwhile, will examine how the Falklands Islands issues was situated in international politics – namely in US attitudes and at the UN in the context of the principle of self-determination. This additional level of analysis places the Falklands alongside other problematic British colonies and also in the Cold War context. Considering the US through its supposedly anti-colonial perspective, and how this was offset against the strategic benefits of the Falkland Islands, challenges the notion of US anti-colonialism pushing universal decolonisation. Analysis of how the UN allocated its time on colonial matters shows that the Falkland Islands was a problem for the organisation. The confrontation between self-determination and territorial integrity was highly important preceding the 1982 conflict.

Internal Factors in the Retention of the Falkland Islands

“Those who cross the sea change their clime, not their mind”⁸

National identity and culture are important perspectives for examination of the internal dynamics of the Falkland Islands. The Islanders’ attachment to the metropole is strong and has overshadowed other aspects of the sovereignty debate. As Alan Beith, Liberal MP for Berwick-upon-Tweed, put it in 1977: “in moral terms [the argument over sovereignty] is much less significant than [that] about the right of self-determination by the islanders.”⁹ The nationalism that exists on the Falkland Islands markedly contrasts to other settler colonies - Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and South Africa - that moved away economically, culturally and geopolitically from the metropole after World War Two and asserted a more independent world view.¹⁰ The Falkland Islanders are akin to people in smaller British territories, the most obvious being Gibraltar where an influential Britishness remains. There are parallels because both have a strong British identity and proximity to a larger power which has contested British sovereignty.¹¹ The discussion of the Internal factor will examine national identity in the Falkland Islands to understand why the population has not adhered to the conventional colonial

⁸ Voltaire’s maxim is cited in Marjory Harper’s and Stephen Constantine’s, *Oxford History of the British Empire: Migration and Empire* (Oxford, 2010), 8 and fits well in understanding the identity culture of the Islanders. Whilst there was population movement, the climate of the Falkland Islands is similar to the UK. Both have maritime climates and sit at similar latitudes – albeit in different hemispheres. Port Stanley has been called the ‘Hemel Hempstead of the Southern World’ (Raban, *Coasting*, 40) and this further points to the affinity between the Falklands and the UK.

⁹ The Falkland Islands, HoC, Volume 925, Column 555, 2 February 1977.

¹⁰ A.G. Hopkins, ‘Rethinking Decolonization’, *Past and Present*, 200, 1 (2008): 211-247.

¹¹ Constantine, *Community and Identity*; Constantine, ‘Monarchy and Constructing Identity’; Peter Gold, ‘Identity Formation in Gibraltar: Geopolitical, Historical and Cultural Factors’, *Geopolitics*, 15, 2 (2010): 367-384.

narrative of anti-colonial nationalism. Rather, this remains a community that sees itself as part of the United Kingdom.

National Identity and the Falklands

To recognise the Falklands in the context of identity, ethnicity and nationality, it is important to place the Islands into an Anglo-Saxon diaspora of emigration and the significance of Britishness in the imperial age. While the Falklands population only ever represented a maximum of 3400 individuals in the 1920s it was still part of the British world the Empire represented.¹² There would have been a kinship with populations in rural Upper Canada or the Savannahs of Rhodesia, as well as the UK. While the Falklands have not been traditionally viewed as a ‘settler’ colony, for the purposes of this study it is useful to categorise them as so because they are made up predominantly by a population of British descent. The Falkland Islanders would have felt part of the Anglo-world which endured through the period of decolonisation.¹³ Nevertheless, Lord Chalfont, Minister of State at the FCO, warned the Islanders in 1968 to “make sure they know what it means to be British. It is not the same as it was 100 years ago.”¹⁴ The ‘Neo-British’ world, where 22.6 million people left the shores of the British Isles between 1814 and 1914, had ended.¹⁵ While countries such as Australia eventually developed a national identity that drew the ex-Dominion away from Britain, the Falkland Islanders needed reminding that to remain so resolutely attached to the UK did not

¹² Historical populations figures of the Falkland Islands can be accessed through census data. Falkland Island Census, Stanley, 1962, British Library, C.S.F413/4.

¹³ See Gary Magee and Andrew Thompson, *Empire and Globalisation: Networks of People, Goods and Capital in the British World, c. 1850-1914* (Cambridge, 2010); Fedorowich & Thompson, *Empire, Migration and Identity*.

¹⁴ Cited in Donaghy, *Falkland Islands*, 6.

¹⁵ While precise figures for those leaving are available, the records do not detail where the migrants were going. Bridge and Fedorowich extrapolates figures of 22.6 million migrants who left the British Isles between 1814 and 1914. Based on this, the maximum population of the Falklands only ever represented 0.015% of British emigration from the UK. Carl Bridge and Kent Fedorowich, ‘Mapping the British World’ in Carl Bridge & Kent Fedorowich (eds), *Mapping the British World: Diaspora, Culture and Identity* (London, 2003), 3.

bring the benefits of preceding decades. Indeed, British officials perceived “fossilised attitudes” in the “isolated and remote dependency”.¹⁶

Recognising that a foundation of Empire was migration and the movement of peoples to colonies overseas provides a root causal explanation for identity formation in the Falkland Islands. The appropriation (or continuation) of British culture represented through the routine employment of the Union Jack/Flag (the Falklands Islands flag incorporates the Union Flag), and in the use of ‘we’, ‘us’ and ‘our’ in language, represented a form of ‘banal nationalism’ as per Gibraltar.¹⁷ There were material linkages too. Remittance networks existed through the Falkland Islands Company (FICo) which was listed on the London Stock Exchange, while emotional kinship was reinforced through common ethnicity. Cosmo Haskard, Falkland Islands Governor, stressed aspects of this reinforced British identity when writing to the Commonwealth Office in 1967:

...the flag (flying everyday day over Stanley), and the national anthem (sung vigorously once a week in the Cathedral and played last thing at night over the wireless). Our links, sentimental and economic, bind us firmly to England.¹⁸

The Falkland Islanders used and continue to use these symbols to emphasise a metropolitan identity, albeit derived from an imperial centre 8000 miles away., can remain so attached to the ‘inventing’ country.

Anderson’s *Imagined Communities* (introduced in Chapter 2) helps understand the Falkland Islands through the lens of an imagined British identity despite the Islands being geographically distant from the metropole, which the inhabitants so dearly cherish and closely identify with.

¹⁶ Lord Chalfont’s visit to the Falkland Islands, Notes on the Factors affecting Her Majesty’s Government’s Policy in the Anglo-Argentine Dispute, November 1968, FCO 42/306.

¹⁷ Stephen Constantine, *Community and Identity*, 411.

¹⁸ Letter from Governor Haskard to Bennet, FCO, October 1967, FCO 7/154.

Anderson's idea that while members of a society cannot know all other members but still can collectively belong to the same 'nation' can be employed here. Kelpers (the Falkland Islanders' self-designated given name due to the abundance of kelp that grows around the islands) see themselves as belonging to the UK and exerting "a public culture of support for English football teams, celebrations of the Queen's Official Birthday, and ritualised flag waving."¹⁹

This Britishness was constantly emphasised in interactions with the metropole. Patriotic feelings were generated in 1968 by the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between Argentina and the UK (which agreed a "willingness to transfer sovereignty" as the British had difficulty in defending the Islands due to their geographic isolation).²⁰ The Memorandum, and negotiations with the Argentinian government, included no input from the Islanders and prompted them to write an open letter to all MPs and 12 national newspapers in the UK:

ARE YOU AWARE THAT: -

Negotiations are now proceeding between the British and Argentina Governments which may result at any moment in the handing-over of the Falkland Islands to The Argentine.

TAKE NOTE THAT:

The Inhabitants of the Islands have never yet been consulted regarding their future - they

Do NOT want to become Argentines - they are as British as you are, mostly of English and Scottish ancestry, even to the 6th generation - five out of six were born on the Islands -

Many elderly people have never been elsewhere - there is no racial problem - no unemployment - any poverty, we are not in debt.

ARE YOU AWARE THAT -

The people of these Islands do not wish to submit to a Foreign Language, Law, Customs, and Culture because for 135 years they have happily pursued their own peaceful way of life, a very British way of life, unique in fact when you consider that the islands are 8,000 miles from the country which they still call 'Home' in site of the Immigration Act. Lord Caradon [Permanent Representative to the UN] said to the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1965: "The people of this territory are not to be betrayed or bartered. Their wishes and their interests are

¹⁹ Dodds, *Pink Ice*, 177.

²⁰ Vaughn Miller, 'Argentina and the Falkland Islands', House of Commons Library, 27 January 2012.

paramount, and we shall do our duty in protecting them.” British ministers have said the same until 1967 since when there has been silence.

QUESTIONS -

Is our tiny community to be used as a pawn in Power Politics?

Do you not feel ashamed that this wicked thing may suddenly be foisted on us?

What can you do to prevent it?

What are you doing?

WE NEED YOUR HELP!²¹

Another notable example of patriotism was a poem written in 1979 by a Falkland Islander to the British government in commemoration of Falklands Battle Day.²² This proudly displayed pomp and solidarity with the UK as well as a firmly-rooted attachment:

The Falkland Islands are loyal and true
To the flag red, white and blue,
Do not sell our people short
We are British in body, soul and thought,

So put the Argentine contracts in a box
And send them via the B.A. [Buenos Aires] docks,
And in a letter to be sure to tell
The Argentine to go to hell.²³

This patriotism was wrapped up in a British identity and through a racial dimension (or the apparent lack of racial differences, vis-à-vis Britain, which distinguished the Falklands from other former UK dependencies in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and the Pacific), which is evident in the 1968 letter. As Dodds writes, racial dynamics were not exclusive to the 1960s and 1970s, and as far back as 1948 Falkland Islands councillors claimed the “100% whiteness” of the population.²⁴ Islanders placed this ‘whiteness’ in a UK context. In a public Legislative Council

²¹ ‘Plea for Help’, *The Times*, 12 March 1968 cited in Dodds, *Pink Ice*, 129-30.

²² The Battle of the Falkland Islands (8 December 1914) established the dominance of the Royal Navy in the South Atlantic after the defeat of the German Navy during World War One. This also confirmed British sovereignty over the Falklands in the face of an external threat – and has an obvious historical resonance for Falklanders in the context of Argentinian aggrandisement. It remains a significant commemorative day in the Falkland Islands where it is a public holiday.

²³ Poem written about Falkland Islands ‘Battle Day’ to HMG, November 1979, FCO 7/3686. The full text of the poem can be found in Appendix A of this thesis.

²⁴ Dodds, *Pink Ice*, 130.

meeting in Stanley in 1979, there was outcry about the possible resettlement of Vietnamese ‘Boat People’ in the Falklands as the Islanders did not “want to lumber ourselves with the same racial problems as the UK” and lose their perceived mono-racial identity.²⁵ The “problems of Asian migration and the problems that it caused in the UK through lack of integration” were further stressed.²⁶

The Falkland Islanders’ perception of Britain married up with many in the UK and it was noted by the FCO in 1979 that: “There are, in this country, strong feelings of solidarity with the Falkland Islands.”²⁷ British public support was noted in letters sent to the UK government through the Falkland Islands Committee (FIC), later Falkland Islands Association (FIA), a non-partisan body that applied pressure for recognition by the UK government of self-determination, it also mobilised public opinion in the UK against leaseback and condominium (see page 131). One strongly worded letter expressed outrage that even sovereignty talks could be entered into as “handing over to Fascism [that is, the Argentinian junta] would be an act of infamy.”²⁸ People in the UK also perceived Falkland Islander ethnicity as mono-racial, and as more British than so-called “Black Englishmen” during the 1970s. As Casey writes, Britishness was equated with Whiteness and this presented Falkland Islanders’ as ethnically British.²⁹ This ethnic link had a large impact in 1982 and explains Thatcher’s rhetoric about the Falkland Islanders ‘belonging’ to the UK.

²⁵ ‘Councillor Wallace holds public meeting’, *Penguin News*, 3 October 1979.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Minister of State’s Meeting on Falkland Islands, 18 September 1979, FCO 7/3686.

²⁸ Letter to Mrs Thatcher from a member of the public, 12 November 1979, FCO 7/3686.

²⁹ J. Casey, ‘One Nation: The Politics of Race’, *The Salisbury Review*, 25 (1985) cited in Ian Grosvenor, ‘What do they know of England who only England know: a Case for Alternative Narrative of the Ordinary in Twenty-First Century Britain’, *History of Education*, 47, 2 (2018): 151.

Additionally, this perception married with Whitehall bureaucrats, specifically Sir Hilton Poynton, who in 1962 exclaimed that the Islanders did not have an independent identity, but that “they are Englishmen!”³⁰ This remarkable exclamation reflected Poynton’s own personal beliefs as a champion of the smaller colonial territories, but also implied a firm British official position that would have implications during and after the 1982 conflict. The fact that the Falklands were perceived to be “English” was further articulated by FCO Minister Ted Rowlands who wrote in *The Guardian* in 1977 on the possibility of Argentinian sovereignty, “that the prospects of an eternity with no Royal Family, with a Spanish language bureaucracy, the Roman Catholic Church, national service, no divorce and no draught bitter is disconcerting. The islanders would not want it!”³¹

A key factor in colonial retention then has been the Falkland Islanders’ affinity to the UK as a central element in their collective identity, but this overlooks their own separate sense of identity. The fact that the Islanders refer to themselves as Kelpers is evidence of a local and specific identification. It has even been suggested that the notion of Kelper identity has been formulated not through a sense of Britishness, but “constructed upon the Islanders’ desire not to deal with Argentina” highlighting that in the face of external pressures embracing Britishness forms a bulwark.³² Here is the academic concept of ‘Othering’ (encountered in Chapter 2) in action, making use of external differences to establish who you are by creating a sense of who you are not. The Anglo-Argentinian dyadic relationship has been paradoxically beneficial to those Falkland Islanders who wish to resist absorption into Argentina through forming a British identity in the South Atlantic and keeping Britain as the colonial power. It seems the Kelpers

³⁰ Sir Hilton Poynton to the Colonial Secretary’s Office, Stanley, 1 October 1962, FCO 1024/325.

³¹ ‘Falklands: Mr Rowlands Explains Why’, *The Guardian*, 17 December 1977.

³² Dodds, *Pink Ice*, 3.

identified with an “imagined political community” being a social construct and not based on face-to-face interaction.³³

From the outside, these observations (both British and Argentinian) indicate a homogenous ‘British’ culture. In reality, however, there was diversity between those who lived in Port Stanley (the capital) and those in the Camp (the countryside). In 1979 the Argentinian daily, *La Nación*, believed that ‘Britishness’ overcame this diversity and allowed islanders to come together to discuss the sovereignty question with no social distinctions evident.³⁴ But the Shackleton Report addressed the class differences and polarisation of Stanley and the Camp as a possible obstacle to integration with Argentina.³⁵ A decade earlier, Willoughby Thompson, Falkland Islands Colonial Secretary, clearly highlighted divisions within the population. Richer land owners (many of whom lived in the UK) and farmers were happy for sovereignty to be transferred to Argentina, and one disgruntled inhabitant had been overheard saying, “what do I get out of England for all the taxes I pay – the Queen – we might be as well off under Argentina.”³⁶ In contrast to this, the shepherd populations, who were very much in opposition to the South Americans, referred to these Angloseptic and pragmatic land owners as “niggers” to show their disapproval.³⁷ That some residents did not hold such an affinity to the UK contradicts the notion that the population was wholly anti-Argentinian. Some residents were driven by personal economic advantages opposed to political and societal issues and were unconcerned by who ruled, as long as investments were safe.

³³ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 5-6.

³⁴ *La Nación*, 26 July 1979, CO 1024/597.

³⁵ The Shackleton Report, 27 August 1976, OD 28/425.

³⁶ Notes on Talks with Thompson, May 1966, CO 1024/597.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

Using identity construction to understand why the Falklands has remained attached to the UK shows the importance of cultural links. The Islanders' sense of their place in the world distinguished them from Argentina and their use of banal nationalist symbolism reinforced their response against Argentine claims to their sovereignty creating an 'imagined community' with the UK and this further produced a sense of British cultural distinctiveness. The exploitation of British symbols by 'the Kelpers' places this local culture in an imperial context, and this is arguably a strong explanation as to how this pro-imperial nationalism drove retention. The kinship link was difficult to break.

The Falklands Lobby

Notions of Britishness and the use of British iconography developed the pro-British identity of the Falklands and did much to influence both the Islanders' relationship with the UK Parliament, and in-turn Parliament's relationship with the Islanders. This is apparent through the operations of the Falklands Lobby in the UK which further articulated and developed a sense of Britishness, and which worked in both directions by convincing influential Britons that the Falklands were part of a wider 'British World'.

The Lobby was established by Arthur Barton, a member of the Legislative Council and the FICo representative on the Islands, in response to the 1968 Memorandum of Understanding. Barton lobbied sympathetic cross-party MPs to not lease the Islands back to Argentina and the grouping subsequently became a permanent body known as the FIC and included influential MPs, notably Nigel Fisher, former Conservative Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies. The FIC was instrumental in generating cross-party support in the UK parliament for expulsion of

Argentinian occupying forces in 1982, and after this the body became the FIA.³⁸ The Lobby sought to protect a British way of life in the Falklands and frequently mentioned the ideas of ‘British stock’, ‘loyalty’, ‘kith and kin’ which did much to promote the patriotism the Islanders proudly displayed.³⁹

The FIC and its representatives were non-partisan and were vocal in their lobbying efforts with members stating that they were fed up “with [the British Government] treating us like our own sheep and putting us in whatever paddock our owners consider would be ‘in our interests’.”⁴⁰ Fears of Argentinian take-over intensified anxieties, with one Islander railing at “the faceless wonders” in the UK civil service who went to the “right schools and end up in the rights jobs, carefully making the wrong decisions.”⁴¹

By the 1970s, the FIC was instrumental in lobbying UK MPs, journalists and diplomats on matters relating to the Falkland Islands. Lobbying was undertaken at the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), a global forum for sovereign parliaments, in September 1975, and also at the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), a body which promoted parliamentary activity in the Commonwealth. It was here where L.G. Blake, a Falkland Islands Legislative Councillor and Honorary Secretary of the FIA, “tried to get to know personally at least one member from every delegation and acquaint him [sic.] with the true facts about the Argentine [sic.] claim to sovereignty.”⁴² In 1979, Mr Wallace, Councillor for Stanley, went to Auckland

³⁸ Before the 1980s, in British documents, both the FIA and FIC are used interchangeably. In 2016, a sub-committee was set-up, the Falkland Islands Association Stanley Committee (FIASC), promoting the role of the Falkland Islands in the UK and elsewhere. It utilises this local support to help its lobbying efforts in the UK parliament. The Falkland Islands Association, <https://www.fiassociation.com/about-us>, [accessed 28 October 2019].

³⁹ Dodds, *Pink Ice*, 134.

⁴⁰ K. Bertrand, Carcass Island, Falkland Islands to the Secretary of the FIC, 12 February 1976, FCO 7/3232.

⁴¹ Anonymous letter to the *Falkland Islands Times*, 30 March 1976, Falkland Islands Digitised Archives, <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/jdownloads/FI%20Times%20FI%20Monthly%20Review/1976%20Jan-Jun.pdf> [accessed 17 November 2019].

⁴² Report by Mrs. Blake, February 1976, FCO 7/3232.

for another CPA meeting and was surprised to find “that many representatives did not know the Falklands exist!”⁴³ In 1973, the annual ‘Falkland Islands Government Reception’ was established in London. The reception has been held every June since to celebrate the territory and its people and is attended by cross-party MPs, ex-governors, Chilean Ambassador and Uruguayan Consul (countries which do not recognise Argentina’s claimed sovereignty over the Falklands), and the event includes a goodwill message from Queen Elizabeth II.

Lord Shackleton’s visit to undertake the economic survey in 1976 also provided an opportunity for lobbying and to showcase the social and economic situation of the colony. Shackleton’s arrival in Stanley on 3 January was met by a jubilant crowd waving Union Flags and banners proclaiming “keep the Falklands British.”⁴⁴ The Falkland Islands Government (FIG), working with the London office of the FIA, promoted the colony and mounted a press campaign, with a two-page spread in *The Times* to plead the FIG’s case for economic modernisation.⁴⁵ The plea pressed Whitehall to act and stop dallying with the economy as had been the case with the sovereignty issue. The press campaign in *The Times* also reads as a marketing tool, as much as a plea for help, with advertisements for the Sheepowners’ Association appealing to “not sell us down the river” and for the promotion of the alginate industry and hotels in Port Stanley.⁴⁶ Additionally, young Falkland Islanders in the UK created an Action Group to promote the Islands and gained much publicity on the radio.⁴⁷ Islanders also met MPs in London, and an

⁴³ ‘Councillor Returns from New Zealand Conference’, *Penguin News*, 24 December 1979.

⁴⁴ *Falkland Islands Monthly Review*, 5 January 1976, Falkland Islands Digitised Archives, <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.fk/jdownloads/Falkland%20Islands%20Monthly%20Review/FI%20Monthly%20Review%20Mini%20Monthly%20Review/1976%20Jan-Jun.pdf> [accessed 17 November 2019]. The writer of this letter wished to remain anonymous because when the Argentinians gained sovereignty they would not wish to be a “political dissenter and end up on some list.”

⁴⁵ ‘Falkland Islands’, *The Times*, 26 August 1976.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ ‘Falkland Island Action Group’, *Falkland Island Newsletter*, November 1976.

Anglican delegation from the Falkland Islands met the Archbishop of Canterbury to discuss the Island's future position.⁴⁸

The work of the Falkland Islands London Office (which opened in 1977 above a café in West London) was instrumental in helping the Islanders' cause. The Office had its own newsletter to circulate information on the colony "during one of the most difficult times in its history."⁴⁹ At the same time, *Penguin News* (the weekly newspaper in the Falklands) was founded showing a development in print culture which would make the Islanders' case for British sovereignty and also promote implementation of the Shackleton Report. The Lobby's interactions with HMG were arguably successful in influencing MPs with appeals from the Lobby being "acknowledged by 71 MPs including Liberals, Scottish Nationals, Labour and Conservative, including Margaret Thatcher."⁵⁰ The London Office actively widened activities to highlight the neglect of the colony. In autumn 1977, the Office encouraged sympathisers to throw bottles in the sea showing messages of support for the Islanders and created car stickers, t-shirts and leaflets for publicity. One islander, Sukie Cameron, later the secretary of the London Office, displayed a whale's head from the Islands to members of the public as a metaphor for the "skeleton" of British diplomacy.⁵¹ During the Argentinian invasion in 1982, the London branch was important as a metropolitan arm of the Falkland Islands, which "lobbied, cajoled, pleaded, insisted and criticised, on behalf of the Islanders" and whose role on the issue of nationality was to promote knowledge of these British links with MPs and the general public.⁵² Even after the conflict was resolved, the FIA in London moved offices to a larger space and produced an

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ 'The Friends of the Falkland Islands', *Falkland Islands Newsletter*, November 1976.

⁵⁰ 'Falkland Islands Local Committee', *Falkland Islands Monthly Review*, 3 May 1976, Falkland Islands Digitised Archives,

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/jdownloads/Falkland%20Islands%20Monthly%20Review/FI%20Monthly%20Review%20Mini%20Monthly%20Review/1976%20Jan-Jun.pdf> [accessed 17 November 2019].

⁵¹ 'Pressure grows for Inquiry on the Administration of the Falklands', *Falkland Islands Newsletter*, November 1977.

⁵² 'The Falkland Islands Office during the Crisis', *Falkland Islands Newsletter*, June 1982.

economic brochure on the ‘prospects of the Islands.’ This was sent to all “peers, MPs, UN Ambassadors, ambassadors in Britain, Euro-MPs, the entire US Congress, to the media and to commercial organisations” to showcase the Islands and their economic potential following the 1982 conflict.⁵³

The Falklands: Nationality and Sovereignty

In 1977, Lord Shackleton reported on the Falkland Islands that:

There are but 2000 inhabitants, loyal to The Queen, bound strongly in history and sentiment to the mother country, yet in total the equivalent of an English village? There lies the rub (sic).⁵⁴

The absence of an indigenous population before British settlement in 1833 was a drawback to the Argentinian claim and raised issues of self-determination in colonies that did not have indigenous populations prior to annexation. As Councillor Mike Summers, the Managing Director of the Falkland Islands Development Corporation (FIDC), pointed out in 2003, “we are as much a people as those in Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil and Chile and many other South American countries whose inhabitants are of principally European, Indigenous or African descent.”⁵⁵

The debate over self-determination was a major issue for the Islanders. As a concept it was recognised as a legal right in the UN Charter. However, the Charter only applied this to ‘peoples’ with no definition of what a ‘people’ constituted and who power should be transferred to.⁵⁶ As Jim Clement, a Falkland Islands Councillor, protested, “in the UN and outside it, words

⁵³ ‘Prospects Brochures sent Worldwide’, *Falkland Island Newsletter*, November 1982.

⁵⁴ Prospect of the Falkland Islands, Lord Shackleton, 3 May 1977, FCO 7/3402.

⁵⁵ Councillor Mike Summers

http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Future_of_the_Falkland_Islands_and_Its_People#Self-Determination_In_The_Falkland_Islands [accessed March 2015].

⁵⁶ Denzil Dunnett, ‘Self-Determination and the Falklands’, *International Affairs*, 59, 3 (1983): 415-16.

like ‘imperialism’ and ‘colonialism’ have been hurled at Britain. How can this apply to us? We have asked to remain under the British flag...the only indigenous mammal I know is the fox.”⁵⁷ In other words, there are no indigenous people to transfer power to. Herein lies the complexity of ethnic identity and nationhood, with the former not necessarily automatically eventuating in the latter. The Islanders believe themselves to be British so a separate nationalism cannot exist, meaning the issue of sovereignty through nationality and self-determination can never be resolved. As self-determining peoples, they have chosen to remain British, therefore following the UN doctrine. Ironically, the very principle created to free colonial populations has been subverted by the Falkland Islands to justify and legitimise their ongoing colonial status.

This issue over nationality and the Falklands entered the public discourse in the late-1970s when a new citizenship act was drafted to change the nationality of colonial peoples. The Act was problematic because recognising British citizenship for Falkland Islanders would mean that this would have to be applied to all Overseas Territories and their citizens. However, to not permit the Falklands an exemption indicated a “diminishing commitment to [the Falklands] which encouraged the Argentinian invasion.”⁵⁸ The 1982 conflict galvanised the imperial government to amend the Nationality Act in 1983 making the Falkland Islanders full UK citizens. This showed a re-commitment to the Islanders. But preceding the Falklands War, the application of the 1981 Act indicated a British reluctance to maintain control over the Islands.

To the Islanders, this lack of apparent commitment was worrying. The rhetoric of ‘kith and kin’ and respecting the Islanders’ wishes could only go so far if the right of abode, and therefore full British citizenship was not bestowed upon the population. In 1980, Nicholas Ridley,

⁵⁷ Councillor Jim Clement, Speech to the Council, 1968, cited in Donaghy, *Falkland Islands*, 11.

⁵⁸ David Dixon, ‘Thatcher’s People: The British Nationality Act 1981’, *Journal of Law and Society*, 10, 2 (1983): 163.

Minister of State at the FCO, said that “full British citizenship for all was out of the question.”⁵⁹

This raised the question of the Islanders’ fate if Argentina invaded. As it was explained in a letter to the FCO from the Falkland Islands Office:

They [the islanders] claimed that theirs is a special case for several reasons:

- i. Islanders are nearly all of British descent;
- ii. the Islands had no indigenous population prior to British settlement;
- iii. the Islanders have no other “mother country”;
- iv. independence is out of the question; and
- v. in the event of Argentine action, they will have nowhere to go.⁶⁰

The above points show that to the Falkland Islanders the change in the law was disturbing and placed them in the position of second-class citizens, even though the *Falkland Islands Newsletter* described the Kelpers as “British stock [who] should be given the full right of abode in the United Kingdom.”⁶¹ The government seemed unwilling to accept a special case and it is widely accepted that changing the law was politically motivated to prevent large numbers of Hong Kong-Chinese claiming residency preceding the Joint UK-Chinese Declaration in 1984. This left the Islanders in an unenviable position, in sovereign purgatory with threats from a larger neighbour and worries of leaseback to the UK not respecting their nationality wishes.

The issues of identity and nationality are inexorably tied up with other aspects of colonial retention – imperial and international - presented in the thesis, but it is clear that internal factors were highly significant in deciding the future of the Islands. Powerful lobbying in the UK, overt British patriotism, and fears over future nationality status shows that Falkland Islands ‘nationalism’ was not a brand that sought independence but instead closer association with the UK. The bonds of kith and kin were effectively promoted during the 1982 conflict with the metropole explicitly acknowledging the Britishness of the Falkland Islands. Thatcher’s speech

⁵⁹ Summary Record of Meeting between Ministers of State at the FCO, 16 December 1980, FCO 7/3818.

⁶⁰ Letter from Falkland Islands Office, 14 November 1980, FCO 7/3818.

⁶¹ ‘New Move on Nationality’, *Falkland Islands Newsletter*, December 1980.

to the House of Commons after the Argentinian invasion expressed the link between the UK and the Falkland Islands as “people of the Falkland Islands, like the people of the United Kingdom, are an island race. Their way of life is British; their allegiance is to the Crown.”⁶² The additional support of the Falkland Islanders’ right to be British from members of the public in the UK showed that on Argentinian invasion a confluence of British sympathy and Falkland Islander national identity fundamentally married the idea of the Falkland Islands being British sovereign territory and being populated by British citizens. This binding together meant that the political status of the Islands was secure in the long-term, with no debates over sovereignty occurring again.

⁶² Speech by Margaret Thatcher, HoC, Volume 21, Column 633, 3 April 1982.

Imperial Factors in the Retention of the Falklands

Retention through economic considerations and metropolitan political concerns will be examined to reveal the imperial factor in the colonial retention of the Falkland Islands. Exploration of the wider economic situation will be focussed on the 1976 Shackleton Report to provide a more thorough investigation of British economic thinking about the Falkland Islands. The report was the result of a full enquiry into the society and economy of the Falkland Islands and was tasked to Lord Shackleton by the FCO.⁶³ It did much to bring the Islands into the UK political mainstream, even if it was hoped by some members of the British government that Shackleton's findings would prove the Islands to be unviable as a colony and therefore ripe for a transfer of sovereignty to Argentina, thus removing a burden on the UK Exchequer.

Reflecting on the political climate and the role it had in determining the Falkland Islands' future, the relationship between politics, decolonisation, and retention can be explored. Publicly there seemed to be bi-partisan support for the Falkland Islands remaining British before the 1982 War. However, there was discord in government. The FCO actively explored avenues of leaseback to Argentina but at the same time was victim to pressure from the FIA and MPs on maintaining the Falkland Islands colonial status. This led to bureaucratic inertia as there was no clear policy on the future of the Islands. The additional departmental shift of the Islands from the CO to the Latin American department at the FCO left them susceptible to intransigence (and even possible transfer of sovereignty to Buenos Aires) as FCO policy was driven by wider Latin American considerations and not the sentiments of the Falkland Islands.

⁶³ Lord Shackleton was a Labour Party MP for Preston and later Preston South until 1955. After 1958, he became Baron Shackleton and later leader of the Labour Party in the House of Lords and in 1968 the minister in charge of the Civil Service. His previous experience of 'successively' removing British forces from Aden in 1967 meant that he was a suitable candidate to undertake an economic survey of the Falkland Islands in 1976. His prominent position in South Atlantic affairs also derived from his father, Ernest Shackleton, the celebrated Antarctic explorer and Shackleton junior's role as president of the Royal Geographic Association from 1971-4.

These factors enable analysis of retention through examining the periphery's impact on the metropole, and how that assisted colonial retention.

The Economic Situation

Economically, the Islands suffered under the sovereignty issue, which “hung over [the Shackleton Report’s] heads as it does the Falklands.”⁶⁴ There was little political will to economically develop the Islands due to the cost and distances involved, and the sovereignty dispute was proving hard to resolve. Additional problems arose from the mono-cultural economy, which relied on sheep farming and wool exports. In 1975, there were 644,000 sheep on the Falklands providing wool exports, but no outlet to export meat.⁶⁵ This left the Falklands “at the mercy of both fluctuations in wool prices and the policies of the FICo.”⁶⁶ The FICo was also criticised for reinvesting money in Britain rather than locally which drained capital and depressed the economy further.⁶⁷

Nevertheless, the Falkland Islands provided a net profit to London, as indicated by a 1969 Board of Trade report which showed a balance of payments surplus of about £500,000. However, the report acknowledged that while there was an annual budget surplus of £400,000, with £600,000 worth of imports per annum from the UK, “eventual transfer would not affect the UK economy.”⁶⁸ This recognised that transfer was considered a possibility in some government departments, namely the Treasury, at a time of financial crisis when the UK exchequer was desperate to cut overseas public expenditure and as we saw in Chapter 2 the

⁶⁴ The Shackleton Report, OD 28/423.

⁶⁵ Lord Shackleton, ‘Prospect of the Falkland Islands’, *The Geographical Journal*, 143, 1 (1977): 4.

⁶⁶ Peter Beck, ‘Cooperative Confrontation in the Falkland Islands Dispute: The Anglo-Argentine Search for a Way Forward, 1968-1981’, *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*, 24, 1 (1982): 48.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ ‘Argentine Territorial Claims to the Falkland Islands’, November 1969, BT 11/6155. Presumably, the Islands were deemed relatively unimportant when compared with other Sterling Area members, such as Australia and indeed British-protected Brunei, which had far larger Balance of Payments surpluses – see Chapter 5.

Labour government was disengaging rapidly from other overseas commitments, notably east of Suez.

Whitehall assessments of economic value of the Falkland Islands also acknowledged the relative importance of Anglo-Argentinian trading relations. These costings evaluated the “book value of [British] investments in Argentina, excluding oil, at £75 million” in 1969.⁶⁹ In 1968, UK exports to Argentina increased 34 per cent and there was a general upward trajectory in bilateral relations.⁷⁰ Offset against the limited surplus that the Falkland Islands provided, it was clear that Argentinian trade was more beneficial to the UK and was also identified as impeding Argentina’s rash decisions over the Falklands sovereignty issue. In 1968, 40 per cent of all of Argentina’s meat exports (226,000 tons) came to the UK representing nine per cent of the country’s total foreign exports. In 1970, the British Industrial Exhibition was launched in Buenos Aires, which was undertaken to boost British trade in Argentina and led to “an army of 300 engineers descending on Argentina to forge links with the Gaucho [a skilled horseman and national symbol of Argentina]”, with the aim of “playing ball with the Argentinians.”⁷¹ British world trade had slackened in the post-war period, especially to Argentina, and this was a way of promoting reengagement, necessitating the £1m Exhibition cost to boost British exports. With the European Common Market looming, it was important to remind British industries of the potential of Argentina and overseas investments to be made outside Europe. The significance was noted by the Board of Trade, whose mandarins fretted that the Falklands dispute threatened the Exhibition’s success since “any political embarrassments would seriously affect the order books of exhibitors and preclude the event’s opening by Prince

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Hugh Grey & Richard Brooks, ‘British Industry Joins the Gaucho’, *Industrial Management*, 70, 1 (1970): 76-130.

Charles.”⁷² Roy Mason, President of the Board of Trade, expected a boom year off the back of the Exhibition in a market that “has been neglected for far too long.”⁷³

Throughout the 1970s, Argentina was an important trading partner for the UK and even though Argentina ranked thirty-seventh out of the top fifty British export destinations, the invisibles (that is, earnings from the sale of services or other items not constituting tangible commodities) remained significant.⁷⁴ With the British economy continuing to experience acute financial difficulties, talks in 1977 between Argentinian Ministers and Ted Rowlands suggested that “[the Falklands] should come under a pyramid of agreements that modernised Anglo-Argentine relations.”⁷⁵ The FCO also recognised that the Falkland Islands needed to be placed in context to “understand the realities of power.”⁷⁶ In the wider scheme of international relations and trade, the South Atlantic remnants of Empire seemed superfluous. There were larger economic priorities to consider in Whitehall and Westminster, and for many mandarins and ministers trade with Argentina should not be allowed to suffer over the Falklands.

Whitehall’s exploration of economic value was maintained throughout the sovereignty dispute. A 1973 report from the FCO Research Department included ‘option costings’ for the future of the Falkland Islands, which are revealing in their scope (see Table 2). The costings were broken down into three scenarios: present policy, which would include no budgetary aid and a reduction in defence costs of 70 per cent; secondly, transfer to Argentina, which required no aid from 1978 and compensation for civil servants; and, total abandonment with population

⁷² ‘Argentinian Territorial Claims’, November 1969, BT 11/6155.

⁷³ ‘Argentina tops Latin American market’, *The Financial Times*, 5 February 1970.

⁷⁴ Ursula Wasserman, ‘Anglo-Argentine Trading Arrangements’, *Journal of World Trade Law*, 16, 4 (1982): 368.

⁷⁵ Falklands and Argentina: Checklist of the Steering Brief, February 1977, FCO 7/3389.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

evacuation to New Zealand.⁷⁷ Alongside this, the static production levels meant that the total national income of the Falklands of £1.1 million had not risen in ten-years at a time of rising inflation and the declining purchasing power of sterling by 50 per cent.⁷⁸ The economic situation in the Falklands was stagnant at best, therefore, with few areas recognised for future development. As abandonment was costed, it indicated that no solution was off limits for the Islands' future and a disassociation with the colony was being seriously entertained.

Table 2: Option Costings for the Falkland Islands

		1973	1978	1983
Present Policy	Aid (£m)	0.09	0.09	0.09
	Defence (£m)	0.71	0.71	0.71
	Total (£m)	0.8	0.8	0.8
Transfer to Argentina	Aid (£m)	0.9	0.75	-
	Defence (£m)	-	-	-
	Total (£m)	0.9	0.75	-
Abandonment	Defence (£m)	0.9	3.75	-
	Aid (£m)	-	-	-
	Total (£m)	0.9	3.75	-

Source: FCO Research Department, May 1973, FCO 86/89.

Nevertheless, this official financial assessment ran contrary to media reports which painted a rosier economic picture. A 1976 piece in *The Guardian* reported that between 1951 and 1973 the Falklands provided a net gain to the Exchequer of £1m and “far from being a burden...deserve a long overdue return [on tax].”⁷⁹ Conservative MP, Richard Luce noted in

⁷⁷ New Zealand was mooted as a potential place for Islanders to emigrate as the climate is similar and both countries are reliant on sheep-farming.

⁷⁸ Paper from the American Studies Research Department, FCO, May 1973, FCO 86/89.

⁷⁹ ‘Britain Gains by Falkland Tax’, *The Guardian*, 21 July 1976.

the Commons in 1977, that from 1953 to 1977 the revenue from taxes extracted by the UK from the Falkland Islands was twice as much as the British aid given to the islands.⁸⁰ However, buoyant news did little to change political prospects.

What is evident is that the British government was realising the benefits of disengagement from the South Atlantic by the late-1970s (if not earlier).⁸¹ The Callaghan government confirmed British indifference to the Falkland Islands by ignoring much of the 1976 Shackleton Report as it was deemed too expensive to implement the recommendations.⁸² The Bank of England, when faced with the prospect of a bond loan of £100,000 for colonial development, removed itself from the situation by explaining to the FCO that the sum was too small for the City to be interested in and anyhow the “constitutional problem would make such an issue unattractive.”⁸³ The British government’s hesitation to do something with the Islands left them “in a kind of limbo, unable to take full advantage of their economic potential and constantly facing the threat of some kind of pressure from their large neighbour.”⁸⁴ Factoring in Argentinian relations and the perceived drain on British resources meant that by the late-1970s there was little economic justification for the Falkland Islands to be retained long term.

Indeed, the ruthless cost-cutting designs of the Thatcher government after 1979 led to underlying continuities with the preceding Labour administration. In 1980, Nicholas Ridley claimed that the Islands were “blighted...and suffered from full economic decline”, and his

⁸⁰ The Falkland Islands, HoC, Volume 924, Column 926, 21 January 1977. Luce was Minister of State for Foreign Affairs preceding the Falklands conflict and promoter of self-determination in Gibraltar during his tenure as Governor from 1997-2000. Famously, Luce resigned his post alongside Foreign Secretary Lord Carrington on Argentinian invasion of the Falkland Islands in 1982 given the public mud-slinging at the FCO for Britain being caught unawares.

⁸¹ Peter Beck, ‘Britain’s Antarctic Dimension’, *International Affairs*, 59, 3 (1987): 29.

⁸² Dodds, *Pink Ice*, 153 .

⁸³ Territorial Division, Bank of England to FCO, 12 December 1980, , 13A110/1, Bank of England Archive, Threadneedle Street, London (hereafter BoE).

⁸⁴ ‘An Option for the Falklands’, *The Times*, 28 November 1980.

secret meeting with his Argentinian counterpart, Carlos Cavandoli, discussed leaseback.⁸⁵ The meeting, which was arranged by the FCO and approved by the Cabinet Defence Committee, took place in Switzerland under the guise of a family holiday for Ridley, and he proposed handing Argentina sovereignty of the Falkland Islands which Britain would leaseback for 99 years.⁸⁶ The meeting, while private, raised the Islanders' suspicions, and when Ridley visited Stanley in November 1980 he was met with verbal abuse while a recording of 'Rule, Britannia!' was played. On arrival in the UK, after his Swiss 'holiday', when the meeting had become public, he faced cross-party criticism in the Commons for his Machiavellian move.⁸⁷ Ridley's visit was also striking as it highlighted the Islanders' intra-group dynamics. While some people protested, it was noted by *Penguin News* that this formed a small section of the inhabitants and many were happy to at least explore leaseback as a practical solution.⁸⁸

Attempts at overcoming the economic problems were made by the FIG, which in both 1970 and 1975 wrote to the Treasury in London in the hope of attracting brass-plate industries (legal companies but whose only tangible existence was through the name on a brass plate outside of a non-existent office) and thus becoming a tax haven. The 1970 letter indicated that the "financial revenue of the Falkland Islands is insufficient to meet their expenditure" and thus the need for economic stimulation.⁸⁹ The follow up in 1975 tentatively asked how to establish a tax haven in the hope of making the dependent territory more viable for the UK and to provide extra revenue for the London exchequer. The Treasury rejected the offer on the basis that infrastructure costs would be too high given geographic remoteness, and that the "benefits [of

⁸⁵ Dodds, *Pink Ice*, 430.

⁸⁶ Ridley gave the impression of British indifference to the Falklands, claiming that the only region Britain felt strongly about overseas was its historic claim to Bordeaux in France because of its fine wine. Mercau, *The Falklands War*, 56.

⁸⁷ Beck, 'Cooperative Confrontation in the Falkland Islands Dispute', 42.

⁸⁸ Mercau, *The Falklands War*, 57.

⁸⁹ Letter to Board of Inland Revenue, 18 November 1970, T 328/1157.

being a tax haven] are much less than commonly supposed.”⁹⁰ Aside from costs, the Treasury also advised that the “boom years for tax havens are over and is too late for countries like the Falklands to jump on the bandwagon” as the EEC was taking a tougher line.⁹¹ That the FIG was itself pursuing avenues for development underscores the lack of economic will in the metropole. This indifference worried many on the Islands. As assurances over sovereignty and the Islanders’ right to be informed over any proposed changes were made by Labour ministers in 1977. But, for a disgruntled former Conservative Colonial Secretary, Lord Boyd, the economic situation indicated that the metropolitan position was a “tightening of the noose” to “force an unwanted solution with the Argentines.”⁹²

The Shackleton Report

With an economic background established this section provides an in-depth analysis of the 1976 Shackleton Report and examination of why it was not implemented. The Report was the result of findings commissioned by HMG and assisted and prepared by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU). It provided a thorough assessment of social and economic reform, possible development, and means for the Islands to be more self-sustainable. Shackleton assessed all 36 farms on the Islands and undertook a full social and economic survey.⁹³ Though commissioned when Harold Wilson was Prime Minister, it was James Callaghan who had to deal with the Report and who was taken aback by its findings that the Islanders could have a full and prosperous future with public investment. This meant that offloading the colony would not be as easy as the government assumed. Callaghan, on reading the Report did not expect it to be as favourable to the Islanders, and he recalled that “it would never cross my mind that

⁹⁰ Letter from B. Fox, Treasury Department, 1 October 1975, T 328/1157.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Viscount Boyd of Merton (formerly Alan Lennox-Boyd), HoL, Volume 382, Column 223, 20 April 1977.

⁹³ Shackleton, ‘Falkland Islands’, 2.

Eddie [Lord Shackleton] would come back with a report...and could ever say anything other than look at this hopeless situation.”⁹⁴

The Report acknowledged that economic stagnation was intrinsically related to the sovereignty dispute with Argentina as this impeded development in communications and trade. Its main conclusion was that closer links with Argentina were required alongside other economic considerations.⁹⁵ The Report advised that the British government should be prepared to invest £5.4m in the expansion of key areas of the economy. One of these was fishing, which could provide a huge boon for the Islands, with estimates at 75-150 million tonnes of protein south of the Falklands; as a comparison, the 1970 total world catch was 70 million tonnes.⁹⁶ These fishing licenses could be given to Soviet, Polish and East German vessels that used the maritime area thus expanding the economy and creating greater investment. The potential of fishing was highlighted in the Report for much-needed revenue, which was the “largest untapped protein source in the world... that would have benefits for mankind as a whole.”⁹⁷ To Shackleton, the Islands’ potential for diversification from wool to create an independent revenue stream was large, even if the British government did not recognise it.

Additionally, Shackleton identified other areas to develop. A key improvement suggested was an extension to the airfield. This would expand the current airstrip to a full runway at a cost of £4m and allow larger planes to land. The airstrip was important for economic development as it would allow commercial flights from the UK to fly direct to the Falklands, and this would also boost industrial diversification through, for example, attracting oil companies to the

⁹⁴ Cited in Freedman, *Falkland’s Campaign*, 39.

⁹⁵ The Report angered Argentina and in response recalled its ambassador from London in early-1976. London reciprocated this move and recalled the UK ambassador from Buenos Aires with bilateral relations maintained through a chargé until the Falklands War.

⁹⁶ Letter to Rosser, Latin American Department, FCO, 19 August 1976, OD 28/425.

⁹⁷ ‘The Falklands Massive Fish Harvest: Will Britain get a Share?’, *The Times*, 31 July 1976.

Islands. Even though prior to the Report the airstrip was effectively vetoed in 1974 by Judith Hart, Minister of Overseas Development, Shackleton still deemed it necessary to include it in his report – no matter how disproportionate it seemed.⁹⁸ There were also developments in agriculture proposed as a means to diversify the economy at a cost of £1m, and ‘technical assistance’ at a further £1m. While initially implemented as a way to buy time in the sovereignty debate, the Report realised the colony’s potential, as well as highlighting the deep-rooted societal problems, much to the annoyance and shock of the British Government.

Nevertheless, the Report, while recognising the economic potential and a way forward through development aid, was never fully implemented. By July 1979, of the recommendations 49 were implemented, 14 were rejected, 20 in process and 7 had no decision (the full list can be seen in Appendix 2).⁹⁹ An outlay for the airfield would cost “many millions of pounds and would be a waste of public funds” - and would be difficult to achieve if the future of the Falkland Islands were in doubt - declared Luce in the Commons in 1977.¹⁰⁰ The Thatcher government had further reservations over the Shackleton Report’s recommendations. In a letter to the Treasury, Ridley was dubious about the potential for fishing and oil and saw no consensus in Parliament for implementation of the Report’s findings.¹⁰¹ Another additional problem was that pursuing economic development in the Falklands would necessitate extending the same level of investment to other colonies. This, in turn, would have repercussions on other British overseas commitments.¹⁰²

⁹⁸ Freedman, *Falkland’s Campaign*, 36.

⁹⁹ Shackleton Recommendations, HoL, Volume 401, Column 635, 5 July 1979.

¹⁰⁰ Shackleton Report Debate, HoC, Volume 924, Column 924, 21 January 1977.

¹⁰¹ HoC, Volume 982, Column 1195, 16 April 1980.

¹⁰² Ridley to Leon Brittan, Chief Secretary, 2 April 1981, FCO 7/3977.

One considerable area of potential identified by the Shackleton Report, however, was exploitation of natural resources surrounding the Islands, with oil deposits expected to be considerable.¹⁰³ Hydrocarbon deposits were explored in the 1975 Griffiths Report (a government-commissioned enquiry undertaken a geologist at Birmingham University) which studied the continental shelf around the Falkland Islands. It concluded that the continental shelf had deposits only one-tenth of the size of the North Sea's, contrary to contemporary reports of double.¹⁰⁴ Nevertheless, that same year forty-nine oil companies had applied for oil licenses around the Islands. British Petroleum (BP) pulled the most weight as the British government was the majority shareholder.¹⁰⁵ The policy towards oil also influenced UK government policy on sovereignty. A 1974 letter from the government Chief Whip to the Foreign Secretary, Sir Alec Douglas-Home, advised "the possibility of oil surrounding the Falklands is likely...there would be many who would object to a move which disabled this country's interest in them."¹⁰⁶ Implicit here was that if oil was to be found in large quantities there should be no backing away from the long-term sovereignty that Britain exercised over the Islands.

To the Islanders, the prospect of oil off the coast was a way of resolving the sovereignty issue. If oil production was to start it would provide the means for Britain to maintain control of the Islands. Dr. Mendoza, Secretary-General of the Association of Latin American State Oil Companies, also likened the oil prospects to those in the North Sea, which would clearly be a boon for the British given the oil price hikes of the 1970s. However, much like other economic problems, oil production could not be developed immediately as the jetties on the Islands were in such a bad state of repair and would need considerable upgrading to bring oil onshore. The

¹⁰³ Ibid., Shackleton in the Lords.

¹⁰⁴ Grace Livingstone, *Britain and the Dictatorships of Argentina and Chile: 1973–1982* (London, 2018), 165.

¹⁰⁵ Roberto C. Laver, *The Falklands/Malvinas Case: Breaking the Deadlock in the Anglo-Argentine Sovereignty Dispute* (The Hague, 2001), 15.

¹⁰⁶ Letter from the Government Chief Whip, 7 January 1974, PREM 15/2006.

sovereignty issue hampered efforts to explore for oil and the government's reluctance to implement much of the Shackleton Report, the cost of which could exceed the prevailing annual British aid budget for Mozambique, meant that this part of the Report was unrealised.¹⁰⁷

Limited existing development in the Falkland Islands again hampered a way forward.

As far reaching as the Shackleton Report was, the lack of implementation showed that neither the Wilson/Callaghan Labour government, nor the Thatcher Conservative government, was willing to substantially invest in the Falkland Islands. When Rowlands became Minister of State at the FCO in 1977, he described the report as merely "whetting the Islanders' appetite" indicating a promise that could not be kept.¹⁰⁸ Even though Rowlands was sympathetic to the Islanders' desire to remain British, HMG was not willing to invest in a colony that was small in population size and geographically remote. The reluctance indicated that the Falklands were not viewed as a desirable asset, and in much of Whitehall retention was not the preferred option.

Nevertheless, maintaining sovereignty over the Falkland Islands did give potential access to natural resources in the South Atlantic, and provided leverage with larger states that viewed the Antarctic as an opportunity - what Dodds & Hemmings call "polar orientalism."¹⁰⁹ The Falklands could be a gateway to scientific benefits and access to future resource exploitation in the Antarctic region. To interpret the limited implementation of the Shackleton Report as a sign of reluctance to keep control of the Islands would be short-sighted. Retaining control over the Islands provided a seat at the table for the 'sixth continent' and the future of the Antarctic region would be partly decided by the British government. This had a psychological dimension, feeding into the colonial psyche that continued to frame British foreign policy. As the Earl of

¹⁰⁷ Debate on the Falkland Islands, HoC, Volume 941, Column 1230, 16 December 1977.

¹⁰⁸ Cited in Freedman, *Falklands Campaign*, 44.

¹⁰⁹ Dodds & Hemmings, 'British Antarctic Territory': 1429.

Kimberley noted in the House of Lords, “the geological and mineral wealth in the whole of Antarctica, if exploited, needs to have a base. Where is that base to be? It is perfectly obvious.”¹¹⁰ But such visions of an Antarctic ‘El Dorado’ were mere pipe dreams not hard policies. The key to understanding the imperial role in the retention of the Falklands is therefore not to be primarily found in metropolitan economics but in how the South Atlantic issue impacted upon metropolitan politics and government.

The Falklands, Westminster, and Whitehall

The Falklands was not immune to political developments in London, and divisions within government influenced policy, or lack of, towards the Islands. As established in Chapter 2, Britain retreated from Empire with party politics playing an ambiguous background role in how that should be achieved. But disengagement from the Falkland Islands never occurred. While some elements in government explored leaseback, there was also bipartisan parliamentary support for the Islanders’ wishes in the sovereignty debate, and in 1978 the *Falkland Islands Newsletter* reported that all political parties in Westminster contained “friends of the Falklands.” Politicians in Westminster faced pressure from the Islanders and a vocal lobby group impacted on British imperial agency in deciding the future of the colony.¹¹¹ However, a lack of coherence was evident in policy towards the Falkland Islands. Rather than consistency in policy, the different factions in government led to inertia and inactivity as there was no agreement on which way to proceed with the Falklands issue. It was, after all, only the 1982 conflict that galvanised politicians to enact policy which would secure a British future.

¹¹⁰ The Falkland Islands, HoL, Volume 445, Column 998, 6 December 1983.

¹¹¹ ‘Parliamentary Debates’, *Falkland Islands Newsletter*, 24 February 1978.

When examining the two main political parties' policy towards the Falkland Islands there were mixed signals. Both Wilson governments (1964-70 and 1974-76), and the Thatcher government (1979-1990), offered leaseback or joint sovereignty to Argentina as a way of reconciling the sovereignty dispute. Yet, all governments from the mid-1960s respected the Islanders' wishes to remain British. This left administrations in a bind as to the right approach. Heath's 1970-74 government experienced criticism from its own backbenches at the idea of sovereignty talks with Argentina. These Conservative MPs feared a repeat of the 1968 situation when leaseback was actively explored to the uproar of the Islanders when Lord Chalfont visited them.¹¹² Even within the Conservative Party there was a lack of consistency between prime ministers. After the 1982 conflict, Thatcher recognised that Britain "must stand by them [the Islanders]" yet Heath had gone so far to argue that the principle of self-determination should not apply to the Falklands.¹¹³

This pointed to a lack of unity in government on the Falkland Islands issue. While Thatcher's position represented a reversal of Heath's, and therefore a more explicit recognition of the Islanders' Britishness, the invasion overcame the lack of party-political action on the whole saga. The issue, therefore, moved from being exploration of leaseback and respecting the Islanders' wishes to 'we must stand by them'. Partly, this can be viewed as Thatcher's capitalisation on the 1982 Falklands War. The conflict arguably restored the electoral fortunes of the Conservative Party before the 1983 general election and also distracted from domestic

¹¹² Chief Whip to Douglas-Home, 7 January 1974, PREM 15/2006.

¹¹³ Dunnett, 'Self-Determination': 415.

issues, such as high unemployment and industrial unrest.¹¹⁴ It also whipped up patriotism in the UK. The reinvigoration of the Falklands issue by Thatcher was exploited as a political tool using kith and kinship rhetoric as ways to promote Britishness at home, making the discarding of the Falklands even more unlikely.

Overriding party concerns, however, was Britain's geopolitical position in the world. In the mid-1970s, Wilson and Callaghan approved withdrawal from the Simonstown base in South Africa, the base from which the Falkland Islands defence was deployable.¹¹⁵ 1973 also saw British accession to the EEC, and with that came the prospect of Falkland Islands' association with the European economic bloc. This left the government deciding if the right course was for closer association between Argentina and the Falklands due to geographical proximity, rather than an economic link-up with far-distant Europe.¹¹⁶ Even though the government was unwilling to give Argentina too much hope, the sovereignty issue could be amicably or immediately resolved, and it was suggested that Britain could migrate the Islanders to a space "free from prejudice."¹¹⁷ The bigger picture was evident in the early-1980s as well. After Thatcher's election in 1979, she wanted to reduce public expenditure and work on a more European defence outlook.¹¹⁸ This highlights the inertia before the 1982 conflict as well as

¹¹⁴ See David Sanders, Hugh Ward, David Marsh and Tony Fletcher, 'Government Popularity and the Falklands War: A Reassessment', *British Journal of Political Science*, 17, 3 (1987): 281-313; David Sanders, Hugh Ward and David Marsh, 'Macroeconomics, the Falklands War, and the Popularity of the Thatcher Government: A Contrary View' in Helmut Norpoth (ed), *Economics and Politics: The Calculus of Support* (Ann Arbor, 1991), 161-185. These studies stress the 'Falklands Factor' as key to the Conservative Party victory in the 1983 general election. However, others have argued that the Falklands War was negligible in determining the outcome. As Miller argues, with the election a full year after the war, public opinion had largely forgotten about the crisis and the event did not match the vote. More recently, Abernathy has highlighted the fractious opposition as the main factor in Conservative victory. W.L. Miller, 'There Was No Alternative: The British General Election of 1983', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 37, 4 (1984): 364-384; Sally Abernathy, 'Let be Cool, Calm – and Elected: Conservative Party Strategy and Political Narrative prior to the 1983 General Election', *Contemporary British History*, 32, 3 (2018): 385-407.

¹¹⁵ G.M. Dillon, *The Falklands, Politics and War* (London, 1989), 4.

¹¹⁶ Memorandum from the Prime Minister, 17 April 1974, PREM 15/2006.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Domenico Maria Bruni, *The Political Parties and the Falklands War* (London, 2018), 28.

demonstrating Thatcher's capitalisation on the Argentinian invasion as a domestic political issue to assuage criticism amongst Tory backbenchers and improve her electoral fortunes.

Additional to Westminster party politics, Whitehall bureaucrats proved influential in deciding the Falkland Islands trajectory. The merger of the FO and the CO to become the FCO in 1968 moved oversight of the Falkland Islands from the Gibraltar and South Atlantic Department to the West Indian and Atlantic Department, and then to the Latin American Department. This isolated the Falkland Islands from other colonies, specifically Hong Kong and Gibraltar. The Latin American Department had little sympathy for the peoples of the Islands and focussed on continental affairs with a wider regard for bilateral economic relations between the UK and Argentina. *The Sunday Times* noted in 1977 that: "the Falklands have undoubtedly suffered from the amalgamation...a couple of thousand remote and dour intransigents [sic.] were rated expendable."¹¹⁹ The Falklands became seen as a burden when weighed up against Anglo-Argentinian interests.¹²⁰ Lord Shepherd, Minister of State at the newly-created FCO, candidly advised the Acting Governor of the Islands, that "[Falklands] interests will be lost in a bigger department."¹²¹ When positioned within the wider decolonisation scene of the 1960s explored in Chapter 2, the departmental restructuring can be viewed in light of the Wind of Change, *Konfrontasi* between Indonesia and Malaysia, and financial problems leading to the withdrawal east of Suez, resulting in the Labour government exploring transfer to Argentina. The administrative reorganisation also had the effect of removing the diplomatic channels away from ministers and towards civil servants.¹²² Taking the Islands future away from Westminster de-politicised the issue and positioned the Islands as an area to be decolonised. However, the

¹¹⁹ 'Falkland Islands: Why do the British want to Quit?', *The Sunday Times*, 25 September 1977.

¹²⁰ Dodds, *Pink Ice*, 149.

¹²¹ Shepherd to Thompson, 18 March 1968, FCO 77/31.

¹²² See Gonzalez, *Falklands Conflict*, 168-213.

Falklands Lobby and the Islanders themselves had a dramatic effect in reversing this throughout the 1970s.

The move to the South American Department changed the Islands' position within government in London. Even though the civil service implemented government ministers' decisions, being an independent body meant they were pragmatic and less political in their outlook. This disconnect was admitted by Lord Franks, who led the 1983 enquiry into the Falklands War, and wrote that preceding the 1982 conflict the Islands were not discussed outside of the FCO, with no Cabinet or Ministry of Defence discussion of plans for the Islands. In Frank's view, there needed to be clearer understandings between assessment staff.¹²³ The Falkland Islanders themselves also recognised issues in London, when in November 1979 the *Falkland Islands Newsletter* wrote "for reasons which are unclear, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office have given the wrong impression to Parliament and the public [concerning the Shackleton Report]."¹²⁴ The Islanders saw this as the FCO deliberately misleading Parliament so they would not have to implement the costly recommendations laid out in the Report.

Inaction was most obvious surrounding the Shackleton Report. While approved by the FCO, it was within the remit of the Ministry of Overseas Development (ODM), in partnership with the Treasury, to discuss the funds needed for development of the colony. However, on receipt of the final report, which focussed on large-scale investment to aid development, HMG disassociated itself from Shackleton and saw it instead as a way to promote Anglo-Argentinian co-operation on the future of the islands.¹²⁵ The ODM were more decisive in their approach to

¹²³ For the government's report into the Falklands War and the decisions taken by HMG preceding the conflict see The Falkland Islands Review, Report of a Committee of Privy Counsellors (The Franks Report), 1983, CAB 292; also found at ICS 192/95/2, 'The Falklands, the Commonwealth and the Franks Report', Senate House Library, University of London.

¹²⁴ 'New Talks', *The Falkland Islands Newsletter*, November 1979, FCO 7/3686.

¹²⁵ Lord Shackleton's Report, August 1976, OD 28/425.

the Report. Reg Prentice, Minister of State for Overseas Development, assured the FCO “that no funds would be committed and is *ad referendum* to Ministers.”¹²⁶ An ODM mandarin was also critical of the Report and summarised it as “preposterous” and its findings “would not seriously be entertained for a moment except by somebody who had had a rush of blood to the head induced by too much flagwagging.”¹²⁷

Yet, by 1982, such dismissive attitudes in Whitehall and tendencies to inaction would be superseded by bigger geopolitical considerations. The 1956 Suez Crisis directly impacted on retention as a way to rectify the humiliating failure to regain control of the Canal. Asserting authority in the South Atlantic meant that Britain still had an obvious ‘imperial’ presence to overcome the Suez Syndrome, or, as Thatcher dubbed it, “a projection of impotence.”¹²⁸ In her autobiography, Thatcher observed that the Falklands War was an “enormous opportunity for our standing in the world” as “British foreign policy had long been in retreat...with our world role doomed to steadily diminish.”¹²⁹ On the other side of the political spectrum, the radical social historian, E.P. Thompson, also noted the unique opportunity the Falklands war presented (although obviously with not the same sense of celebration as the prime minister). In an editorial in *The Times* he highlighted the war as representing “imperial atavism”: “it is about ‘face’. It is what happens when you twist the lion’s tail.”¹³⁰

Even though the conflict occurred after discussions of leaseback, Thatcher’s discourse highlights the lingering psychology of Empire in the metropole, with benefits that were not just tangible. Lord Armstrong, Cabinet Secretary, also acknowledged that the Falklands restored

¹²⁶ Letter to FCO, 1 July 1976, OD 28/425.

¹²⁷ Letter to Minister of State from D. Williams, 25 June 1976, OD 28/425.

¹²⁸ Margaret Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years* (London, 1993), 4.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 225.

¹³⁰ ‘Why Neither Side is Worth Backing’, *The Times*, 29 April 1982.

faith in Britain as a power, allowing the country “to exercise influence outside of its immediate surroundings.”¹³¹ As a way to rectify previous governments’ apparent mistakes of retreat, the Falklands became not only an important foreign policy issue of maintaining colonial control, but also an issue in which the fight for the Islands could be characterised as “The Empire Strikes Back.”¹³² As Thatcher explained, “everywhere I went after the war, Britain’s name meant something more than it had.”¹³³ Again, this indicates the importance of the Falklands issue not as a reversal of policy in accepting the Islanders’ Britishness, but as a tool for rectifying UK geopolitical decline. The inertia was overcome by a Conservative government capitalising on a foreign-policy issue.

Discussion of the Imperial dimension to Falkland Islands’ retention brings issues of colonial development, administration, and political rhetoric to the fore, and these can be seen as factors driving colonial retention. While economically the assessments undertaken acknowledged that *something* had to be done for the Islanders, the lack of implementation for some recommendations meant that their future was uncertain. Even though economic reports recognised the surplus the Falkland Islands gave back to Britain, there was little political will in London to assist in promoting the local economy. Nevertheless, this belies the changes that were evident over time. Successive governments had to weigh up geopolitical considerations, EEC membership, and defence costs and this meant that the Falklands was not important in the larger scheme of foreign policy. What is evident is the inertia that resulted from party politics and departmental reorganisation in Whitehall. The movement of the Falkland Islands into a different department at the FCO and no government committed to one route out of the dilemma meant that nothing happened. The lack of a coherent policy meant that the Falklands were

¹³¹ G.C. Peden, ‘Suez and Britain’s Decline as a World Power’, *Historical Journal*, 55, 4 (2012), 1074.

¹³² *Newsweek*, a US publication, ran its famous ‘The Empire Strikes Back’ front page on 19 April 1982 with HMS *Hermes* sailing to the South Atlantic on the cover.

¹³³ Thatcher, *Downing Street Years*, 225.

retained almost by accident preceding the 1982 conflict, and the invasion was hit upon as a convenient domestic political issue. When these factors are examined together, they provide ample explanation of colonial retention, especially when considering how imperial issues intersected with the Islanders' own wishes. The metropolitan situation galvanised a strengthened Britishness, demonstrating how interlinked the Is were in determining colonial retention – a phenomenon which can be stressed further through the examination of the international dimension.

International Factors in the Retention of the Falkland Islands

While international factors were important in pushing colonial independence, there does remain the problem of how the continued existence of dependent territories can be explained through an international frame given the apparent hostility of the US, the USSR and the UN to all forms of colonialism. As the spread of communism preoccupied the US during the Cold War, and influenced US foreign policy towards the British Empire, similar concerns were relevant preceding and during the Falklands Crisis of 1982. British imperial action actually changed US perception of the Falklands from being of only peripheral concern. Aside from geopolitical issues, there will be an examination in this section of the UN and the diplomatic efforts to resolve the Falklands issue from the 1960s onwards. The UN asked the UK and Argentina to find a peaceful solution to the sovereignty issue “bearing in mind the provisions and charter of the United Nations and of the General Assembly resolution 1514.”¹³⁴ Nevertheless, the UK was not bound by UN resolutions and the fact that the Islanders had self-determined to remain British paradoxically did not contravene UN policy on decolonisation.

The United States and NATO

The question of sovereignty over the Falkland Islands never received much attention from the US before the 1982 conflict because the territory held “no economic or political interests” which the US might benefit from.¹³⁵ Policymakers neglected the South Atlantic, and even though interest was growing in the region for access to the Antarctic, the Falklands were far removed from the central theatres of international politics.¹³⁶ In the view of the US embassy in

¹³⁴ UNGA Resolution 2065 (XX), https://treaties.un.org/doc/source/docs/A_RES_2065-Eng.pdf [accessed 28 May 2020].

¹³⁵ Air-gram from the Embassy in Argentina to the Department of State, 16 May 1979, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1981-1988*, Vol. XIII Conflict in the South Atlantic, Document A-36.

¹³⁶ Andrew Hurrell, ‘The Politics of South Atlantic Security: A Survey of Proposals for a South Atlantic Treaty Organisation’, *International Affairs*, 59, 2 (1983), 17.

Buenos Aires in 1979, the only winners in the Anglo-Argentinian dispute “will be the penguins and the sheep.”¹³⁷ When Argentina invaded the Falklands in 1982, the reaction in Washington was muted as both Argentina and the UK were US allies. But the US did offer diplomatic mediation through Alexander Haig, US Secretary of State. When asked about the Islands, Haig described them as “a pimple on the arse of progress which had been festering for 200 years.”¹³⁸ Taking this analogy further, *The Sunday Times* described Washington’s perception of the Falkland Islands as “an irrelevant pimple on a teeming continent.”¹³⁹ A National Security Council (NSC) meeting in 1982 described the issue as “a dispute over the sovereignty of that little ice-cold bunch of land down there” – an attitude which caused outrage in Whitehall and Downing Street.¹⁴⁰

However, preceding the War, the US did acknowledge the Falklands dilemma as a geopolitical concern in the South Atlantic. As Reagan told Thatcher in April 1982, “Britain is one of our closest allies, and Argentina, we would like to cooperate with in our interests in this hemisphere.”¹⁴¹ The Monroe Doctrine of 1823, where President James Monroe and Secretary of State John Quincy Adams warned against European intervention in Latin American states, impacted on the Falkland Islands question.¹⁴² This tenet of US foreign policy meant that the US had an interest in the South Atlantic, as well as an obligation to the UK through a long-standing partnership. In a meeting between Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, and Argentinian Foreign Minister, Alberto Vignes, in 1973, the latter was concerned with the indifference the US was demonstrating towards the Falklands as “it is a colonial problem within

¹³⁷ Air-gram to the Department of State, 16 May 1979.

¹³⁸ ‘Why the Last Outpost had to Fall’, *The Sunday Times*, 4 April 1982.

¹³⁹ ‘Godspeed Falklands’, *The Sunday Times*, 11 December 1983.

¹⁴⁰ The US response to the Falklands Crisis, NSC meeting, 30 April 1982 cited in Sally-Ann Treharne, *Reagan and Thatcher's Special Relationship, Latin America and Anglo-American Relations* (Edinburgh, 2015), 61.

¹⁴¹ Telegram from Reagan to Thatcher, 15 April 1982, FCO 82/1210.

¹⁴² Monroe Doctrine, 1823. Office of the Historian, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1801-1829/monroe>, [accessed 16 August 2019].

our hemisphere.”¹⁴³ In a 1976 meeting, the Argentinian Foreign Minister, César Guzzetti, pleaded with the US to change its position on abstentions at the UN and help Argentina.¹⁴⁴ The Falklands western hemispheric issue impacted on the US approach to the Falklands question at the outbreak of war. Being allies with both Argentina and the UK meant that the US government saw little role for itself in resolving the issue, and the only actors who could achieve a resolution were the two governments in London and Buenos Aires.¹⁴⁵ Even though the US had little vested interest in the Falkland Islands, it still factored into its foreign policy due to the US’s obligations in Latin America and its alliance with the UK. However, British colonial problems in Latin America (Belize and the Falkland Islands) were peripheral issues as far as Washington was concerned. Nowhere else on the globe did the UK and US interests diverge so much.¹⁴⁶

The Western Hemisphere obligations also had a background in US policy towards the South Atlantic region and Latin America. The US saw Latin America as an essential component in US foreign policy by the 1970s. The US global role and its relationship with the developing world drove its foreign policy focus to Latin America during the 1970s. With the oil shocks (see page 267), and the shift in the balance of power between developing and developed countries, Latin America was important as a powerful bloc within the Global South.¹⁴⁷ Additionally, US fears of Soviet encroachment into the South Atlantic, the British withdrawal

¹⁴³ Memorandum of Conversation, US–Argentine Relations, 5 October 1973, *FRUS, 1969-1976*, Vol.E-11.

¹⁴⁴ Memorandum of Conversation, US-Argentine Bilateral Relations, 10 June 1976, *FRUS, 1969-1976*, Vol.E-11.

¹⁴⁵ Briefing Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs and the Acting Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs to the Deputy Secretary of State, 29 March 1982, *FRUS, 1981-1988*, Vol. XXIII Conflict in the South Atlantic.

¹⁴⁶ Donaghy, *Falkland Islands*, 180.

¹⁴⁷ Tanya Harmer, ‘Dialogue or Détente: Henry Kissinger, Latin America, and the Prospects for New Inter-American Understanding, 1973-1977’ in Bevan Sewell & Maria Ryan (eds), *Foreign Policy at the Periphery* (Lexington, 2017), 230.

from Simonstown in South Africa, and Soviet intervention in Angola, meant that South Atlantic security took on increasing importance.¹⁴⁸

In light of these Cold War concerns, the US had long mooted a plan to set up a South Atlantic Treaty Organisation with major South American countries (Argentina, Brazil, as well as white South Africa). Latin American countries placed great emphasis on this idea with Argentina eager to use the Malvinas as a perfect base from which to monitor Cape Horn and the Beagle Channel.¹⁴⁹ The Falklands War further compounded the issue of security in the region. It focussed US attention and highlighted the need for security in a region that had largely been neglected in US foreign policy.

However, this hemispheric consideration ran into difficulties given Cuban support of the Argentinian invasion (with military supplies sent from Libya). This angered Washington as it came with conditions of support for the Cuban socialist government. With Havana's support of Soviet intervention in Angola and Yemen, there was palpable anxiety over Cuban/socialist influence in Latin America. This was evident when Nicanor Costa Méndez, Argentinian Foreign Minister, expressed support for the successful "liberation struggles" by Cuba and Vietnam against the "unjust and imperialist" powers.¹⁵⁰ These US foreign-policy dilemmas brought the Falklands War directly into Washington's Cold War strategy.

Washington's role in the Falklands moves us past the idea of Cold War diplomacy being just about confrontation between the Soviet Union and the USA, and into examination of US

¹⁴⁸ See Klaus Dodds, 'Creating a Strategic Crisis out of a Communist Drama? Argentine and South African Geo-Graphs of the South Atlantic', *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, 56, 1 (1994): 33-54; David Fig, 'The South Atlantic Connection: Growing Links between Africa and Latin America, Britain and Latin America' (London, 1979), 92-109.

¹⁴⁹ Dodds, *Pink Ice*, 41

¹⁵⁰ 'Courting the Third World', *The Times*, 5 June 1982.

interests in South America. These interests were not just about the protection of the South Atlantic from Soviet encroachment but also the promotion of US trade and investments in Latin America. When balanced against their hemispheric considerations, the US was actually eager for a ceasefire when war broke out in 1982.¹⁵¹ However, it was not in Washington's interest to change the status quo in the South Atlantic. The Soviets had passed secret nuclear information onto the Argentinians during the Cold War, with nuclear trade ongoing for many years and this worried the Americans.¹⁵² The Falklands War focussed the Cold War onto the South Atlantic and the US reacted to that.

Moreover, the close relationship between Reagan and Thatcher was important in the Cold War. Not only did London provide an important bridge between Washington and Paris and Bonn, but the Falklands War provided an opportunity for US commitment to a close ally. When Argentina invaded the Islands in April 1982, the US government backed the UK because to not do so would increase the likelihood that the Argentinian troops would stay longer in the Falkland Islands resulting in Thatcher losing the Prime Ministership. This would be a set-back for the Reagan administration as it could have left a political vacuum, risking a 'left-wing' Labour government in power, and losing a close ideological ally in the later stages of the Cold War.¹⁵³ As the Bureau for Intelligence and Research (part of the Department of State) noted, "If Thatcher fails to redeem her reputation and the Nation's honor, she could be finished as a Tory leader and Prime Minister."¹⁵⁴

¹⁵¹ 'Telephone conversation from Ronald Reagan to Margaret Thatcher', *The Sunday Times*, 8 March 1992.

¹⁵² Letter to Haskell, Nuclear Energy Department, from Mr. Gillmore, April 1982, FCO 28/4738

¹⁵³ Treharne, *Reagan and Thatcher's Special Relationship*, 63.

¹⁵⁴ Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Analysis, 6 April 1982, National Security Archive, <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/dc.html?doc=329516-19820406-uk-thatchers-flakland-dilemma> [accessed 21 January 2020].

Alongside the sharing of intelligence reports, which Thatcher personally thanked Haig for, there was an indication that the US position was firmly on the side of the UK. While parliament wished for more explicit support of the UK position, Haig impressed the US position to the Prime Minister highlighting that “we are not impartial.”¹⁵⁵ Partly, this owed itself to the global geopolitical situation with 1982 not being a ‘good’ year for foreign policy during Reagan’s presidency.¹⁵⁶ The fear of the spread of communism in Africa, the Middle East and Central America meant that the Reagan administration confronted the Cold War head on with little room left to deal with a longer conflict. Argentina’s invasion of the Falklands in 1982 also brought Reagan’s presidency under the microscope of public opinion. As was noted in *The Times*, public opinion in the US was siding with firmer support of the UK position, and the “last thing the administration needed is a foreign policy failure.”¹⁵⁷ There was a genuine fear that not supporting Britain would hinder Reagan’s re-election hopes and leave the US with another one-term president.

The Islands were a strategic gateway for both the US and the UK, but the Cold War’s fault-lines changed this in the 1970s, and the South Atlantic became more important in geopolitics.¹⁵⁸ The Falklands provided the only safe refuge for NATO navies in the South Atlantic and based on this, colonial retention was much encouraged by “strategic denial.”¹⁵⁹ Having a NATO base in the South Atlantic also gave further credence to the psychology of colonial occupation. Britain retained considerable clout as a sea power, and this benefited NATO as Washington appreciated the strategic value of British Atlantic bases, especially the Falklands, because other

¹⁵⁵ Telegram from US Embassy, London to US Embassy, Buenos Aires, 10 April 1982 reporting Haig’s meeting with Thatcher, 8 April 1982, National Security Archive, <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/dc.html?doc=329527-19820410-secretarys-meeting-with-prime-minister> [accessed 21 January 2020].

¹⁵⁶ See S. Rosenfeld, ‘The Conduct of America Foreign Policy: Testing the Hard Line’, *Foreign Affairs*, 61, 3 (1982): 489-510.

¹⁵⁷ ‘The Falklands: A Crisis for Reagan at Home Too’, *Times*, 17 April 1982.

¹⁵⁸ Dodds, ‘Strategic Gateway’, 20.

¹⁵⁹ The Defence of the Falklands, FIC, April 1975, FCO 7/2957.

dependent territories were geographically unsuitable for its needs.¹⁶⁰ All of these factors negated against a transfer of sovereignty to Argentina, and meant that geopolitically the Islands were important. Nevertheless, the US and Cold War strategy is not an adequate explanation to understand retention of the Falkland Islands on its own. US policy largely ignored the South Atlantic; the preoccupation with the Soviet blue water navy around the Cape of Good Hope and in the Indian Ocean created “suicidal blindness” as far as the South Atlantic was concerned, underscored by British and US shock when Argentina invaded the Falklands in 1982.¹⁶¹ Even though benefits could be reaped from control, it would be wrong to say that US foreign policy drove Britain to keep control of the Islands (in contrast to the BIOT which will be examined in greater depth in the following chapter).

The United Nations and Self-Determination

The UN, paradoxically, may have had more influence than the US on the retention of the Falklands. This was through hardening the resolve of the Islanders to publicise their desire to remain British and through the vague concept of self-determination being skilfully manipulated by UK diplomats to stall a transfer to Argentina. The question of Falkland Islands sovereignty first occupied the UN in December 1965, when the UN’s Fourth Committee (the Special Political and Decolonization Committee – one of the six UNGA committees) passed resolution 2065 (*Question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas)*), which asked both governments to find an amicable way of resolving the sovereignty dispute under Resolution 1514.¹⁶² The problem with Resolution 1514 was that respecting the Islanders’ interests, who self-determined to continue

¹⁶⁰ This argument draws upon Gonzalez, *Falklands Crisis*, 12 - the Falklands War and Soviet incursions into the South Atlantic made policymakers in Washington realise that the ‘southern flank’ of NATO was exposed and vulnerable.

¹⁶¹ Dodds, *Pink Ice*, 9.

¹⁶² The twentieth session, which the Fourth Committee was under, also passed seven other resolutions on decolonisation and smaller dependent territories under the UN remit of self-determination and unequivocal decolonisation. These can be viewed at <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/20/ares20.htm> [accessed March 2017].

living under British sovereignty, respected the UN mandate. Yet, the UN still perceived the Islands as a colonial problem. Additional to this, there was never a clear idea of what constituted a ‘colonial people’ under Resolution 1514, nor the criteria for nation-hood, or even what the right to self-determination meant.¹⁶³ This left the Islands in a bind as they were exercising their right to self-determination, thus abiding by the principles laid out at the UN. But this still ran contrary to the UN’s remit of unequivocal decolonisation. When the Falklands question came before the UNGA, Latin American countries, as well as the Afro-Asian bloc of (newly-joined) ex-colonial states, overwhelmingly provided support for the Argentine cause in a show of solidarity at what they saw as colonialism, but which ignored the Islanders’ wishes to remain British.

What was problematic at the UN was the lack of clear parameters defining the principles of independence and self-determination, and how these were to be enforced. A problem identified by British officials in the 1970s was that UN resolutions were inherently unfair to the Falklands and Britain. The sentiment was that the only way to solve colonial problems was through decolonisation, but for the Falklands this actually went against the UN’s own self-determination principle as the Islanders themselves had chosen to self-determine their future through the FIC and discussions with the British government. In 1978, an attempt at a Falkland Islands referendum was undertaken, as Gibraltar and Northern Ireland had recently conducted their own, but this was not accepted by the British government.¹⁶⁴ It was not until after the 1982 conflict that Islanders’ formally voted on being British.¹⁶⁵ This emphasises the problem

¹⁶³ Dunnett, ‘Self-Determination and the Falklands’, 423.

¹⁶⁴ ‘Referendum Proposed’, *Falkland Islands Newsletter*, November 1978.

¹⁶⁵ The first referendum on the Falklands was in 1986. This unofficial plebiscite resulted in 96% in favour of continued British sovereignty with 1.66% voting for independence, 0.33% voting for transfer of sovereignty to Argentina, and 0.33% to become a UN Trust Territory. The first, and only, official referendum on British sovereignty was held in 2013 where 98.80% voted in favour of remaining a British territory. In the 2013 referendum there were 3 votes (0.2%) against the motion.

with the UN's desire for self-determination and decolonisation. The Falklands is an example of how Resolution 1514, passed through the plenary organ, demonstrated that territorial integrity and self-determination were separate concepts. The resolution also stressed that both Britain and Argentina should recognise the *interests* of the Islanders. This recognition of their *interests* (suggesting what would be most beneficial) and not their *wishes* implied that self-determination was inapplicable to the Islanders as they were settlers and not an indigenous population. To counter this, the UK has justified its ongoing colonial rule on the grounds of territorial integrity deriving from its 1833 settlement of the Islands as a basis to show that the Islanders have the right to self-determine to remain British.¹⁶⁶ This has raised the question of what does the UN prefer: independence of thought, territorial independence, or transfer of sovereign territory from one state to another? The debate's complexity created the protracted situation at the UN with little clarity over the Falkland Islands' status. This resulted in an impasse between Argentina, the UK and members of the UNGA in finding a diplomatic solution to the sovereignty issue.

The UN position frustrated the British government. The perception was that the sole means to resolve the issue as far as the UN was concerned was a transfer of sovereignty to Argentina, opposed to leaseback, and this created a feeling that the Islands "have been unfairly treated."¹⁶⁷ This position also contravened Resolution 1514 and the UN Charter, which explicitly stated that self-determination was a right afforded to everyone, and this pushed the UK Mission at the UN in 1976 to "secure recognition that the normal rules of decolonisation apply."¹⁶⁸ This highlighted the rapidly changing dynamic at the UN from its initial inception, moving from an

¹⁶⁶ Fabián Raimondo, 'The Sovereignty Dispute over the Falklands/Malvinas: What Role for the UN?', *Netherlands International Law Review*, 59, 3 (2012): 399-423.

¹⁶⁷ Telegram from UK Mission, UN to FCO, 9 April 1976, FCO 58/989.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

East-West dyadic towards dominance by vociferous anti-colonial states which championed independence as a hard-and-fast rule.

Britain accepted that for some small colonies self-government was the way forward – such as in Southeast Asia and Southern Africa – but exceptions were made with the Falklands (as well as Gibraltar and Hong Kong) that smaller territories were sometimes just too small to be viable as independent states and they enjoyed strong links to the metropole.¹⁶⁹ Member states who still had colonies (such as the UK and France) tried to stop calls for unequivocal independence through Article 2 of the UN Charter, which stated that the organisation would not interfere with matters relating to the “domestic jurisdiction of the member state”. This anomaly led to lobbying from the UK of Non-Aligned states on issues such as the Falklands to bring them “slowly, and with pertinacity, to understanding our position on problematic issues.”¹⁷⁰ Yugoslavia was one of these states, with the British government relieved that the Falkland Islands were falling down the agenda list at the Committee of 24, but lobbying Belgrade to do more at the NAM summit in Colombo in 1976.¹⁷¹ Other extensive lobbying efforts were undertaken by the British to “ram home self-determination” in the hope that the Argentinians would cancel a 1976 UN committee debate.¹⁷² By bringing other states into the fold, the UK tried to defend its own interests.

The Falklands remained an issue at the UN, and even though the British were resolute in maintenance of colonial rule in the name of self-determination, this fell on deaf ears in the Argentinian government. In a meeting in Paris during 1973, the Assistant Under-Secretary of

¹⁶⁹ Evan Luard, *A History of the United Nations: Volume Two: The Age of Decolonisation, 1955-1965* (London, 1989), 6.

¹⁷⁰ Michael Stewart, Foreign Secretary, to UK Mission, UN, 24 June 1966, CO 936/951.

¹⁷¹ FCO to C.L. Booth, Belgrade, 26 May 1976, FCO 58/989.

¹⁷² R.J. Dalton, UK Mission to UN to Latin America Department, FCO, 19 March 1976, FCO 58/989.

State for FCO Affairs in the Americas, and the Argentinian Deputy Foreign Minister discussed the future of the Falkland Islands. The former cunningly reminded the latter that HMG placed great importance on Resolution 1514 and the Islanders' right to self-determination had to be heard, contrary to the Argentinian position which was to keep this as an inter-governmental discussion excluding the Islanders.¹⁷³

Nevertheless, the British had to oblige with talks at the UN otherwise it would "undermine their position and make it difficult for its few allies to support the positions of self-determination."¹⁷⁴ Additionally, failure to comply by UN rules would jeopardise British investments in and trade with Argentina and weaken the whole British position at the UN.¹⁷⁵ On the back of this, Callaghan on his elevation to Prime Minister in 1976, wanted to increase British standing at the UN and launched a lobbying campaign in relevant capitals.¹⁷⁶ It was not successful. Resolution 31/49, which was passed in 1976 to expedite negotiations, passed by 102 votes to 1. The one against was the UK and Britain's allies abstained.¹⁷⁷ The UK, frustrated at UN intransigence over colonial issues, had no choice but to work with the organisation in a forum that allowed Argentina to raise colonial issues and where Britain was relatively isolated.

Examination of the UN shows the ability for states, in this case Argentina, to raise colonial matters and bring them into the forefront of international diplomacy. The Committee of 24, backed by Resolution 1514, called for an end to colonialism and Argentina seized on this to pursue its claim to the Falkland Islands/Malvinas. This left Britain using self-determination as the only means to counter this claim, and as outlined above, the complexity of language, and

¹⁷³ Record of Discussion between British and Argentine Delegations, July 1976, FCO 58/989.

¹⁷⁴ Donaghy, *Falkland Islands*, 8.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁷ W. Michael Reisman, 'The Struggle for the Falklands', *Yale Law Journal*, 93, 2 (1983): 287-318.

what the UN prioritised, meant that there was stasis over a diplomatic solution to the Falkland Islands question. Additionally, the Committee of 24, which was generally pleased with British compliance on colonial matters, always sided with Argentina on the Falkland Islands.¹⁷⁸ This again highlights the diplomatic isolation Britain encountered over the Falklands. Nevertheless, at the time of writing a diplomatic solution remains to be found. In 2013, the UN asked for another try, but this was also unsuccessful.¹⁷⁹ The questions remain at the UN: to whom do the Islands belong, what precisely is a colonial people, and what is self-determination?

The role of the International factor is important when examining retention, but in the case of the Falkland Islands this was largely due to the relative disinterest of the US and the ineffectualness of the UN. Washington's reluctance to be drawn into the Falklands debate meant that Britain acted alone against Argentina, and this was compounded by isolation at the UN. While advantages of colonial rule were acknowledged by the US government, it was not until the 1982 conflict that the US sided with the UK on the Falklands question. However, this support was to do with Argentinian aggression, and not tacit support for British colonial rule per se. UN difficulty in bringing both parties together meant that a diplomatic solution was not found, and the Falklands provides a classic example of the complexity of colonial issues at the UN. UNGA resolutions supported a peaceful solution but that was difficult to achieve when there was little clarity over definitions of peoples and self-determination. These highlight that external influences on the retention of the Falkland Islands had little direct influence on British decision-making and meant that a change in sovereignty was always remote.

¹⁷⁸ Letter from UK Mission at the UN to the FCO, 30 December 1974, FCO 7/2946.

¹⁷⁹ In June 2013, the Special Committee on Decolonisation approved text "reiterating the need for a negotiated settlement". However, Sharon Halford, member of the Legislative Assembly of the Falkland Islands and Islander representative at the UN, disagreed as the overwhelming vote to remain a British territory in March 2013 was a "clear message". Special Committee on Decolonization Approves Text Reiterating Need for Negotiated Settlement of Falklands (Malvinas) Question, <https://www.un.org/press/en/2013/gacol3257.doc.html> [accessed 31 October 2019].

Conclusion

Examination of internal, imperial and international dimensions has highlighted how closely connected all three are to the Falkland Islands sovereignty debate. The problems of late-stage decolonisation are apparent through examining issues of self-determination, economic development and international diplomacy, with reconciliation of these issues difficult to achieve. The chapter has also highlighted that at times London had little control over circumstances that arose in relation to the Falkland Islands. Governments could not anticipate how vocal the Islanders would be, or the apparent value of the Islands unexpectedly revealed in the Shackleton Report which the Islanders seized upon. These provided conditions which maintained the status-quo.

The pro-British nationalism which developed from the 1960s brought the Islanders into a closer association with the metropole and with the UK government respecting that wish. While the population were, and still are, part of a British *Imagined Community* it is difficult to extrapolate whether that was the sole cause of retention. Allegiance with their nearest ethnic kin did not automatically guarantee support from the British government. However, there is no doubting that this patriotism was only strengthened in light of potential handover to Argentina. Successive UK governments placed the Islanders' rights first over the transfer of sovereignty, and it is for this reason that ethnicity and patriotism are highly important when studying the retention of the Falkland Islands. In this sense, the 1982 Falklands conflict was not an imperial war fought for territorial aggression or resources, but one fought for kindred spirits and British peoples. There is scope within this to argue that if Argentina had never invaded the Islands in 1982 there is a possibility that the Islands would have transferred to Argentina at some time in the future.

Indeed, the limitations of just focussing on the internal dynamics of Falklander identity is shown through the imperial government's serious consideration of leaseback. If local patriotism was the only factor in determining Falkland Islands status then the idea of leaseback, or transfer, would never have been explored. Similarly, if Islander identity was so important then the status of Islanders as British citizens would not have been changed via the 1981 British Nationality Act. While identity and nationalism are important analytical framings for the retention of the Falkland Islands there are clearly other influences. Metropolitan affairs highlight how Islander identity influenced British policy makers and parliament through lobbying, and London's influence on colonial affairs. This metropolitan-peripheral relationship crosses both the Internal and the Imperial levels of analysis meaning a holistic approach has to be taken to understand colonial retention.

Imperial policy cannot be discounted, when explaining retention, therefore (although this was often reactive and had unwitting consequences). The 1976 economic survey and the implementation of some of the recommendations indicated an acknowledgement of the need for colonial development, even if Callaghan was shocked by the Shackleton Report's findings. The parsimony of the Treasury angered the residents of the Falkland Islands, but this stinginess created a protracted situation as it drew out the decisions needed to move forward on the ultimate fate of the colony. Even though the Islands brought in a surplus to the Treasury, the exploration of leaseback indicated that this was irrelevant in the British 'official mind' when costing the Islands. The reluctance to economically develop the Falklands created a situation where retention occurred by accident. The lobby groups and those in government were at an impasse concerning the future of the colony and as with all bureaucracies facing a perplexing situation the best thing is always to do nothing.

When analysing metropolitan government factors, it was argued that departmental reorganisation neglected the Islands. This again worked peculiarly to the colony's advantage. The vocal lobby group in Parliament which supported the Islanders' claims furthered this imperial inertia meaning the Falklands issue could never be resolved. UK agency was actually lacking here. While it was ultimately a British decision to decide the fate of the Falkland Islands, there lacked any parliamentary will to resolve the sovereignty issue. Ministers and mandarins were unwilling to spend money developing the Islands, but also unwilling to spend political capital to reach an agreement with Argentina. When examining the retention of the Falkland Islands, the Shackleton Report provides an important focus. It led to strong opposition in Argentina, and a clear trajectory to invasion (Argentina was angry that Britain was taking an interest in the Islands and not exploring leaseback options) and Shackleton's findings surprised the British government that there was more economic value than was initially thought. Economic value was partially focussed on oil and the natural resources in the region. These would be a boon to develop the colony, but also provide a stream of money to the Exchequer in London. The resource issue did pique the interest not only of politicians in London but also of British businessmen. As the initial SAS landings on the Islands were made in April 1982, Alan Clark, Tory MP and later a junior minister in the Department of Trade and Industry, noted in his diary that "if we really assert our strength we should be able to participate in the exploitation of resources without being threatened or disturbed". This followed a conversation with the oil prospector and editor of *The Spectator*, Algy Cluff, who claimed that "there was plenty of oil around the Falklands and he had the technology to extract it, '... if other disputes could be settled'."¹⁸⁰ But this change of establishment opinion on the value of the Falklands was after the event. It remains difficult, therefore, to posit a link between resource

¹⁸⁰ Diary entry of 22 April 1982 in Alan Clark, *Dairies: Into Politics* (London, 2000), 324.

exploitation and the Falklands War as opposed to the nationalistic motives of defending 'kith and kin' and the 'reversal of fortune' rhetoric of the Thatcher government.

On the international dimension the US had little influence over the Falklands before the 1982 war, and even though there was a Western Hemisphere perspective in Washington's thinking, there was no US interference in British policy towards the colony. The US had geopolitical concerns in the South Atlantic and favoured good relations with Argentina but weighed this up against the alliance with the UK and this resulted in the US siding with Thatcher in conjunction with the wider ideological battle. Nevertheless, even though Cold War concerns of Soviet encroachment into the Southern Atlantic influenced US thinking, ultimately this did not become policy and so the Falklands did not become a major political issue in the State Department.

The UN's contradictions and inefficacies provides another layer to the retention saga. Both Argentina and the UK respected the UN Charter in discussions, but the difficulty in diplomatically resolving the Falklands question meant that UN influence over retention was through the organisation's failure. The ambiguity over which mattered more, territorial integrity or self-determination, complicated the situation and a diplomatic solution was never found. Hence, the Falkland Islands remained a British colony. This resulted in Argentina invading the Islands in 1982 and in turn cementing British sovereignty. Some in the British government were influenced by the UN as the FCO did consider leaseback and condominium with Argentina. But that ultimately came to very little indeed.

Chapter Four: British Indian Ocean Territory

Introduction

The British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT) was created in November 1965 and its formation after many colonies had become independent means Diego Garcia was and remains Britain's most recent colonial venture. BIOT inclusion as a case study within the thesis displays how defence and geopolitical factors influenced a revival of colonialism in the 1960s and 1970s. Nevertheless, there will be consideration of other factors, such as British foreign policy, and how the east of Suez decision factored into the creation of the BIOT. Additionally, the discussion of internal matters will examine the population removal from Diego Garcia and how the Chagossians' life away from 'home' has influenced policy towards the colony.

British military withdrawal east of Suez after 1968 divested Britain from much of its Indian Ocean commitments, but there were tangible benefits to be gained in administering a colony which the US exploited part as a military facility. British use of this military facility (which was part of the terms of the US lease) allowed a presence to be maintained without the fiscal responsibility, and also provided leverage with Washington during the Cold War. The US also benefitted from having a military base in a sparsely-populated and geographically-remote area that was an important Cold War theatre. Soviet naval movements in the Indian Ocean region, especially after the Suez Canal's reopening in 1975, and Communist influence expanding in many of the Ocean's littoral states, attracted the US to Diego Garcia to counter these advances. Together, these geopolitical aspects allow the thesis to facilitate discussion of colonial retention during the 'Wind of Change' wave of decolonisation and the benefits to Britain and the US. Holland argues that the period from 1964 marks a time of 'dis-imperialism' with the crisis in Rhodesia, withdrawal east of Suez, and a reshaping of British politics contributing to a further

acceleration of decolonisation.¹ Diego Garcia, however, can be examined as a counter to this notion of dis-imperialism and to underscore that colonial retention had geopolitical benefits. This challenges the notion that the period was marked exclusively by colonial independence and highlights how the highly-important colony of Diego Garcia has been overlooked in the historiography of Empire.

The discussion of internal aspects will examine the controversial treatment of Diego Garcia's population, who worked as fishermen and contract labourers in the export of copra, salt, fish and tortoise shell, before their removal in the early-1970s.² In order to expel the Chagossians (or *Ilois*, a French creole word meaning islander) the British portrayed them as "temporary contract workers" to emphasise their non-indigeneity.³ This jarred with the British embrace of self-determination as a means to settle colonial issues. The right to self-determination was denied to the BIOT population, which was obverse to the Falklands Islands where self-determination was used as a justification for colonial retention. The Islanders' removal to Mauritius and the Seychelles is now subject to international legal proceedings. In 2017, the UNGA voted in favour of sending the issue to the ICJ to clarify the legal status of the Chagos Islands. That resolution was passed with 94 votes in favour and 15 votes against. The ICJ ruled in February 2019 that the UK had infringed on the right to self-determination and was obliged to cede control. Balancing morality and Islanders' rights against Cold War *realpolitik* was difficult.

The discussion of Imperial factors will assess the metropolitan influence on retention by looking at the run up to the 1968 east of Suez decision and the link between military withdrawal

¹ Holland, *European Decolonization*, 271.

² The islanders were not an indigenous population but were descended from enslaved people shipped from Mozambique and Madagascar via Mauritius from 1783 when Diego Garcia was a French possession.

³ Sand, *United States and Diego Garcia*, 3.

and the BIOT's creation. Even though there was no explicit link between the establishment of the BIOT and the British decision to militarily withdraw east of Suez, inferences can be drawn. The planned military withdrawal was not a sudden policy announcement in 1968, and its foundations stemmed from an overstretched military budget, and a number of defence reviews in response, throughout the 1960s. The creation of the BIOT factored into decision-making about a reduction in overseas military commitments and the lease of Diego Garcia to the US, which the UK would have unfettered access to, could partially offset the British military rundown east of Suez. This jointly-operated military facility made force reduction more palatable, especially for Conservative Party MPs who disapproved of the east of Suez rundown. Additionally, the British could exploit the agreement with the US government through provisos stating that "British naval ships and military aircraft have full right of access to the facility *at all times*."⁴ The discussion of Imperial aspects will also analyse the Commonwealth connection and how the British maintained relationships with Commonwealth countries that were affected by Diego Garcia. What is evident is the balancing that Britain had to maintain between its Commonwealth partners and the US, which indicated a swing in favour of the latter.

The discussion of International factors examines the role of security, the Cold War, and US-UK relations. The Indian Ocean was important to world trade. Oil exports from the Persian Gulf, and Asian trade passing through the Suez Canal, meant protection of these routes was essential during the Cold War. The military base's development on Diego Garcia was an important element in the US-UK Cold War struggle with the Soviet bloc. Colonial retention was directly beneficial to the US which did not have to administer Diego Garcia, and this was geopolitically important for its post-war military projection. Additionally, there will be examination of the US-UK 'special relationship' and how Diego Garcia countered its decline

⁴ Ibid.

during the 1970s. Also examined in the International section will be the UN and its attitude towards the BIOT. With the supranational organisation opposed to colonialism, the analysis will look at the UN role and how expectations were weighed against the Cold War dynamic.

These three Internal, Imperial and International factors allow the reader to understand how the BIOT's creation was important for Britain and the US during decolonisation. It is clear that there was a confluence of factors pushing in favour of retention. However, this comes with its caveats, and the facility's creation has caused difficulties for both parties in the agreement and this brings to the fore that colonialism remains both a burden and an asset in the post-colonial era. The UN was opposed to the BIOT's creation, and also the building of military facilities on the island of Diego Garcia. The Cold War seemed far away from the Indian Ocean, but the US and the British bringing it there was deemed unattractive, unnecessary, and illegal by many.

Internal Factors in the Retention of the BIOT

The examination of Chagossian removal from Diego Garcia from the late-1960s into the early-1970s will examine attitudes towards the *Ilois* in contrast to other colonial populations. Additionally, analysis of legal proceedings which the British government now faces, and the development of Chagossian identity, will show the problems that the British government has faced many years after the population transfer. The blanket removal of a settled population was unique in the British Empire and underscores a divergence over the treatment of peoples in different colonies. The British government's refusal to acknowledge self-determination on Diego Garcia markedly contrasted to the Falkland Islands where the population's identity and rights were paramount in sovereignty debates. Not recognising self-determination was an important factor in retention and meant that the *Ilois* were deemed a transient population. This lack of affiliation with Britain can be explained through the Chagos Islanders never being traditionally seen as British in either culture or ethnicity. Being descendants of French black slaves meant identity-links to the metropole were not as strong as in Gibraltar and the Falkland Islands, for example, and this symbolised the different treatment of different people in different colonies. The eviction was also undertaken clandestinely (the *Washington Post* was the first to report on the removal in 1975) and this appealed to the US government which wanted no population to remain. This highlights the lengths Britain went to when local factors met the geopolitics of decolonisation and the Cold War.

The Chagossians and their Expulsion

Before the population's fate was determined by the UK, a matriarchal society had developed with a unique culture and identity (owing to the islands' geographic isolation) and a small population of 2000 people in the 1960s (incidentally the same as the Falklands). However, by the mid-1960s the US government wished to have an island base as part of the 'Strategic Island

Concept' (explained in greater depth in the International section of this chapter). The US government, as part of its lease, wanted "exclusive control" of Diego Garcia, and to effectively run the military facility required no "local inhabitants."⁵ The removal cost was met by the British government and included the resettlement of displaced labour, compensation for the Chagos-Agalega company (which owned and ran the plantations), and compensation to the governments of Mauritius and the Seychelles for loss of territory.⁶ The CO advised the Treasury that resettlement and compensation would be the most difficult aspects in creating the new territory.⁷ The letters and telegrams from the CO are striking in their discussions of the BIOT's creation. The resettlement and detachment to create the territory was regarded as "essential" by the British government. There was little consultation with Mauritius and the Seychelles and no consultation with the *Ilois*.⁸

Nevertheless, on the BIOT's creation in 1965, there was no certainty that full eviction would occur. The initial plan was to send residents to "out-islands, rather than in Mauritius or the Seychelles as it would be cheaper", with initial agreement that the US government employ local residents in construction.⁹ Other plans included the development of Aldabra atoll (which was part of the BIOT until Seychellois independence in 1976) to be the site of an RAF facility, jointly-administered by the UK and US, which would include transmitters for the BBC World Service. However, the lobbying powers of Labour MP Tam Dalyell helped shelve this idea so as not to ruin the pristine ecosystem.¹⁰ Aldabra housed the largest population of giant tortoises in the world, alongside other endangered fauna, and both US and UK governments were

⁵ Sand, *United States and Diego Garcia*, 25.

⁶ Telegram from Secretary of State for the Colonies, 21 July 1965, CO 1036/1332.

⁷ Trafford Smith to J.A. Patterson, 13 July 1965, CO 1036/1332.

⁸ Telegram to Mauritius and the Seychelles, 19 July 1965, CO 1036/1332.

⁹ Smith to Patterson, 15 July 1965, CO 1036/1332.

¹⁰ Tam Dalyell, *The Importance of Being Awkward: The Autobiography of Tam Dalyell* (Edinburgh, 2012), 63. Dalyell's efforts over Aldabra earned him the nickname 'Aldabra dafty Tam'.

lobbied by scientists for this ecology to be left untouched.¹¹ Tory MP Nicholas Ridley also worried about the ecosystem in 1967, challenging Denis Healey, Defence Secretary, over wasting taxpayer's money on this venture. Healey quipped, "as I understand it, the island of Aldabra is inhabited—like Her Majesty's Opposition Front Bench—by giant turtles, frigate birds and boobies."¹² Into the twenty-first century, environmental concerns have supplanted the Islanders' claim to return home. According to the US Embassy in London, Colin Roberts of the FCO stated in 2009 that "establishing a marine park would, in effect, put paid to the resettlement claims of the archipelago's former residents."¹³ Environmental concerns overrode the Islanders' rights, and the confluence between protecting a strategic gateway in the Indian Ocean and conserving fragile ecosystems meant that the removal of the Chagossians was assured.

When Chagossian eviction was decided upon, the removal was undertaken secretly and it was not until the 1970s that it was exposed by the *Washington Post*, which described it as an "act of mass kidnapping."¹⁴ Secretive removal saved the US government from embarrassment and was important in the US-UK agreement in order to obtain US funding. The British government feared that the leaking of information would result in the US government relinquishing its 50/50 split for compensation which was paid for removal costs. Washington's contribution of approximately £5m would "never be acknowledged publicly" and was made clandestinely through a British discount on Polaris research and development.¹⁵ To appease US wishes, the British adhered to population removal to provide an ideal staging post for military

¹¹ Robin Cook MP, World in Action 'Britain's Other Islanders', 1982, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nt6Jz9xlKXg> [accessed 15 August 2019].

¹² Ministry of Defence, Aldabra, HoC, Volume 774, Column 1186, 12 April 1967.

¹³ Cable from US Embassy, London to BIOT Diego Garcia etc., 15 May 2009, Public Library of US Diplomacy, WikiLeaks, https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09LONDON1156_a.html [accessed 15 August 2019]. This cable shows the enhanced value to the US of Diego Garcia, and how the British use environmentalism to accommodate US interests.

¹⁴ 'Editorial', *The Washington Post*, 9 September 1975.

¹⁵ A.N. Galsworthy to J. Stonehouse, 20 May 1966, CO 1036/1616.

projection. The process of undertaking population removal to create a new colony underscores the lengths that the British government went to in light of geopolitical concerns.

In 1968, when the removal formally started, Islanders who left temporarily to have medical treatment, or went shopping for supplies in Mauritius, were banned from returning to the Chagos archipelago. Supplies were also restricted on the island resulting in a deterioration of living conditions and making it an undesirable place to live.¹⁶ The lack of British kinship to Chagossian people, and the racist imagining of the islanders, emphasised their non-Britishness and non-indigeneity and justified their removal. Stressing their ‘Otherness’ meant that human rights did not factor into the debate on the islanders’ future thus making eviction easier to contemplate.

In order to facilitate removal, the Copra plantations on Diego Garcia were bought by the British Crown in 1967 and sold to Moulinie & Co. which was told to ship the residents off the island. When leaving the island, residents were allowed to take a small box of personal belongings, with most possessions left behind. Days before the final residents left Diego Garcia, Sir Bruce Greatbatch, Governor of the Seychelles, ordered the company to exterminate all Chagossian pet dogs on the island, which Marcel Moulinie (owner of the company) personally undertook.¹⁷ The effectiveness of the clearance reduced the island’s population to zero and when complete, the MoS declared “there is nothing on our files about a population and an evacuation.”¹⁸ The removal had been removed from the official record. Some government officials disapproved of the eviction. David Snoxell, British High Commissioner to Mauritius from 2000-4, called it

¹⁶ David Vine, ‘From the Birth of the Ilois to the “Footprint of Freedom”’ in Mary Kooy & Sandra Evers (eds), *Eviction from the Chagos Islands* (The Hague, 2011), 15.

¹⁷ On the BIOT’s creation the Commissioner and Administrator were based in the Seychelles and at times the titles Governor of the Seychelles and Governor of the BIOT are used interchangeably. Upon Seychellois independence in 1976, administration of the BIOT moved to the FCO in London.

¹⁸ Cited in S. Mole, ‘Justice for the Chagos’, *Round Table*, 103, 1 (2014): 114.

“one of the worst violations of human rights perpetrated by the UK in the 20th Century.”¹⁹ However, Snoxell confirmed that he had no choice but to represent the official government position. There was also little that could be done because UK law permits crown colonies to be administered through the Privy Council, therefore making overseas territories publicly unaccountable.²⁰

The total cost – inclusive of Chagos, Aldabra, Farquhar and Desroches – was estimated at over £7.2 million. This included compensation to the Islanders, the resettlement of displaced labourers, and a capital grant of £3 million to Mauritius for the loss of its islands which would be transferred to the BIOT.²¹ The swift removal was justified on the grounds that the Islanders were allegedly transient workers from Mauritius and the Seychelles. As the Earl of Longford, Colonial Secretary, advised, “there must be no reference to permanent inhabitants – they must be referred to as Mauritian or Seychellois.”²² This would prevent them from having the right of self-determination. The semantics used informed the treatment of the Islanders with the FCO “anxious that no publicity should be given to the problem of these *contract labourers*.”²³ Chagossians were treated as itinerant workers who could be moved whenever was deemed necessary. In reality, both the UK and the US government were aware, and acknowledged, that the Islanders could trace their heritage back many generations. This inconvenient truth troubled

¹⁹ Interview in ‘Chagos: “A year from now the right of return will have been restored”, *New Statesman*, 1 April 2010, <http://www.newstatesman.com/human-rights/2010/04/160-mauritius-british-chagos> [accessed 17 July 2019].

²⁰ The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council (JCPC) is the highest court for the BOTs. Harking back to the Norman Conquest, when the King was the fount of justice, it meant lands owned by the crown were not answerable to the English (later UK) Parliament. All matters in crown colonies are therefore decided through the Privy Council and are not publicly accountable. See David B. Swinfen, *Imperial Appeal: The Debate on the Appeal to the Privy Council, 1833-1986* (Manchester, 1987) and T.O. Elias, ‘Colonial Courts and the Doctrine of Judicial Precedent’, *Modern Law Review*, 18, 4 (1955): 356-370.

²¹ Defence of the Indian Ocean, Estimate of Compensation Costs, July 1965, CO 1036/1332.

²² Sand, *United States and Britain in Diego Garcia*, 25.

²³ Telegram from Douglas-Home, FCO to 10 Downing Street, Cabinet Office and the Treasury, 14 January 1971, FCO 141/1355.

some in government. A letter from the FCO's Pacific and Indian Ocean Department to the Governor of the BIOT in 1970 acknowledged this point:

Apart from our overall strategic and defence interests, we are also concerned at present not to have to elaborate on the administrative implications for the present population on Diego Garcia of establishment of any base there. We would not wish it to become general knowledge that some of the inhabitants have lived on Diego Garcia for at least two generations and could, therefore, be regarded as "belongers".²⁴

Chagossians were treated as secondary citizens whose rights were expendable in the Cold War and it was this strategic concern that ignored their residential status. In contrast to other colonies, where identity brought closer ties to the metropole making retention favourable to the British government during the Cold War, the lack of kinship here meant that a pro-British identity could not be used to serve a larger purpose. Jeremy Corbyn, Labour MP for Islington North, noted the geopolitical influence in 2001, suspecting that as "a quid pro quo for Britain withdrawing from Suez [sic.], Diego Garcia was offered as a base."²⁵ British military withdrawal east of Suez, which is explored in the Imperial section of this chapter, influenced Cold War defence requirements and had a lasting impact on the Islanders. As one British diplomat wrote, "the aim is to get some rocks that will remain *ours*; there will be no indigenous population except seagulls."²⁶ The Islanders were disposable in post-war geopolitics and their lack of identification with Britain – culturally and ethnically - made it easier for eviction to take place.

However, there were mandarins and diplomats who were opposed to the expulsion. Aside from Snoxell's ethical misgivings, Peter Carter in the British High Commission in Mauritius understood the risks in terms of Anglo-Mauritian relations and that colonial retention and

²⁴ Eleanor Emery to Sir Bruce Greatbatch, 13 November 1970, as quoted by Tam Dalyell, British Indian Ocean Territory, HoC, Volume 360, Column 181, 9 January 2001.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Sir Paul Gore-Booth cited in Vine, *Island of Shame*, 91.

population removal conflicted potentially with the wider maintenance of British influence in the Indian Ocean region through managed decolonisation. Removing the *Ilois* from Chagos could threaten good relations with the Mauritian government and there was a concern that transfer of the *Ilois* would make Mauritius reluctant to transfer the territory needed to create the BIOT. In 1970, Carter wrote forcefully to the FCO: “as for the possibility of the resettlement [in Mauritius] of some 450 *Ilois* from Chagos, I shudder to think of the repercussions this might have. It will certainly do a great deal of harm to the goodwill we have engendered.”²⁷ That engendered goodwill was the successful decolonisation of an Anglophile Mauritius in 1968 and which was not a Non-Aligned group member until 1973, but was nevertheless susceptible to communist pressure and so needed to be favourably maintained as a ‘Western’ ally. Carter went on to argue that the Chagossians were a British responsibility and should not be “chucked out.”²⁸ In 1971, Carter wrote again to the FCO on resettlement, asking “why don’t we just leave them [the Islanders] in the Chagos to the North?”²⁹ Clearly there was official acknowledgement that blanket resettlement was not necessarily the best option and was ethically problematic. However, these concerns were trumped by the realities of Mauritian internal politics. The ethnic divide between western-oriented Indo-Mauritians and more radicalised Creoles encouraged the former to accept the British terms of independence as a means of entrenching their dominant political and economic position. That included acceptance of the transfer of sovereignty and population of the Chagos Islands.³⁰

²⁷ Carter to Defence Department, FCO, 2 November 1970, FCO 141/1355.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ Carter to Emery, 13 January 1971, FCO 141/1355.

³⁰ Jean Houbert, ‘The Indian Ocean Creole Islands: Geo-Politics and Decolonisation’, *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 30, 3 (1992): 465-484.

By 1973 the removal was complete, and the island, said journalist John Pilger in 2004, was “swept and sanitised.”³¹ The *Ilois* did not have the kinship with the UK needed to influence the British government. With the Cold War shaping geopolitics there was scant regard for “some Tarzans and man Fridays whose origins are so obscure.”³² The US-UK partnership during the Cold War would not be disrupted for the sake of the Chagossians.

As evidenced, the population removal was clandestine and had wider defence considerations. This will be examined in detail in the International part of this chapter, but it is impossible to isolate the Internal dimension and the Islanders from international politics when looking at retention in the case of Diego Garcia. Population removal helped the British government in its defence policy and partnership with the US during the Cold War. But the perceived nature of Islander identity also influenced events because this was not regarded as being white Anglo-Saxon focussed, meaning there was no kith and kin support in Chagossian claims for self-determination as per the Falklands. The Chagossian people do, however, have their own sense of themselves through an ‘Imagined Community’ and, as the next sub-section will explore, the development of identity away from home has made return easier, and British retention more difficult.

The Chagossian Plight and Flight

Scholarship on the exiled Chagossian population is limited, and while it has attempted to add a Chagossian voice to the historical narrative it has not been situated within an imperial history framework. There is, however, non-academic materials on the Chagossians which reconcile the population’s experience away from Diego Garcia. These provide valuable primary-source

³¹ John Pilger, *Stealing A Nation*, Granada TV, 2004, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PjNfXK6QpqY&t=1785s> [accessed 14 February 2020].

³² FO Official, Sir Denis Greenhill cited in Sand, *United States and Diego Garcia*, 17.

material with which to analyse the development of Chagossian culture and identity and allow Chagossian voices to be heard. While the Chagossians do not live on Diego Garcia, they will be treated as a displaced population here and analysed within the context of the Internal dimension. This section will also detail the legal cases which have been brought before the UK government. These are key to understanding an enhanced Chagossian identity and were instrumental in showcasing Chagossian culture and developing a community away from 'home'.

After population removal, the majority of the Chagossian population, between 1328 and 1522 individuals, resided in Mauritius, with approximately 232 living in the Seychelles. After 2002, the British Overseas Territories Act reclassified BDTs as BOTs. This also amended the citizenship status of residents in overseas territories to British citizenship, and thus BOT residents were now eligible for British passports. Successful lobbying by Chagossians and British MPs resulted in an amendment to the Act which allowed second-generation Chagossians to be eligible for British citizenship because they were a deported population.³³ With the ascension of these bills, 2000 Chagossians settled in the UK, mainly residing in Crawley (West Sussex), Manchester, and London.³⁴

The settlement of the Chagossian population in the UK gave the population a wider diaspora, and thus made cultural transmission challenging. Nevertheless, there has been a concerted effort to highlight and celebrate a Chagossian cultural heritage through dance, food and music.

³³ Public Bill Committee, Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Bill, June 2009 <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmpublic/borders/090618/am/90618s02.htm>.

³⁴ Chagossians in Mauritius were entitled to citizenship under the 1968 constitution and this was instituted to ensure that the resettled would not be classified as Chagossian and thus use self-determination as a territorial integrity claim. Chagossians in the Seychelles did not receive citizenship and either had to be non-citizens or pay for naturalisation. Laura Jeffrey, "We don't want to be sent back and forth all the time": Ethnographic encounters with displacement, migration, and Britain beyond the British Isles', *The Sociological Review*, 65, 1 (2017): 74.

Jeffrey's recent Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) grant to support and safeguard the transmission of intangible Chagossian culture provided insight into a culture that has developed in exile with strong links back to Diego Garcia.³⁵ Demonstrations of cooking traditional coconut dishes and ritualistic *sega* dancing have shown that through forced displacement the population bind themselves to their 'home' and the wide diaspora is important in celebrating this culture.³⁶ This also dispels notions of cultural hybridity and underscores a Chagossian identity as a homogenous group from the Chagos Islands.³⁷ Additionally, *sega* dancing was nominated by the Mauritian government to be placed on the UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2017, which featured an international touring exhibition of cultural heritage.³⁸ The aim of the AHRC-funded research was to "preserve [the Chagossians'] collective identity and intangible cultural heritage after their protracted displacement" through bringing a sense of pride to the community.³⁹

Football is another cultural identifier. The Chagos Islands International Football Team ostensibly represents the territory of the Chagos Islands in the BIOT. The team has played in the Confederation of Independent Football Associations (CONIFA) since 2011 and is based in West Sussex, but it represents the global Chagossian diaspora.⁴⁰ Chagossian culture has also been represented through film and in 2019 a documentary was released celebrating the Chagossian people, highlighting their culture and demonstrating how through their court cases

³⁵ Chagos: Cultural Heritage Across Generations, <https://chagos.online>, [accessed 27 November 2019].

³⁶ *Sega* is a dance performed on a Saturday night, which developed from eighteenth-century creole plantations, with lyrics sometimes protesting against social conditions or personal suffering as well as celebrating joyful occasions and jest.

³⁷ Rosabelle Roswell, *Le Malaise Créole: Ethnic Identity in Mauritius* (Oxford, 2006), 54-55.

³⁸ Laura Jeffrey, 'Safeguarding *sega*: Transmission, Inscription, and Appropriation of Chagossian Intangible Cultural Heritage', *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 25, 10 (2019): 1020-1033.

³⁹ Rebecca Totter, Co-Principal Investigator, AHRC, <https://ahrc.ukri.org/research/readwatchlisten/features/celebrating-world-heritage-day-top-5-insights-from-the-heritage-sector/> [accessed 3 December 2019].

⁴⁰ Football, UK Chagos Support Association, <https://www.chagossupport.org.uk/blog/tag/Football> [accessed 3 December 2019].

they are pursuing their right to return home.⁴¹ The recent projects show that cultural heritage as a resource can be used by marginalised groups to define themselves, and when used with other cultural identifiers supports the idea of an ‘Imagined Community’. As the population in Crawley cannot know the full Chagossian diaspora they imagine their role within this nationalism and identity to support their right to return. The Chagossians were forcibly evicted, but their culture is promoted and links the diaspora and their home.

Cultural developments in exile have also led to tangible markers such as the Chagos flag, which was created in 2000. The flag, designed by Olivier Bencoult, a Chagossian activist who was evicted from the Islands aged four, represents the Chagossian plight through its colours: red/orange for the sun and representative of the plantations and removal of the population; black for hardship, hunger strikes and demonstrations; and blue for the sea, which the Islanders want to return to.⁴² This flag has been adopted by the Chagos diaspora and is a symbol which their plight can be anchored to because public demonstrations use the flag to further emphasise an ‘Imagined Community’. This is similar to the Falklands (and other BOTs that have a close association with the UK, such as Gibraltar, St. Helena and Tristan de Cunha) where flags are used as signifiers of heritage and identity. This is a banal nationalism perhaps, but, for the Chagossians, in exile and in opposition to British rule. The adoption of the flag for the Chagossians is reflective of their desire to be independent and they deploy the flag as a ‘traditional’ nationalist symbol embedding their desire to be an independent nation. This is in contrast to the Falkland Islands, which displays the coat of arms (portraying the *Desire*, John Davis’ ship, which discovered the islands in 1592) on its flag, but not as a desire to return home but to affirm the right to remain.

⁴¹ Sheffield Documentary Film Festival, <https://www.showroomworkstation.org.uk/docfest2019-another-paradise> [accessed 3 December 2019].

⁴² Interview with Olivier Bencoult, SBS News, <https://www.sbs.com.au/news/chagos-archipelago-winning-back-paradise> [accessed 3 December 2019].



Figure 2: The Chagossian National Football Team with the Chagossian flag.

Source: 'Paradise Lost', *Delayed Gratification*, <https://www.slow-journalism.com/from-the-archive/paradise-lost-chagos> [accessed 3 December 2019]

This sense of national identity has informed Chagossian legal challenges, and since 2000 nine cases have been brought before the UK courts. The first significant challenge was in 2000, when the High Court of Justice ruled on constitutional rights and the 1971 Immigration Ordinance (which barred return to the Chagos archipelago). The Court heard that eviction from the Islands was unlawful under the Magna Carta and accepted that return was a right. The Court overturned the 1971 Ordinance allowing return to the outer islands in the Chagos Archipelago. But this excluded Diego Garcia which the UK government prevented return given its US treaty obligation.⁴³ Some returned for memory purposes and to tend to familial graves, but none to permanently settle. However, in 2004, two Orders in Council under Royal Prerogative were passed which suddenly reinstated all immigration controls and nullified the 2000 court case.⁴⁴

⁴³ See Christian Nauvel, 'A Return from Exile in Sight? The Chagossians and their Struggle', *Northwestern Journal of International Human Rights*, 5, 1 (2007): 96-126.

⁴⁴ Letter to the Clerk of the Committee from the Parliamentary Relations and Devolution Team, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 7 June 2007,

After this, the High Court ruled that this was unlawful and the government mounted an appeal against this ruling which in 2008 was brought before the House of Lords.⁴⁵ By a margin of 3-2 the Law Lords voted to allow the government's appeal and overruled the High Court of Justice in the UK legal disagreements.

The 2008 ruling was advantageous for the British government. Increased security concerns due to the 9/11 attacks in New York and the subsequent War on Terror after 2001 meant Diego Garcia had renewed significance. Its proximity to the Middle East and Central Asia provided the US with enhanced military projection and was used for two extraordinary rendition flights in 2002.⁴⁶ The British government were also concerned about security and the cost of resettlement in the event of a successful court case which were deemed 'prohibitive'. KPMG (the international accountancy firm) was employed by the British government to cost the resettlement programme and detailed three options based on substantial, medium-scale and small-scale resettlement. First, resettlement of 1500 peoples, which would need extensive infrastructure (an airport and harbour), would have a capital outlay of £413.9m; second, resettling a population of 500 peoples would have a capital outlay of £106.9m; and third, resettling 150 people would have a capital outlay of £62.9m.⁴⁷ The ruling that Chagossians were not allowed to return was welcome relief to the British government in costs 'saved' because of the importance of security and the protection of military facilities and for US-UK relations. The 'saving' underscored how internal colonial matters faced up against metropolitan

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200607/cmselect/cmcaff/501/501we16.htm> [accessed 23 August 2019].

⁴⁵ *R v Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, ex p Bancoult (No 2)*,

<https://www.supremecourt.uk/cases/docs/uksc-2015-0021-judgment.pdf> [accessed 23 August 2019].

⁴⁶ Initially, the US government denied rendition flights to Diego Garcia. However, in a June 2014 parliamentary paper the UK government acknowledged the use of CIA rendition flights and that it had known about them since 2008. This dented public confidence in UK government accountability over its sovereign territory and was contrary to UK law, which bans extradition flights. See, 'The Use of Diego Garcia for Rendition', 19 June 2014, <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmselect/cmcaff/377/37704.htm> [accessed 23 August 2019].

⁴⁷ Feasibility Study for the Resettlement of the British Indian Ocean Territory, November 2014,

http://data.parliament.uk/DepositedPapers/Files/DEP2014-1543/Feasibility_Study_for_the_Resettlement_of_the_BIOT_Draft_Report.pdf.

concerns and geopolitics. The British government was not willing to allow the Islanders to return, hence the many court cases, with the US-UK partnership proving more important than the rights of the Chagossians.

The differences between BOTs is evident when looking at the Chagossians. The protection of largely white-British peoples in the South Atlantic markedly differs to the treatment of the Chagossians. In 1982, £2bn was spent defending the Falkland Islands, development funds were made available, and full-British citizenship was reinstated in 1983.⁴⁸ That same year, £4m was given to the Mauritian government to distribute through the *Ilois* Trust Board Fund as a full and final settlement for the displaced Chagossians who still resided in Mauritius. To receive the money each recipient had to sign a form renouncing future claims against HMG and to relinquish the right to return to their homeland.⁴⁹

BIOT court cases in the UK identify the power relationship between the demands of the UK and US governments and the rights of displaced peoples. In this instance, national interests of both states have trumped the individual rights of the Chagossians. The legal disputes culminated in 2019 with the ICJ ruling, and in May 2019 the UNGA adopted a resolution demanding that the UK government withdraw from the Chagos Archipelago in six months.⁵⁰ The British government rejected the non-binding resolution, but it focussed attention on waning British support at the UN, especially on colonial matters. However, the legal dispute has reinforced Chagossian identity and culture. The development of an identity in exile is important as it may lead to the British government losing sovereignty over the islands in the long-term.

⁴⁸ Pilger, *Stealing a Nation*, 2004.

⁴⁹ Snoxell, 'Expulsion', 125.

⁵⁰ UNGA Plenary Meeting, 22 May 2019, <https://www.un.org/press/en/2019/ga12146.doc.htm>, [accessed 12 August 2019].

The development of a distinct *kiltir* (Chagossian creole for culture) is important for the Internal level of analysis because the Chagossians’ “nuanced understandings of culture validate their claims of cultural loss and distinctiveness in exile.”⁵¹ As Chapter Two explored, people are defined by what they are not and life in exile has confirmed this by living in other cultural environments. Through relocation the Chagossians have developed an identity and nationality away from the Chagos archipelago but the islands are somewhere they call home. This identity has moved along different trajectories to other peoples, notably Falkland Islanders and Gibraltarians. The development of Chagos national identity has used similar symbols, but not to try and bring about closer association but as a movement recognising Chagossian self-determination to return home. Nevertheless, the identity that has developed has aided the retention of the BIOT. Exiled identity reinforced the Islanders’ supposed non-indigeneity, and their diaspora has meant it is easier to refuse their right to return home because for many Chagossians onward migration to Mauritius and the Seychelles – and subsequently the UK - has complicated the notion of ‘home’.⁵² Because there are two or more countries in which Chagossian identity is drawn from, having a home to be returned to is obscured through migration.

⁵¹ Jeffrey, *Chagos Islanders*, 76.

⁵² Jeffrey, ‘Forced Displacement’, 1114.

The Imperial Factor in Retention of the BIOT

The Imperial dimension considers metropolitan Britain and its influence on the continued existence of the BIOT. Analysis will focus on the east of Suez decision, UK politics, and Britain's relations with the Commonwealth with assessment of the Imperial factor's influence on the creation of Diego Garcia in light of the Cold War and budgetary concerns. This will focus on the creation of the BIOT in 1965 being linked to the east of Suez defence reviews because a British presence in the Indian Ocean could be maintained through access rights with minimal expenditure. This was politically beneficial as it mitigated the impact of the retraction of forces. Edward Heath's government after 1970 was opposed to full military withdrawal, but the budgetary problems in the UK meant that a full reversal of policy was impossible making Diego Garcia increasingly important in metropolitan policy. The military facility could directly facilitate an international power presence and enabled the UK to withdraw from east of Suez more easily making retention of a colony to achieve that goal increasingly attractive. Finally, the Imperial dimension will include a Commonwealth perspective showing how British governments had to balance Commonwealth considerations with the Cold War. With many Indian Ocean littoral states also Commonwealth members there was a direct interest in US use of the BIOT, as this was in opposition to their belief that the Indian Ocean should be a zone of peace.

Diego Garcia at Westminster

Political discourse will be analysed in this section to indicate the BIOT's geo-political appeal in Westminster when the 1960s-1970s were marked by metropolitan disengagement from imperial commitments. BIOT creation under a Labour government counters the notion that Labour was an anti-imperial party, and while Labour Party paternalism towards the Commonwealth prevailed, the creation of a whole new colony implies Labour had some

residual interest in colonialism.⁵³ Diego Garcia was a British government vehicle for geopolitical advantage in the Cold War, but what also helped its creation, retention and sustenance was the usual impotence of party politics on imperial policy formulation. Front benchers (both Labour and Conservative) were clandestine in their approach to the BIOT. On creation, there were no debates in parliament and subsequent Acts to do with the BIOT did not receive parliamentary assent. Ministers were secretive in policy formulation as it was understood the embarrassment that creating a colony in the midst of decolonisation would cause, especially when international pressure urged independence. Nevertheless, both Labour and Conservative MPs understood the geopolitical practicalities of the decision. This resulted in a sustained policy of commitment towards the BIOT regardless of government after 1965 (notwithstanding the occasional parliamentary intervention from more humanitarian-minded MPs).

The furtiveness of both Whitehall and Westminster on the BIOT is evident in correspondence between cabinet ministers, MPs and constituents in the 1970s. In 1975, a letter from David Ennals, Minister of State at the FCO, highlighted the official government approach to Diego Garcia when advising Conservative MP John Nott on how best to reply to a constituent asking about parliamentary accountability and the “high-handed diplomacy” in the BIOT’s creation. Emphasising the secretive approach, Ennals explained that, “there have been no select committees dealing with Diego Garcia or the British Indian Ocean Territory” with it being “common practice for governments to exclude the general public, mainly for security reasons, from areas used for defence purposes”.⁵⁴ The FCO letter came at a time of public knowledge of Diego Garcia, with the Chagossian removal revealed in newspapers from 1973, and even

⁵³ See C.M.M. Cotton, ‘Labour, European Integration and the Post-Imperial Mind, 1960-1975’ and David Stewart, “‘A Complex Question about the Remnants of Empire’: The Labour Party and the Falklands War’ in Frank, Horner and Stewart (ed), *British Labour Movement and Imperialism*, 149-72, 173-191.

⁵⁴ R.E. Jones to Nott, 23 September 1975; Ennals to Nott, 27 October 1975, FCO 141/1411.

though the FCO emphasised the openness to parliament in creating the BIOT, parliamentary accountability was minimal.

Some written answers were provided to parliamentary questions during 1975, especially concerning the plight of the Chagossians, but these deliberately sanitised and obscured the government's role in the eviction process and the effect this had on the people involved. The reply of FCO Minister Lord Goronwy-Roberts to Lord Brockway (the famously anti-colonial founder of the MCF) on the Chagossians' "return to Mauritius and the Seychelles" denied that the government had been deliberately silent on the Diego Garcia issue.⁵⁵ BIOT criticism and Chagossian treatment did not fall along party lines and rested upon individual MPs and Peers to question the process. Arthur Newens, Labour MP for Harlow, told the Commons that British policy should be both against colonialism and independent of present US policy in the Indian Ocean.⁵⁶ Robin Cook, Labour MP for Edinburgh Central, pushed the second Wilson government on the lack of transparency surrounding US involvement on Diego Garcia.⁵⁷ In a revealing House of Lords debate, Labour Lords Brockway and Hale criticised their government for the forceful eviction of peoples and the lack of accountability over the whole process.⁵⁸ MPs were not split along party lines regarding the BIOT, with intra-party criticism evident. This supports the notion that retention in this case was about *raison d'état*; the Cold War context of defence and geopolitics were central to government policy irrespective of which party was in power. As John Battle, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, reminded parliament in 2001 during a debate on the Diego Garcia issue, MPs should not forget the geopolitics of the 1960s and 1970s: "the Cold War was all too real."⁵⁹ Battle's statement indicates the importance

⁵⁵ House of Lords Debate, Diego Garcia Inhabitants, 14 October 1975, FCO 141/1411.

⁵⁶ Foreign Affairs, HoC, Volume 880, Column 348, 25 March 1975.

⁵⁷ Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, HoC, Volume 897, Column 812, 16 October 1975.

⁵⁸ Diego Garcia Inhabitants, HoL, 4 October 1975, FCO 141/1411.

⁵⁹ British Indian Ocean Territory, HoC, 9 January 2001.

of retaining strategic influence during decolonisation and how the preservation of British world power was considered necessary. Darwin, as we saw in Chapter 2, argues that this was a major consideration in decolonisation, and this can be expanded upon here to show that the apolitical ‘Official Mind’ shaped outcomes in colonial retention as much as it did in the process of decolonisation.⁶⁰

Indeed, the question of geopolitics and the treatment of the Chagossians often came above parliamentary process, and it was this that caused consternation among many in parliament. In the House of Lords in October 1975, Baroness Lee of Asheridge was perplexed that “it took an exposure in the American Congress Committees to give us in the British Parliament the information that I think we ought to have had directly a long time ago.”⁶¹ Also in October 1975, Robin Cook asked the Foreign Secretary if he was:

aware that serious allegations have been made by American Senators that the agreement entered into on Diego Garcia involved cuts in the price of Polaris Missiles? Is he aware that the only Government statement on these allegations has been a non-attributable Foreign Office briefing? Could we not have a statement or a Select Committee to sort fact from fiction?⁶²

The lack of transparency concerned members of both Houses and showed a deliberate concealment of the negotiations, population eviction, and the British administrative role. As Jeremy Corbyn put it in 2001, there was a need for greater transparency by governments on issues “which would make Palmerston proud.”⁶³ This was supported by fellow Labour maverick Tam Dalyell who criticised the process which prevented the second Wilson

⁶⁰ Darwin, ‘Pattern or puzzle’; see also Karl Hack, ‘Unfinished Decolonisation and Globalisation’, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 47, 5 (2019): 818-850.

⁶¹ Debate in the House of Lords, Diego Garcia Inhabitants, 20 October 1975, FCO 141/1411.

⁶² Diego Garcia, HoC, 16 October 1975.

⁶³ BIOT, HoC, 9 January 2001.

government examining the FCO papers from the Heath administration, and thus preventing governments knowing the full nature of proceedings.⁶⁴

Government concealment also extended further than parliament. In a response to a 1973 BBC African Service television programme *Africa A to Z*, Bruce Greatbatch was irritated over BBC reporting, writing to the FCO that “the impression might be given that all BIOT islands were detached from the Seychelles, and it was not made clear that the islands are uninhabited. This is strange in a programme that is financed by the British taxpayer to support British foreign policy and British interests.”⁶⁵ Greatbatch was also frustrated by the inclusion of the Seychelles within media discussion on Africa, presumably because he did want British foreign policy to be portrayed as still colonial in nature to a predominantly African audience. The FCO reply assured the Governor that the programme’s written format would be changed and “the ambiguity of the passages” Greatbatch objected to would be eliminated.⁶⁶ As well as the government not fully disclosing information relating to the BIOT in Parliament, this instance of the BBC being influenced by colonial administrators and the FCO over its coverage further reveals the extent the government went in downplaying embarrassing news concerning the BIOT. Even though the BBC was funded through a parliamentary-approved TV licence, it was supposed to enjoy editorial independence, and it is striking that retroactive editing could take place to cast a more favourable light on British overseas interests.

This is not to say that the political persuasion of particular administrations was unimportant in the creation and development of the BIOT. As acknowledged by Ashton and Louis both Wilson and Heath faced their share of foreign policy challenges in the 1960s and 1970s. What separated

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Greatbatch to A.C. Stuart, Hong Kong and Indian Ocean Department, FCO, 14 September 1973, FCO 141/1428.

⁶⁶ FCO to Greatbatch, 24 September 1973, FCO 141/1428.

the two Prime Ministers was the trans-Atlantic partnership. Wilson valued close ties to Washington and was an Atlantacist at heart, whereas Heath shirked a close relationship with Washington and brought the UK into the EEC in 1973.⁶⁷ This partly explains the BIOT's creation under Wilson. His regret at the east of Suez withdrawal, and his declaration that Britain's frontiers were on the Himalayas, allowed Diego Garcia to satisfy his global power aims and maintain close ties to Washington.⁶⁸ Even so, while Heath was more uncertain about the 'special relationship', there were still global practicalities that necessitated his government's approval of population removal and the expansion of facilities, which did not conflict with a pivot towards Europe. Approval for the BIOT, and the lease of Diego Garcia to the US government, showed partisan support in British government because it highlighted shared defence problems. The FO in 1966 wrote that the "white man cannot expect indefinitely to maintain bases in non-white territory" making a base on a geographically remote, and allegedly uninhabitable, British sovereign territory attractive.⁶⁹ This allowed the British military presence east of Suez to diminish but also transfer to the US as policeman of the region (and which the British government could benefit from).

This discussion of politics at Westminster and the BIOT has examined the secretive nature of the colony's creation and retention and has looked at the role of party affiliations in this process. The concealment of information serves as a measurement of how important the colony was to successive British governments and is a reminder of the international irritation ongoing colonialism brought in the post-war period. Additionally, the Chagossian eviction was highly embarrassing, especially in the context of the zeitgeist of self-determination and decolonisation, but it was deemed necessary for geopolitical circumstances. This resulted in

⁶⁷ S.R. Ashton & Wm. Roger Louis (eds), *British Documents on the End of Empire: East of Suez and Commonwealth, 1964-1971* (London, 2004), xxxi.

⁶⁸ See Parr, 'Britain, America, East of Suez and the EEC'.

⁶⁹ Ashton & Louis, *East of Suez and the Commonwealth*, xxxi.

bipartisanship on the BIOT issue, with only a few left-wing MPs critical of the decision, highlighting that in geopolitical circumstances domestic party politics was not an important consideration. Party politics was limited in its influence on colonial retention for Diego Garcia and rather than the Labour or Conservative Party driving imperial policy there was a lack of party-political influence. The secrecy of the BIOT's creation suited the 'Official Mind' insofar as MPs (by and large) were prepared to see the geopolitical practicalities of Diego Garcia, thus eliminating scrutiny similar to other retained territories such as the Falklands and Brunei. This emphasises Diego Garcia as a late example of Whitehall's protection of diplomatic-strategic spheres of influence, thus making an ongoing global defence role on a reduced budget a reality.⁷⁰ The importance attached to Diego Garcia by both Labour and Conservative regimes to meet global objectives is brought out further in the next section and how this would additionally suit the 'Official Mind'.

The East of Suez Decision and the Cold War

The decision to withdraw British troops east of Suez was formally announced by Prime Minister Harold Wilson in January 1968. However, the decision can be traced back further than this date.⁷¹ Disengagement from overseas military roles outside Europe was initiated in 1965, the same year that the BIOT was created, with the Wilson government focussing on domestic expenditure.⁷² As Dockrill argues, while earlier governments relied on the east of Suez role as a cornerstone of British defence policy - alongside the defence of Western Europe, and the nuclear deterrent - problems mounted throughout the 1960s as Britain was spending seven per

⁷⁰ John Darwin, 'Imperialism and the Victorians: The Dynamics of Territorial Expansion', *English Historical Review*, 122, 447 (1997): 614-642.

⁷¹ For an analysis of the 'delayed' decision see Matthew Jones, 'A Decision Delayed: Britain's Withdrawal from South East Asia Reconsidered, 1961-68', *English Historical Review*, 117, 472 (2002): 569-595.

⁷² See John Subritzky, 'Britain, *Konfrontasi*, and the End of Empire in Southeast Asia, 1961-1965', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 28, 3 (2000): 209-227; Edward Longinotti, 'Britain's Withdrawal East of Suez: From Economic Determinism to Political Choice', *Contemporary British History*, 29, 3 (2015): 318-340.

cent of its annual GDP to maintain its 400,000 personnel across the globe.⁷³ The devaluation of Sterling in 1967 was a decisive factor in crossing the Rubicon of full withdrawal from east of Suez. Denis Healey, Defence Secretary, announced that troops would be withdrawn by 1971 from Southeast Asia, the Persian Gulf and the Maldives in a bid to save on the “ever growing and stretched military budget.”⁷⁴

Existing scholarship has attributed the withdrawal to domestic policies, with a focus on the welfare budget - specifically the NHS – resulting in the Labour government reducing overseas defence spending to protect this.⁷⁵ However, at the same time, it is possible to see how metropolitan geopolitical considerations influenced the BIOT’s creation. As Smith argues, retaining British influence was paramount in the decolonisation of the Persian Gulf region, and the creation of the BIOT can be viewed as an extension of and complement to this policy in the Indian Ocean. The creation of the BIOT chimes with Smith’s pattern of withdrawal insofar as it provided both a continued presence east of Suez through access rights to a future military facility, while also permitting a reduction in the defence budget.⁷⁶ The British were aware that the military withdrawal would have negative consequences for their global defence. Heath’s government maintained a diminished presence in Southeast Asia through the FPDA, but like the Wilson government saw advantages in using Diego Garcia to counteract the full removal of military personnel east of Suez.

⁷³ Dockrill, ‘Britain’s Power and Influence: Dealing with Three Roles and the Wilson Government’s Defence Debate Chequers in November 1964’: 212.

⁷⁴ Pham, *Ending East of Suez*, 26.

⁷⁵ Shohei Sato, *Britain and the Formation of the Gulf States: Embers of Empire* (Manchester, 2016); Shohei Sato, ‘Britain’s Decision to Withdraw from the Persian Gulf, 1964-1968: A Pattern and a Puzzle’, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 37, 1 (2009): 99-117; Longinotti, ‘Britain’s Withdrawal East of Suez’: 318-340.

⁷⁶ Simon C. Smith, ‘Britain’s Decision to Withdraw from the Persian Gulf: A Pattern not a Puzzle’, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 44, 2 (2016): 328-351; Simon C. Smith, *Britain’s Revival and Fall in the Gulf: Kuwait, Bahrain Qatar and the Trucial States: 1950-1971* (Abingdon, 2004), 6. Spencer Mawby likewise stresses the strategic value of the Middle East and Persian Gulf which at the highest levels of the UK government was not affected after the 1956 Suez Crisis. *British Policy in Aden and Protectorates, 1955-67: Last Outpost of a Middle East Empire* (London, 2005).

Nevertheless, even after personnel were withdrawn and bases wound down by 1971, rising defence costs still posed a problem for the British government. The December 1974 Defence Review by Roy Mason, Secretary of Defence, revealed the *still* enormous costs of defence which needed to reduce the military budget to 4.5 per cent of GDP, saving £4,700 million by 1983.⁷⁷ The Statement of Defence Estimates committed the UK to NATO (except maritime defence in the Mediterranean), but there would be reassessment of the FPDA in Southeast Asia, the Simonstown Agreement with South Africa (which would formally cease in 1975), as well as withdrawal from the staging post of Gan and of the Gurkha battalion in Brunei. This indicated a further downsizing of defence commitments but reemphasised the need for Diego Garcia. Alongside renewed commitments for remaining colonies and Oman, considerable commitments were given to Diego Garcia with expansion of facilities approved.⁷⁸ This allowed joint US-UK use of the military facility in the Indian Ocean, and when placed next to British contraction indicated that military strategy had changed from unilateral defence to using the US to support the British defence position. Again, however, this underscored the importance of retaining Diego Garcia.

With the British allowing expansion of the facility in the early-1970s to a working, albeit small, military base, the US government wrote to the FCO expressing their pleasure because the BIOT “provides a clear signal to the Soviets of our resolve to ensure a credible military capability there for use by our allies in mutual interest of security in the Indian Ocean.”⁷⁹ The FCO recognised the benefits of Diego Garcia to the British government when R.A. Sykes, head of the Defence Department wrote to Sir Edward Peck, the Permanent Under-Secretary, stressing “added flexibility at no capital cost in meeting our remaining commitments east of Suez after

⁷⁷ Secretary of Defence, Roy Mason, HoC, Defence Review, Volume 882, Column 1352, 3 December 1974.

⁷⁸ Statement of Defence Estimates, 1975, Memorandum by Secretary of Defence, accessed from TNA website, <http://filestore.nationalarchives.gov.uk/pdfs/small/cab-129-181-c-21.pdf>, [accessed 9 October 2018].

⁷⁹ Confidential Telegram from Washington to the FCO, 24 January 1974, FCO 141/1356.

the withdrawal in 1971.”⁸⁰ In the House of Lords, meanwhile, Earl Cowley, former government whip in the Lords, also recognised the advantage to Diego Garcia as an intelligence-gathering facility which had become more important with the changing east of Suez role and the termination of the Simonstown Agreement in 1975.⁸¹ These arguments help us to understand the importance of Diego Garcia to the British government and the importance of the BIOT’s retention. The US facility contributed to British defence in the Indian Ocean making withdrawal east of Suez tolerable and with benefits secured after defence restructuring.

This economised British role was recognised in 1966 by Robert McNamara, US Defense Secretary, who, after initial disapproval of the military facility on Diego Garcia, conceded that it could be used to keep Britain involved in operations east of Suez, which the US government saw as necessary for Indian Ocean security.⁸² What can be argued here is that forming the BIOT was undertaken directly with the east of Suez decision in mind. While Kibata argues that this was not the case, the costs saved by the British government on a policy that dates to 1965, and which additionally appealed to the US government, means it is hard to disconnect both. When considering the importance of Diego Garcia to the British in the 1970s, when military

⁸⁰ Sykes to Peck, 23 July 1968, FCO 31/134.

⁸¹ Indian Ocean: Neutrality, HoL, Volume 358, Column 755-6, 19 March 1975. The Simonstown Agreement was important for Indian Ocean security after the UK and the Union of South Africa signed a naval agreement in 1955, which transferred the Simonstown base from the Royal Navy to the South African Navy and gave the Royal Navy access in return. The agreement also allowed South Africa to buy naval ships from the UK and in effect was a mutual defence agreement which protected sea routes between the Middle East, Asia and the UK. The Agreement was modified in 1967, but formally terminated in 1975 following the 1974 UK Defence White Paper. The South African vote to become a republic in 1961, Pretoria’s withdrawal from the Commonwealth, and the National Party’s *apartheid* policy meant that South Africa increasingly became a pariah in the international community. This made the Simonstown Agreement less attractive to the UK. An argument can be made that Diego Garcia allowed the British to dispose of their embarrassing South African commitments. The US was a more reliable partner, and Diego Garcia provided financial benefits, allowing the UK to extricate itself from unnecessary relations with a troublesome South Africa. For the Simonstown Agreement and Anglo-South African relations see Allan du Toit, ‘The Anglo-South African Simon’s Town Agreement’, *Naval Digest*, 24 (2016): 129-165; Daniel Feather, ‘British Policy towards Military Cooperation with the Republic of South Africa, 1961-1975’, *International History Review*, 41, 4 (2018): 729-752.

⁸² Kibata, ‘Towards a New Okinawa’, 199.

reduction became a reality, conservation of the world-role was facilitated through the US facility.⁸³

The British still could, and would, maintain an imperial role to suit an international power presence. With increasing Soviet activity in the Indian Ocean, and Sino-Soviet influences in East African countries, the Island became a vital tool for US and NATO defence. Even though there were costs associated in administering the colony, these were insignificant next to the financial military burden that would have been entailed by remaining east of Suez.⁸⁴ The BIOT's creation and longer-term retention directly allowed a British military presence to be preserved satisfying the international power role, and also reduced Britain's defence budget.

By the 1970s, the Soviets extended operations into the Indian Ocean and its littoral states in their commitment to spread communism. The development of military facilities at Kismayo in south-eastern Somalia, an elaborate Soviet arms depot in northern Somalia, construction of naval facilities in Berbera, the expansion of facilities in Mogadishu, and proposals made to the Indians for a naval base at Vishakhapatnam meant that the increasing Soviet threat had to be contained.⁸⁵ Prior to the independence of Mauritius in 1968, the USSR had little interest in the area, but used independence to "establish a large embassy, sign a Soviet/Mauritius cultural agreement, request astronaut rescue facilities, and increase calls of Soviet naval vessels."⁸⁶ Soviet expansion also reached the Middle East and South Asia. Military aid was provided to Yemen and Iraq and the Indian government received four submarines, a submarine depot ship,

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ The cost of running the facility administratively was £88,993 in 1972-1973 and £123,000 in 1973-1974. Speech on the Debate Consolidated Fund Bill: Her Majesty's Government's Policy regarding the administration of Diego Garcia, Departmental Briefs on the BIOT, 20 March 1974, FCO 40/611.

⁸⁵ Anglo-US Talks on the Indian Ocean, 7 November 1974, FCO 141/1389.

⁸⁶ Guidance Note on Soviet Naval and Military Expansion in the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean from the Defence Department, 8 December 1970, FCO 46/652.

five anti-submarine escorts, two landing ships and small patrol vessels from the Soviet Union.⁸⁷

An FCO brief before UK-US talks in 1970, highlighted the Soviet Union's expansion into the Indian Ocean, describing the Soviets as wanting "a finger in every pie."⁸⁸

The increasing Soviet naval deployments into the Indian Ocean, given Suez Canal reopening in 1975 after being closed by Egypt since 1967, was important for UK and US use of Diego Garcia. However, other factors contributed to Soviet entry into the Indian Ocean. The mid-1970s was marked by US military weakness after Vietnam, and the ending of détente, alongside the 1971 Indo-Pakistan war, and the 1973 Yom Kippur War. Beside these pressures, the USSR increased its naval ship-days (the total amount of days spent at sea for naval ships) in the Indian Ocean from 1000 days per year in 1969 to 9000 days by 1975.⁸⁹ The Suez Canal provided the means, but Soviet deployment was initiated by other factors.⁹⁰ The Soviet 'threat' contributed to UK policy towards Diego Garcia with population removal undertaken in light of the wider Cold War threat. As Anthony Greenwood, former Labour Colonial Secretary, wrote in the *Sunday Times* in 1975, "the loss of Aden made Diego Garcia much more palatable to the Americans" and US use of British territory necessitated colonial retention.⁹¹ In 1977, Britain's official east of Suez policy was to "promote bilateral relations with allies and promote Western interests in the Indian Ocean in the limits of our resources."⁹² The retention of Diego Garcia was highly useful to promote these bilateral relations with the US government, and it was during 1977 that expansion of the facility was approved for US naval facilities and an enhanced

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Sino-Soviet Capabilities and Intentions in the Indian Ocean Area, Departmental Brief, 26 November 1970, FCO 46/652.

⁸⁹ Director of Central Intelligence Briefing, Soviet Naval Presence in the Indian Ocean, 7 May 1975, CIA online archive: <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP80R01731R002200020002-8.pdf>, [accessed 28 January 2019].

⁹⁰ Richard Edis, *Peak of Limuria: The Story of Diego Garcia and the Chagos Archipelago* (Chippenham, 2004), 100.

⁹¹ Anthony Greenwood quoted in the *Sunday Times*, 21 September 1975.

⁹² Response to parliamentary question from Stanley Newens, MP for Harlow, 2 March 1977, FCO 46/1529.

airfield.⁹³ Promoting an ongoing east of Suez role, alongside cultivating relationships with allies, meant that Diego Garcia was highly important to the British government additional to defence savings. While militarily it could help with global projection it also promoted international power through alliances and the promotion of wider interests.

The BIOT's creation and subsequent retention was a practical solution during the Cold War. The mutually beneficial relationship allowed the British to mitigate east of Suez disadvantages and provided a means for "contribution to the Joint Naval Force with Australia, New Zealand, Singapore and Malaysia [as part of the FPDA]."⁹⁴ These advantages show that an ongoing colonialism in the Indian Ocean was an ideal vehicle to promote British national interests in the region and pass the mantle of Britain's imperial role to the US. The reduced expenditure this required was more advantageous and allowed the British government to focus domestically, while simultaneously still contributing to international defence partnerships. This highlights how the 'Official Mind' retained an imperial mentality in the preservation of British overseas defence roles. While decolonisation was politically accepted, in certain instances continuities were evident, insofar as colonies were retained to meet these demands, thus making Diego Garcia valuable after 1968.⁹⁵ The Indian Ocean theatre assumed increasing relevance in the 1970s and signified the relevance of Diego Garcia to the US government. This maintained the 'special relationship' through fractious times and allowed the British government to conduct a great power foreign policy in the region through the US military facility. And, as will be revealed in the next section, so important was this Anglo-American dimension that Diego Garcia was pushed through despite considerable Commonwealth dissension.

⁹³ Implementation of the Defence Review, Non-NATO Commitments, February 1977, FCO 46/1529.

⁹⁴ Telegram to Washington from FCO, 17 November 1978, FCO 31/640.

⁹⁵ Heinlein, *British Government Policy and Decolonisation*, 21.

The Commonwealth and Other Foreign Relations

Diego Garcia's position in the Indian Ocean was significant for the Commonwealth as many littoral states were members of the organisation. India, Australia, Malaysia and Tanzania were all important Commonwealth members, and defence partners, but were opposed to the BIOT's creation, and its subsequent military use, as they wished to see the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace removed from the Cold War. Furthermore, Mauritius and the Seychelles (achieving independence in 1968 and 1976 respectively) were Commonwealth members and had direct territorial disputes with the British government over the BIOT. Examination will show how the BIOT revealed the tensions in the Commonwealth, and how the British government balanced its defence commitments and 'special relationship' alongside the Commonwealth. This strained the Churchillian 'Three Circles' post-war principle through which Britain positioned itself in the middle of Europe, the US and the Empire, and disrupted British foreign policy aims.⁹⁶

Of the Indian Ocean littoral states, India and Ceylon (Sri Lanka) were the most vocal in their opposition to Indian Ocean militarisation. In 1972, the UN adopted Resolution 2832, which built on disarmament talks at the 1970 NAM meeting in Lusaka, Zambia.⁹⁷ The UN adoption of the Resolution, which declared that "the Indian Ocean, within limits to be determined, together with the air space above and the ocean floor is hereby designated for all time as a zone of peace", also established an *ad hoc* committee on the Indian Ocean consisting of Australia, India, Malaysia, Mauritius, Sri Lanka, Tanzania and Zambia, among others, to achieve the

⁹⁶ The Three Circles concept derived from Churchill's 'United Europe' speech and has been deployed as a framework of analysis in David Reynold's *Britannia Overruled: British Policy and World Power in the Twentieth Century* (London, 1991), especially in Chapter 8 on the 1955-70 period.

⁹⁷ The full text of Resolution 2832 can be found at UN Library, <https://dx.doi.org/10.18356/47ef4073-en> [accessed 30 August 2019]. The NAM declared that it would take measures to "dissolve great power military alliances to relax international tensions" and wanted Indian Ocean de-militarisation. The full text of the NAM's meeting in 1970 can be found at: http://cns.miis.edu/nam/documents/Official_Document/3rd_Summit_FD_Lusaka_Declaration_1970.pdf [accessed 30 August 2019].

objectives of the Declaration.⁹⁸ Many post-colonial states voted in favour to adopt the Resolution and its passing brought British defence aims directly into confrontation with Commonwealth states at the UN. Britain had to balance its Cold War defence aims against promotion of the Commonwealth in states that were (apparently) directly opposed to its foreign policy.

In 1974, at an international conference on the Indian Ocean in New Delhi, a resolution was passed condemning the interference in Seychellois sovereignty (over the three atolls split from the Seychelles to form the BIOT in 1965) and considered the Diego Garcia military facility as a continuation of “twisted imperialism where imperialism finds suitable conditions for its global strategy.”⁹⁹ The conference also promoted the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, with Commonwealth countries affirming this by urging the “removal” of island bases.¹⁰⁰ The ambition to turn the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace had a distinctively anti-colonial theme and was based on the recognition of previous “foreign domination and exploitation of the African continent” as a threat to “world peace” stressing the region’s position in Cold War geopolitics, the Commonwealth and ongoing imperialism.¹⁰¹ The Organisation of African Unity (OAU), the predecessor to the African Union, took an active role in promoting the Indian Ocean peace zone in a 1975 conference in the Seychelles. However, along with the Governor of the Seychelles, Colin Allan, the Seychelles Democratic Party (the Seychellois ruling party)

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 375.

⁹⁹ International Conference on the Indian Ocean against Foreign Military Bases, and for a Zone of Peace, New Delhi, 14-17 November 1974, FCO 141/1405.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ M.A. Servina, Secretary General of the Seychelles People’s United Party (SPUP), Memorandum to the Organisation of African Unity Liberation Committee, May 1975, FCO 141/1405.

opposed the OAU's position promoting Indian Ocean peace.¹⁰² The SDP was the largest party in the Seychelles, with its leader, James Mancham, the Seychellois chief minister favouring closer ties to the UK. Mancham, fearing the increasing Soviet threat in the Indian Ocean, pursued integration with Britain.¹⁰³ Not all Indian Ocean states opposed British foreign policy and some saw benefits to militarisation as an active way of promoting their own self-interests.

Indian opposition to the prospective military facility, however, was an important driver for Commonwealth disapproval, and it troubled the British government. In the late-1960s New Delhi was opposed to Indian Ocean militarisation and the FCO were worried over US military plans for Diego Garcia being leaked and angering a major Commonwealth partner. The British High Commission in India wrote to the FCO about future Anglo-Indian talks and advised to remain ambiguous on Indian Ocean defence, and that the territory "remains available for UK or US development" with a focus on a communication facility, thus avoiding any accusation of bad faith once anything was subsequently publicly announced about the territory's development.¹⁰⁴ In order to reduce criticism from New Delhi, the British High Commission also advised to break any news about Diego Garcia when the Indian government was not in session.¹⁰⁵ This would minimise criticism and allow British defence aims to continue after the east of Suez withdrawal without antagonising its Commonwealth 'ally'.

¹⁰² Allan to FCO, 16 May 1975, FCO 141/1405. The SDP and SPUP were in coalition together on independence of the Seychelles with James Mancham as head of state. Mancham was overthrown in a coup d'état in 1977 by France Albert Rene, leader of the SPUP, after which the Seychellois government was critical of British Indian Ocean policy. Rene was a Marxist and, contrary to Mancham's position, did not want closer ties to the UK, further complicating the BIOT position in the Indian Ocean. See Deryck Scarr, *Seychelles since 1770: History of a Slave and Post-Slave Society* (London, 2000), 188-191.

¹⁰³ Letter from T.C.D. Jerrom, Head of Indian Ocean Department, FCO, March 1969, FCO 141/1428.

¹⁰⁴ J.P. Waterfield, British High Commission, New Delhi, to R.A. Sykes, Defence Department, FCO, 26 September 1968, FCO 31/134.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

Commonwealth concerns over Indian Ocean militarisation after the BIOT's creation were also raised in parliament. This was recognised as an increasing source of tension within the organisation, and as Tam Dalyell told the House in December 1970:

the decision is likely to provoke a major Commonwealth controversy since it is directly opposed to the stated wishes of the Government of Ceylon, the nearest country to Diego Garcia, and to the express public views of the Indian Government and not least of Mrs. Indira Gandhi with whom, I understand on impeccable authority, no consultation has taken place. As such, it is a dangerous, and I believe counter-productive, game for Western white men to start playing.¹⁰⁶

Diego Garcia became a problematic issue in the Commonwealth as the UK position was undermined by perceived colonialism from the very states that had recently become independent through throwing off the British yoke. While other Commonwealth issues highlight the tensions evident in the organisation, notably over Rhodesia/Zimbabwe, the challenges to the Commonwealth over Diego Garcia created diplomatic problems for the British government. Appealing to the US government on defence grounds brought Britain into direct opposition with Commonwealth member states, with whom Britain supposedly shared values, and on top of Rhodesian and South African issues led to pressures in maintaining the three circles role that Churchill wished to achieve after World War Two.

Diego Garcia also upset the notion that the Commonwealth was an organisation based on equal partnership. The Seychellois government, which pursued independence after the British opposed integration of the Seychelles with the UK in 1970, acknowledged that the creation of the BIOT was concerning as it brought the Cold War directly into the region. A nearby military facility exposed Indian Ocean countries first and would particularly “endanger them in the threat of nuclear war.”¹⁰⁷ While territorial integrity was important, strategic concerns played a

¹⁰⁶ Diego Garcia Bases, HoC, Volume 808, Column 1371, 16 December 1970.

¹⁰⁷ British Indian Ocean Territory, Historical Paper by Douglas Nott, Appendix C, 10 January 1975, FCO 141/1405.

significant role. Littoral Commonwealth countries saw Diego Garcia as an extension of colonialism, but rather than “direct colonialism, the cupidity with which it is searching for sources of raw materials and markets” this new colonial strategy was seeking to “control communications in the Ocean.”¹⁰⁸ In *The People*, a newspaper in the Seychelles, a letter criticised “this ugly and shameful action on the part of Great Britain [which was] typical of her past imperial concept; the right and power to reign, rule and impose her will on others...your subjects are no longer our superiors but our equals.”¹⁰⁹ The tensions that Diego Garcia created fractured the benefits that Britain hoped to establish from the post-colonial, multi-racial Commonwealth, but also shows that Britain was willing to go ahead with the BIOT and military facility on Diego Garcia at the expense of Commonwealth criticism. This once again illustrates the geo-strategic value placed on the colony, with governments of both political persuasions forgoing the Commonwealth for wider defence purposes and the US-UK partnership.

During the 1971 Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Singapore, a study group on the security of maritime trade routes in the Indian Ocean was established. By hoping this would stress the importance of Indian Ocean world trade, Britain wished for concrete outcomes on protection of trade routes in the region. Despite a tense and acrimonious summit, Britain hoped that this would lead to some consensus over Indian Ocean security in which Diego Garcia could be recognised as playing a key role in the defence of the economic interests of littoral states and not just the strategic interests of Britain and the US. The effort was not a success. Commonwealth leaders were concerned it would lead to a rubber stamping of Diego Garcia, and thus signal approval of colonialism on their doorstep.¹¹⁰ The summit, rather than

¹⁰⁸ Declaration of the Tananarive Conference, January 1975, FCO 141/1405.

¹⁰⁹ ‘The Rape of the Seychelles’, Don Miguel to the editor of *The People*, Appendix D of International Conference on the Indian Ocean against Foreign Military Bases, November 1974, FCO 141/1405.

¹¹⁰ Changwei Chen, ‘A Diplomatic Tightrope: The Whitlam Government and the Diego Garcia Dilemma’, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 42, 3 (2014): 533.

resolving the issue of Indian Ocean peace, left the matter unresolved as the problems of Southern African were more substantial and “nearly came close to wrecking the Commonwealth.”¹¹¹ By adding to existing problems, the Indian Ocean issue strained the Commonwealth and the UK even further. Churchill’s three circles were becoming two.

Some significant Commonwealth countries were influenced by the US. The Australian government balanced appealing to fellow Commonwealth states in the Indian Ocean region with supporting the US, with whom it shared a defence treaty (ANZUS; dating from 1951). Edward Gough Whitlam, Australia’s Prime Minister, was opposed to the military base on Diego Garcia and supported the stance of Commonwealth countries on the Indian Ocean issue, but also successfully maintained cordial relations with the US and the UK.¹¹² Rather than explicitly siding with either party on the issue, the Australians directed their energy to mediation between the US and the USSR. In his weekly address in March 1974, Whitlam said that Diego Garcia did not help any littoral states in the Indian Ocean.¹¹³ Rather, an agreement between the US and the USSR “should be sought over their [military] build-up” to resolve the Indian Ocean problem and halt militarisation.¹¹⁴

For the UK, Commonwealth antipathy towards Diego Garcia and Indian Ocean militarisation had to be mollified especially as British defence policy in the early-1970s was “tentative and overstretched.”¹¹⁵ This has to be compared with the 1968 east of Suez decision. Having Commonwealth support for Diego Garcia, and ergo Indian Ocean militarisation, allowed

¹¹¹ Saul Dubow, ‘The Commonwealth and South Africa: From Smuts to Mandela’, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 45, 2 (2017): 301. Southern African issues at the Commonwealth Summit were the ongoing Southern Rhodesia problem after UDI in 1965, and South African Apartheid.

¹¹² Chen, ‘Diplomatic Tightrope’: 545.

¹¹³ ‘Australia in Plea to US and Soviets’, *New York Times*, 26 March 1974.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Supplementary Brief for the Prime Minister’s Visit to Washington, Security in the Indian Ocean, December 1970, FCO 46/652.

Britain to relinquish its military commitments. Commonwealth acceptance had to be sought as approval for creation and retention of a colony in the Indian Ocean was a major facet of British defence policy. Even though Commonwealth states had no legal obligation to one another, good bilateral relations were important to facilitate other defence matters such as the FDPA (whose constituent members were all Commonwealth members).

At the same time, however, Diego Garcia acted as a UK counterbalance against Soviet influence in Commonwealth states. The impact the USSR could have on the Commonwealth was acknowledged by Percy Cradock, head of Planning Staff at the FCO, when he wrote to the Ministry of Defence at the end of 1970, stating that “Soviet long-term intentions are inimical to the best interests of the Commonwealth countries in the area.”¹¹⁶ This was evident in the Seychelles. On independence in 1976, the Soviets had inquired of Mancham about the BIOT’s status, provided funding for the 1974 election campaign, and offered the country 4,500 tons of free rice.¹¹⁷ Because the USSR was exploiting recently-independent countries in the Indian Ocean, it was important for the British government to pursue the Diego Garcia strategy to offset Soviet inroads in the Indian Ocean. This made retention even more preferable and to a certain extent caused the British government to forgo the Commonwealth link in pursuit of Cold War *realpolitik*.

The Commonwealth was an important consideration for the British government after 1965 but in a rather unexpected way. The BIOT’s creation and the lease of Diego Garcia was in direct opposition to many Commonwealth countries’ disarmament policies with India, Sri Lanka and Zambia all vocal in their resistance to bringing the Cold War into the region. However, US-

¹¹⁶ Cradock to Tash, 15 December 1970, FCO 46/652.

¹¹⁷ Record of Discussion on Seychelles and BIOT, Hong Kong and Indian Ocean Department, 27 May 1975, FCO 46/1298.

UK relations overrode these concerns. East of Suez and Cold War considerations characterised British foreign policy in the period with the Commonwealth link being seen as less advantageous by the 1970s. Diego Garcia was symptomatic of the British government's pursuit of the 'special relationship' over the Commonwealth, with global geo-strategy more important in metropolitan big thinking. This made BIOT retention appealing as it suited broader policy precisely because, as discussed in Chapter 2 on a macro-scale, the multi-racial Commonwealth was proving such a difficult body to manage by the 1970s. For Britain, the Commonwealth was a poor surrogate for empire and ongoing colonial rule in the Chagos Archipelago became more attractive to UK strategists.

International Factors in the Retention of the BIOT

The International level of analysis of Diego Garcia will examine three areas: the US and the Indian Ocean, the US-UK ‘special relationship’, and the United Nations. Analysis of the US will look at its role in the creation and retention of the BIOT. As Diego Garcia housed the military facility it is important for a US viewpoint to be established. This will also be framed in the context of the ‘special relationship’ and how that encouraged Britain to create and retain Diego Garcia to improve bilateral relations during a period when they were strained. Additionally, the UN’s role reveals the bilateral territorial disputes and the opposition of many UN members to the new colonial venture in the Indian Ocean. In keeping with the Falkland Islands, however, the UN proved ineffectual in terminating post-colonial colonialism.

The USA and the Indian Ocean

As Chapter 2 explored, it is difficult to discuss decolonisation without considering US involvement. Concurrently, however, the US role in colonial formation during the era of decolonisation helps understand the strategic benefits that Washington obtained from the continued existence of colonies, while, at the same time, seemingly remaining anti-colonial. The US requested the lease of Diego Garcia for military facilities as part of the US Navy’s ‘Strategic Island Concept’ in order to insulate itself from perceived communist threats.¹¹⁸ British administration made Diego Garcia attractive for the US government as it would have no direct territorial claim allowing Washington to continue its anti-colonial tradition. It became important for the US to maintain a strong Indian Ocean presence after the British east of Suez withdrawal, and also to protect strategic trade routes throughout the region.

¹¹⁸ Dreamt up by Stuart Barber, a civilian naval planner, the Strategic Island Concept allowed the US to police the world from bases on islands, a projection of power that has been regarded as bringing islands such as Diego Garcia into an American Empire. See Erickson, Walter & Mikolay, ‘Diego Garcia’.

Additional benefits were gained by leasing land from the British government, which meant the US had a favourable landlord in a strategically-advantageous area, providing stability for its Cold War commitments. Geopolitically, the 1960s and 1970s were a time of adjustment. Decolonisation jeopardised US naval positions as access could be curtailed by anti-colonialist or pro-Communist states. US policy-makers needed access to territory that allies had not made independent, which could be utilised long-term.¹¹⁹ As Richard Gifford, a lawyer representing the Chagossians cynically stated in 2004, “the landlord could never be a newly created African state.”¹²⁰ The use of an Indian Ocean island base enabled US planners to envisage “a powerful Anglo-American base at Diego Garcia as a key link in a network of spy satellites, Polaris submarine bases, naval yards and military airports” and this would “allow the Americans to meet the growing Soviet challenge for control of the area.”¹²¹ With the Suez Canal’s reopening in 1975, the Soviet Union could deploy naval power into the Indian Ocean faster, which the US needed to counter. The geographically remote island assisted the US in doing so and facilitated its military projection in a region that was largely isolated from the Cold War prior to 1975.¹²²

Countering the Soviet Union in the Indian Ocean was important to the US government which could exploit Diego Garcia to check on the “first-class Soviet bases in the region: Aden, the Island of Socotra, facilities in the Seychelles, Hodeida in Yemen, Berbera in Somalia and Port Sudan.”¹²³ The Soviet base in Somalia was important for the US’s establishment of military facilities on Diego Garcia. In 1975, Henry Kissinger and his staff, discussed the second Soviet

¹¹⁹ Vine, *Island of Shame*, 41-55.

¹²⁰ Richard Gifford, ‘The Chagos Islands – The Land where Human Rights Hardly Ever Happened’, *Law Social and Development Journal* (2004): 5, cited in Harris, ‘Decolonising the Special Relationship’, 721.

¹²¹ Telegram from FCO to Washington, 19 December 1975, FCO 141/1349.

¹²² By the 1970s, the US had “largely been shut out of many Indian Ocean littoral states” and Soviet thrusts towards a global network of bases meant that the Indian Ocean became critically important. See Robert Harkavy, *Great Power Competition for Overseas Bases: The Geopolitics of Access Diplomacy* (Oxford, 1982), 215-16.

¹²³ FCO to Greatbatch, 24 September 1973, FCO 141/1428.

command facility outside of Cuba in Somalia. In the meeting, it was noted that by “pointing out what the Russians are doing in the Indian Ocean, it makes what we do look pathetic.”¹²⁴ Using the Soviet Union’s geopolitical stance as leverage with Indian Ocean states, and also those in Congress who disapproved of US policy, provided Washington means to press ahead with a military facility on Diego Garcia. However, for the Soviet Union, its interest in the Indian Ocean was to counter the US and “tie the hands of the imperialists and deprive them of the opportunity to interfere in the internal affairs of the peoples.”¹²⁵ With both the US and USSR opposed to each other’s policy, and using littoral states as proxies to further their own interests, the Indian Ocean became an important theatre in the Cold War. This established Diego Garcia as highly significant in US foreign policy and making British retention necessary.

Other geopolitical factors also made Diego Garcia attractive to US policy-makers. The risk of Soviet interference to trade routes around the Persian Gulf meant protection of oil shipments was important to secure strategic resources in the Cold War. Alongside trade, Soviet expansion of diplomatic channels in the region, including a new embassy in Mauritius, a large embassy in Kuwait, and the funding of the Kenyan People’s Union Party (KPU) impressed the need for US influence in the region to restrain Soviet influence. Communist Chinese influence was also extending into East Africa with a strong foothold in Tanzania and a dominant position in the armed forces, and Beijing’s support for African liberation movements, especially in Kenya, where North Korea, China and the USSR gave Jaramogi Oginga Odinga of the KPU 2 million East African shillings to finance campaigns against the government before the banning of the

¹²⁴ Minutes of the Secretary of State’s Regional Staff Meeting, 25 April 1975, *FRUS, 1969-1976*, Vol. E-8, Documents on South Asia, 1973-1976.

¹²⁵ Statements on Soviet Naval Policy by Soviet Naval Commodore, *Pravda*, 26 July 1970, FCO 46/651.

party in 1969.¹²⁶ The US and the UK deemed Communist influences in the region as “nefarious” which needed to be blocked.¹²⁷

Aside from the significance to British defence, therefore, it is also important to understand how global geopolitics influenced the retention of Diego Garcia. The reopening of the Suez Canal in 1975, the withdrawal by the British from the Persian Gulf and Arabian Peninsula, and Soviet incursions into the Indian Ocean galvanised the US and NATO to be more proactive on Indian Ocean security. This became increasingly significant as British withdrawal left a power vacuum. In the Cold War context, the US was afraid that this would result in an increased Soviet presence which would exploit the space left by British withdrawal. Although the US was initially against occupying the void on grounds of cost and overstretch, it was in their long-term interest to do so for Indian Ocean security and the monitoring of Soviet activities.¹²⁸ In April 1967 Dean Rusk warned Britain’s Foreign Secretary, George Brown, that “If there is any thought we may be able to take on your commitments when you left, as we did in Greece [in 1947], I must say at once there is no sentiment in this country to take on the additional commitments in any area.”¹²⁹ However, even though the US did not particularly want to manage British decline and take over Britain’s ex-commitments, the Cold War geopolitical situation made it necessary to do so.

¹²⁶ Simons to Le Toq, East African Department, FCO, 14 September 1970, FCO 31/640. Oginga Odinga was a prominent figure in Kenyan independence and was a founding member of the Kenyan African National Union (KANU), becoming Kenya’s first Vice-President in 1964. He disagreed with Jomo Kenyatta, President of Kenya, on foreign policy and pushed for closer ties to the USSR and China. Kenyatta’s pro-Western outlook meant Oginga Odinga left KANU and formed the KPU. Susanne D. Mueller, ‘Government and Opposition in Kenya, 1966-9’, *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 22, 3 (1984): 399-427.

¹²⁷ Simons to Le Toq, 14 September 1970, FCO 31/640.

¹²⁸ US Reactions to our Withdrawal East of Suez, 4 March 1968, FCO 24/102.

¹²⁹ Memorandum from Secretary of State Rusk to Foreign Secretary Brown, 21 April 1967, cited in FRUS, 1964–8: Volume XII, p. 568. Cited in Smith, *Revival and Fall in the Gulf*, 133, fn. 38.

In this, the protection of strategic raw materials was crucial, especially by 1973, when the oil crisis showed the dependency Western countries had on Middle Eastern supplies. As 75 per cent of Western Europe's oil came from the Middle East and the Persian Gulf the embargo had a detrimental effect on the defence and economies of NATO members.¹³⁰ The US saw the need to protect trade routes in the long-term to ensure continuation of oil supplies to its key European allies. The British regarded oil transportation in the Indian Ocean as a crucial issue. In 1974, Foreign Secretary Alec Douglas-Home gave a speech in Nairobi which stressed that, "all [British] oil comes through the Indian Ocean" making protection of these tanker routes vital for security.¹³¹ However, other states' lack of recognition of this protection frustrated Douglas-Home as "no-one has mentioned the Russian build-up over the last ten years, they have quite a powerful fleet there – 25 warships, but when we put one or two there, there is a squeal."¹³² Writing after retirement, Douglas-Home reiterated that, "there were then even signs of a strong Soviet interest in the Indian Ocean, and our oil supplies ran through it...it was clearly important that the Russians should not be allowed a monopoly of power and presence in those areas."¹³³ US and UK security of key resources and their transportation was just as compelling as communist influence in driving retention. Diego Garcia served as an ideal location in which to protect these routes but also to counter communist leverage in key Indian Ocean states.

The oil crisis, and protection of resources, changed the fortunes of Diego Garcia which is evident in telegrams sent before and after the crisis. The 1972 Exchange of Notes, which built on the initial 1966 agreement between the US and the UK, provided for a "limited naval support

¹³⁰ William L. Dowdy & Russell Trood (eds), *The Indian Ocean: Perspectives on a Strategic Arena* (Durham, 1985), 397.

¹³¹ Extract of Home's speech in telegram from Governor of Mauritius, 11 February 1974, FCO 141/1349.

¹³² *Ibid.*

¹³³ Lord Douglas-Home, *The Way the Wind Blows* (London, 1976), 146.

facility.”¹³⁴ By 1976, however, this had changed to “a support facility of the United States Navy and to maintain and operate it.”¹³⁵ President Ford, in a meeting with Australian Prime Minister, Malcolm Fraser said that “there has been complete change in the Indian Ocean and in general attitude towards national security.”¹³⁶ This is reflected in the budget allocations which were originally appropriated at US\$20 million from 1970 to 1973, which then increased to US\$29 million dollars for the fiscal year 1974 alone, US\$18.1 million in 1975, and US\$13.8 million in 1976.¹³⁷ This alarmed Congress which wrote to the Secretary of Defense, James R. Schlesinger, wondering why the facility’s costs had escalated so much. His reply indicated a number of reasons for this increase:

... changing circumstances now indicate that we should - in our interest - have the ability to operate routinely on a sustained basis in the Indian Ocean and its environs. The principal changes are:

- the growing Soviet naval and air presence and capability in the region;
- the probable opening of the Suez Canal permitting the Soviets the opportunity to augment their forces in the Indian Ocean from the Black Sea rather than from their Pacific Fleet, thereby saving about 18 days’ transit time; and
- the re-emphasized importance of the concentration of critically important oil routes both around the Horn and to Europe as well as across the Indian Ocean to Japan.¹³⁸

The expansion in what was needed by the US can be attributed to a number of factors: increasing Soviet influence, the loss of Vietnam and geo-strategic concerns, and the 1970s oil crisis. By the late-1970s, when Jimmy Carter assumed the Presidency, US\$500m over five years was approved for the expansion of Diego Garcia, rising to US\$1bn under Department of Defense plans in 1980.¹³⁹ This came after the Iranian Revolution and the Soviet invasion of

¹³⁴ Jon Lunn, ‘Disputes over the British Indian Ocean Territory, December 2019’, *HoC Library*, 6908 (2019), <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn06908/> [accessed 3 January 2020].

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*

¹³⁶ Memorandum of Conversation between Ford and Fraser, 27 July 1976, *FRUS*, 1969-1976, Vol. E-12, Documents on Southeast Asia.

¹³⁷ Figures cited in Sand, *Diego Garcia*, 36.

¹³⁸ Schlesinger to John Stennis, Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee United States Senate, 16 February 1974, *FRUS*, 1969-1976, Vol. E-8, Documents on South Asia.

¹³⁹ Briefing Memorandum from the Director of the Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs (Bartholomew) to Secretary of State Muskie, *FRUS*, 1977-1980, 30 June 1980, Vol. XVIII, Middle East Region. In the 1970s modest amounts of money were spent on Diego Garcia, which struggled to pass Congress.

Afghanistan during 1979, and a ‘heating’ up of the Cold War after détente. These underscored heightened geopolitical concerns in the Indian Ocean necessitating expansion of defence facilities and capabilities. This was recognised by Zbigniew Brzezinski, Assistant for National Security Affairs, who saw expansion of the Diego Garcia facilities as the “third phase of US architectural tasks in the post-war world”, which included a more flexible framework for the Middle East.¹⁴⁰ This third phase had developed from the first which centred on deterrence in Europe, and the second which included safeguarding of the Far East and normalisation with China.¹⁴¹

Carter initially stalled on the base’s expansion in 1977, but when meeting Leonid Brezhnev, de facto president of the USSR, in Vienna for SALT II in 1979, the US president bluntly told Brezhnev that “we had never renounced developing the Diego Garcia base. What had occurred was massive Soviet arms supply to Ethiopia and before that to Somalia, along with the presence of thousands of Cuban troops in the Horn [of Africa]. Now the Soviet Union was building up arms in Afghanistan. Thus, the situation had changed.”¹⁴² In 1980, a State Department memorandum revealed that the US government was discussing storing nuclear weapons on the facility with the Department of Defense “chest-thumping” over its success on Diego Garcia.¹⁴³ US priorities changed based on the shifting Cold War and the end of détente, the 1970s energy crisis, and escalating international tensions which required US adaptation of the Indian Ocean facility.

¹⁴⁰ Memorandum of Conversation, Indo-US Relations, 27 October 1980, *FRUS, 1977-1980*, Vol. XIX, South Asia.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴² Memorandum of Conversation between Carter and Brezhnev, *FRUS, 1977-1980*, 17 June 1979, Vol. VI, Soviet Union.

¹⁴³ Briefing Memorandum from the Director of the Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs (Bartholomew) to Secretary of State Muskie, 30 June 1980, *FRUS, 1977-1980*, Vol. XVIII, Middle East Region; Arabian Peninsula.

Cold War *realpolitik* changed Diego Garcia. Its transformation from a communications facility to a military base accommodating the Rapid Deployment Force by the early-1980s was directly linked to the changing geopolitical environment. By the presidency of Ronald Reagan, a British visitor on seeing the base in 1984 described it as “a panorama of the American war machine...it made Pearl Harbour look puny.”¹⁴⁴ British administration of Diego Garcia made the deal sweeter for Washington as it could be absolved from claims of colonialism. It remains British territory and since the 1980s has been a sovereignty issue between Mauritius and the UK (although Mauritius did not formally challenge Britain on this until 2010).¹⁴⁵ The Indian Ocean was an increasingly important military theatre during the Cold War and a military facility equidistant from its littoral states facilitated US regional military projection. As Ninokovich writes, Kennedy and Khrushchev both saw that the Cold War would be won in the periphery. Arguably, then, the US placed itself at the forefront in the Indian Ocean with re-colonisation compatible with surrounding decolonisation.¹⁴⁶

The Special Relationship and Diego Garcia

The ‘special relationship’, promoted by British ministers and mandarins in the post-war period, had a significant influence on the UK to create the BIOT in 1965. While the discussion of the ‘special relationship’ here primarily looks at a British perspective, it is included in the International frame of analysis through consideration of global partnerships that British governments wished to achieve through the US lease of Diego Garcia. The fractious relationship with the UK that existed from the Johnson to Carter administrations assisted the foundation of the BIOT as a military facility as a means to appease US governments. This can

¹⁴⁴ Sand, *Diego Garcia*, 37.

¹⁴⁵ ‘Statement by US Secretary of State, Madeline Albright, during her visit to Mauritius on 10 December 2000 cited in Vine, *Island of Shame*, 9.

¹⁴⁶ Frank Ninokovich, *The United States and Imperialism* (Hoboken, 2011), 239.

be thought of as a patron-client relationship with the British satisfying US requirements for the territory. However, closer examination will show that concessions were made on both sides.

The ‘special relationship’ was demonstrated through the BIOT’s creation in 1965. When conducting agreements with the US government the British considered their place within the bilateral relationship and the effect the BIOT would have on it. George Brown confirmed this by acknowledging that “the apparent lack of American contribution to the cost of setting up this new territory may involve us some embarrassment, but I think that we should respect the Americans wishes on this point – particularly since they have made it clear that they would not have agreed to put up the money otherwise.”¹⁴⁷ Britain was willing to take diplomatic criticism (in terms of sovereign and territorial problems with Mauritius and the Seychelles) in exchange for reduced research and development costs for the Polaris nuclear capability.

That reduction in the Polaris nuclear missile programme surcharge was very important for the British government, and as we saw earlier was a key factor in Britain removing the Chagossian population. The British nuclear deterrent formed a cornerstone of post-war British defence policy, and the 1962 Nassau Agreement (signed between Macmillan and Kennedy) concluded the British purchase of US nuclear weapons. The importance of this purchase meant the British government agreed to the reduction in costs towards Polaris because this would allow US Congress to keep its share of the agreement a secret. This, in turn, ensured that the creation of the BIOT would be a smooth process and access to nuclear weapons would be ensured.¹⁴⁸ The cost of Polaris procurement was huge, around £300 million, but was deemed necessary by Wilson in light of strategic shifts in British military capability. When looked at again in an east

¹⁴⁷ Minute for Prime Minister Wilson, December 1966, CO 1036/1700.

¹⁴⁸ G.G. Arthur, Head of Defence, FCO to A.N. Galsworthy, CO, 22 June 1966, CO 1036/1616.

of Suez context, the acceptance during Wilson's first government that there would need to be a strategic shift (culminating in the withdrawal east of Suez) meant that the BIOT suited two aims: a reduction in 'traditional' military capability and a flexible deterrent that was cheaper than a continuation of present policy.¹⁴⁹ It also helped the Labour government wield disproportionate influence with the US because it gave "greater political muscle within NATO."¹⁵⁰ While the 'special relationship' remained tense, areas continued where US-UK defence collaboration stayed strong.

Nevertheless, the BIOT agreement symbolised the asymmetry of bilateral relations (that is, Britain was far more preoccupied with the US than the US was with Britain).¹⁵¹ In 1974, when the US facility required expansion, the British were reluctant to give in to Washington's demands that would allow use of the facility by consultation only.¹⁵² The right of US access to Diego Garcia strained the relationship in the 1970s, and in 1974 a *New York Times* article by Joe Alsop indicated the divergent US-UK position. When speaking to the British embassy, Alsop noted that a "high-level" US source had told him how difficult the British government was being.¹⁵³

However, to assume an unequal partnership is misleading and London obtained concessions from the US government. In a letter to Henry Kissinger from Alec Douglas-Home in 1974, the joint decision-making was addressed, informing that "Diego Garcia is British property and we have to be able to say to Parliament that we have the ultimate control of what goes on there."¹⁵⁴

¹⁴⁹ See Andrew Priest, 'In American Hands: Britain, the United States and the Polaris Nuclear Project, 1962-1968', *Contemporary British History*, 19, 3 (2005): 353-376.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 369.

¹⁵¹ John Dumbrell, *A Special Relationship: Anglo-American Relations from the Cold War to Iraq* (Basingstoke, 2006), 125.

¹⁵² Robert Armstrong, PPS to the Prime Minister to Antony Acland, PPS to the Foreign Secretary, 28 January 1974, FCO 46/1191.

¹⁵³ Letter from British Embassy, Washington to Acland, 23 January 1974, FCO 46/1191.

¹⁵⁴ Copy of Douglas-Home to Kissinger, 30 January 1974, FCO 46/1191.

British control was further complicated by the recent ‘nuclear alert’ which was declared in 1973 after the NSC moved the US military to DEFCON3 during the Yom Kippur War fearing Soviet Scud missiles in Egypt.¹⁵⁵ This disturbed the British as US allies were not informed of this decision, implying that consultation was not cooperative. These considerations were summed up by Edward Heath who was happy to explore other formulae but the point of substance, British joint agreement over the use of facilities, had to be secured.¹⁵⁶ Other clauses relating to the facility’s expansion in the early-1970s produced basic conditions for closer US-UK cooperation in the Indian Ocean, and use of facilities in emergency situations.¹⁵⁷ The US government eventually conceded in 1980 that British approval had to be sought if using Diego Garcia for any combat operations (although any exploitation of the facility for something “politically sensitive” only required consultation).¹⁵⁸

Additionally, the British had been relieved of any capital outlay in any circumstance, and the agreement to use Diego Garcia in 1968 “implies no change in [HMG’s] decision to withdraw forces east of Suez and to adopt a Europe-based defence policy.”¹⁵⁹ The same letter from Foreign Secretary Stewart to Prime Minister Wilson advised that in any situation the British expected full American diplomatic support “in dealing with criticisms from individual governments and in the United Nations.”¹⁶⁰ Regarding the ‘special relationship’ and Diego Garcia, the British Ambassador to the United States met with Henry Kissinger in 1970. The latter believed that President Nixon and Prime Minister Heath had developed a good working

¹⁵⁵ See Victor Israelyan, *Inside the Kremlin During the Yom Kippur War* (University Park. 1995).

¹⁵⁶ Armstrong to Acland, January 1974, FCO 46/1191.

¹⁵⁷ Foreign Secretary’s visit to Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia, 31 January to 8 February 1974, FCO 46/1191.

¹⁵⁸ Briefing Memo from the Director of the Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs to Secretary of State Muskie, 30 June 1980, *FRUS, 1977-1980*, Vol. XVIII, Middle East Region; Arabian Peninsula.

¹⁵⁹ Stewart to Wilson, 25 July 1968, DEFE 24/3083.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

relationship and wanted this further developed in regard to the Indian Ocean.¹⁶¹ The use of Diego Garcia supported the ‘special relationship’ and facilitated the development of bilateral relations in the region. In a subsequent meeting a year later, the British informed Kissinger that “we still decide policy towards Malaysia/Singapore, Kenya, Mauritius, Ceylon, and Pakistan, which is all separate to how the Americans view the Indian Ocean. However, it is in the best interest for the countries to work together.”¹⁶²

UK policy, then, still orientated towards ex-colonies but the Island’s lease to the US provided a vehicle to realise these policy goals in partnership with an ally and bolstered the special relationship at a time when Britain was pivoting towards Europe. The British also had an effective veto over the deployment of US intelligence planes on British-administered air bases following the U2 incident in 1960.¹⁶³ An FCO brief of February 1974 also advised that on the agreement’s signing between the US and UK, the use of Diego Garcia did not provide the US Government “the right to unfettered use of the BIOT territory.”¹⁶⁴ The fact that the US still liaised with the British government on shared facilities demonstrates a more balanced ‘special relationship’ than some scholarship suggests. For example, the consultations respected UK sovereign territory but also indicated that the US needed to be more respectful in dealings with its partners on foreign policy matters.

¹⁶¹ J.A. Thomson, British Embassy Washington to Sir Burke Trend, Cabinet Secretary, 9 December 1970, FCO 46/652.

¹⁶² Visit of Henry Kissinger: The Indian Ocean, 15 June 1971, FCO 46/742.

¹⁶³ ‘Conditions governing the use of Bases in the UK and BIOT/Diego Garcia’, General Brief for Secretary of State’s Visit to Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia, 31 January-8 February 1974, FCO 46/1191. Prior to the U2 incident, U2 spy planes used British pilots from UK air bases. This allowed Eisenhower plausible deniability if the flight was compromised. Although British pilots proved successful, the US government used US pilots until Gary Powers was shot down over the Soviet Union. After this, and the acrimonious summit on Berlin that followed, Macmillan banned U2 flights from the UK. See Kathleen Paula Newman, ‘Britain and the Soviet Union: The Search for an Interim Agreement on West Berlin November 1958-May 1960’, PhD Thesis, London School of Economics, October 1999.

¹⁶⁴ General Brief for Secretary of State’s Visit, 31 January-8 February 1974, FCO 46/1191.

The 'special relationship' was strained in the late-1960s and during much of the 1970s. The Johnson administration had cool relations with the Wilson government, and Heath saw the special relationship as troublesome.¹⁶⁵ However, Heath's attempt to reverse British military reduction east of Suez was warmly received in Washington and the BIOT, while already established, was approved for US expansion under Heath.¹⁶⁶ Diego Garcia provided the British with an opportunity to craft a post-east of Suez defence policy and help sustain the special relationship. While Washington was despondent at the withdrawal east of Suez there remained alternative ways of maintaining the partnership and BIOT retention benefitted the British government. The concessions that the British government obtained highlight that the International dimension in terms of US influence was not absolute in deciding retention and the imperial metropole had much to gain from Diego Garcia. While Vietnam overshadowed the era (and the British never sending troops tested the US-UK relationship even further), Diego Garcia provides evidence for foreign policy synergism between Britain and the US in the 1960s and 1970s.¹⁶⁷

Diego Garcia at the United Nations

The UN, which acted as a protector of colonial and decolonising states, is important within the International framework as population eviction went against self-determination, as did the creation of the BIOT (challenging Resolution 1514, which called for a speedy and unconditional end to colonialism). The creation of a whole new colony to suit defence matters will be analysed here to examine why Britain retained an overseas territory in direct opposition

¹⁶⁵ Recent scholarship has cast doubt on the cool relations between Wilson and Johnson. Washington was dismayed over London's withdrawal east of Suez, the devaluation of sterling and lack of a British military contribution to Vietnam, but there remained cordial relations between Johnson and Wilson. See Simon C. Smith (ed), *The Wilson-Johnson Correspondence 1964-69*, (Ashgate, 2015).

¹⁶⁶ Niklas Rossbach, *Heath, Nixon and the Rebirth of the Special Relationship: Britain, the US and the EC, 1969-74* (London, 2009).

¹⁶⁷ Alan Dobson, 'The Years of Transition: Anglo-American Relations, 1961-67', *Review of International Studies*, 16, 3 (1990): 239-258.

to the UN. In comparison to the Falklands, where self-determination was exploited as a concept to reinforce British rule, the importance of the concept was downplayed for Diego Garcia.

The BIOT geographically changed upon Seychellois independence in 1976, with the return of Aldabra, Farquhar and Desroches leaving only the Chagos archipelago behind. This came on the back of UN demands on the UK “to respect the territorial integrity of the Seychelles and to return immediately to that Territory the islands detached from it in 1965.”¹⁶⁸ However, the Mauritian government have since independence in 1968 always asserted their rights to Diego Garcia and the Chagos archipelago and do so today under Resolution 1514 with the backing of China, the African Union, and the Group of 77, leaving a continuing sovereignty dispute.¹⁶⁹ The British, in countering Mauritius, claimed that the Chagos archipelago would be returned *eventually*, after the islands were no longer needed for defence purposes. The British also viewed the sovereignty dispute with Mauritius as a bilateral issue and not one that needed to be referred to the UN or be heard at the ICJ.

At the UN, the British used their track record of decolonisation to counter criticism of BIOT policy and in 1967, two years after its creation, asserted that “during the past seven years another nineteen countries previously under British administration have advanced to independence...and now we have practically completed the historic task of converting a subject Empire into a free Commonwealth.”¹⁷⁰ The British were also clandestine in their approach at the UN. In 1971, a letter from D.M. Read at the UN Political Department in the FCO to D.R.

¹⁶⁸ Chronicle 54, *United Nations Monthly*, 1970.

¹⁶⁹ The Group of 77 is the largest intergovernmental body at the UN and was formed in 1964 to promote the interests and boost joint negotiations at the UN for countries in the Global South. Peter Sand, ‘The Chagos Archipelago Cases: Nature Conservation between Human Rights and Power Politics’, *The Global Community, Yearbook of International Law and Jurisprudence*, 1, 1 (2013): 130.

¹⁷⁰ Speech by Lord Caradon in the Plenary of the General Assembly, 14 December 1967, General Assembly: Colonialism, FCO 58/57.

Todd, BIOT Colonial Administrator, advised that the UK Mission at the UN had doubts about “any mention of islands now forming part of the British Indian Ocean Territory. This could of course, provide a convenient opening for our critics in the UN Committee [of] 24” underscoring the concealment of which islands precisely were included in the territory.¹⁷¹

Concealment from the Committee of 24 was also in evidence in 1970, in discussions of the Seychelles. Advice to diplomats was that the best way to address the “departure of Chagos” was to “agree a position of non-competence.”¹⁷² By focussing on the three islands removed from the Seychelles, the British government would not prejudice their position on removal of migratory workers on islands bought from Mauritius.¹⁷³ FCO advice to the UK Mission at the UN was to frame the BIOT issue within a Seychellois context. That roused the Soviet Union, which when mentioning “the islands detached from the Seychelles and Mauritius” received a blunt reply from the UK Mission that “as Mauritius is now fully independent, and a fellow Member State of the UN, the situation in relation to those parts of the BIOT was clearly of no concern to the Committee of 24.”¹⁷⁴ Semantics took on an important role when the British dealt with the Committee. Aside from sovereignty, the line taken when discussing the island’s population (specifically its removal) was to “stick to the formula that they are contract labourers engaged in work on plantations. The merit of this line is that it does not give away the *Ilois*’s existence but is at the same time strictly factual.”¹⁷⁵ The language was deliberately obtuse to avoid arousing the Committee of 24 in a bid to escape from Britain’s “public enemy

¹⁷¹ Read to Todd, 1 March 1971, FCO 141/1428.

¹⁷² J.D.B Shaw, Counsellor to UK Mission at the UN, to A.S. Papadopoulos, UN (Political) Department, 24 June 1970, FCO 141/1428.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Papadopoulos to Shaw, 26 August 1970, FCO 141/1428.

number one” status at the UN. This appealed to those ministers in the FCO who were firmly opposed to the Committee of 24 meddling in British colonial affairs.¹⁷⁶

The BIOT’s creation allowed the British government to be firm in their approach to the UN, acknowledging the importance of retention. When the time came for population removal, the British “would propose, to deny, the competence of the UN to concern itself with a territory which has no indigenous population.”¹⁷⁷ If challenges continued, the British government would reaffirm that the “British Indian Ocean Territory is British sovereign territory and we have a right to use it for any purposes we consider in our national interest.”¹⁷⁸ Support at the UN was also hoped for from Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia and Singapore who could benefit from using the territory as British allies and which could block some criticism. The BIOT symbolised British antipathy to the UN on colonial matters, again highlighting Diego Garcia’s overarching importance in Cold War defence.

While the UN was aware of the BIOT’s creation in 1965, it only became a major issue in the 1970s. The population eviction brought to the forefront issues of decolonisation and self-determination at the organisation with Britain, not the US, taking the brunt of criticism. The concealment of information deflected UN critiques while also satisfying US demands for use of the colony. This provides a nexus between how bilateral negotiations, which both the US and the UK wished to keep a secret, impacted on international affairs at the UN. It suited the colony’s purpose and importance as concealment shielded criticism from the Committee of 24 as this re-colonisation went largely unnoticed during a wider process of decolonisation. The BIOT also exposed British animosity towards the UN concerning colonial affairs. British

¹⁷⁶ Louis, ‘Public Enemy Number One’, 186-193.

¹⁷⁷ Secretary of State to the Prime Minister, Defence Secretary, Commonwealth Secretary and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, 25 July 1968, FCO 31/134.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

resolve in deciding colonial matters in the metropole and not at the UN is clearly evident in the case of the BIOT. As Alec Douglas-Home wrote in his memoirs, “There seems to be some wariness of the UN and what it can actually achieve, whether that be peace or not. To counteract this Britain had to rely on its own will.”¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁹ Home, *The Way the Wind Blows*, 148

Conclusion

Examining Diego Garcia after 1965 has shown that the Internal, Imperial and International dimensions of colonial retention are difficult to differentiate. Nevertheless, distinct conclusions can be drawn. Identifying the correlation between the theoretical outlines can explain why colonial retention was chosen as the most viable option. The BIOT's creation at the tail-end of decolonisation is significant as it supported the defence policies of both the UK and the US with population removal undertaken to realise that objective, clearly demonstrating the benefits of continued colonial rule.

The analysis of Internal factors examined the Chagossian people and their removal from the island including subsequent exiled status and legal cases that have been brought before the UK government and the ICJ. Descended from East African slaves, *Ilois* identity developed through the islanders' geographic isolation, with their own creole language and a matriarchal society. However, this Chagossian identity grew after eviction from Diego Garcia and legal campaigns to return to their homeland marked a population which developed an imagined community in exile. The evolution of this identity developed when the islanders directly engaged with the metropolitan authorities over sovereignty issues and the right to return, with the reformulations of their homeland influencing perceptions of the Chagos Archipelago.¹⁸⁰ This interaction with the imperial centre became more pronounced when Chagossians migrated from Mauritius and the Seychelles to the UK. Upon arrival in the UK, many Chagossians were tenants of South Asian landlords and this mirrored their experience on the Seychelles and Mauritius where coincidentally they were the landlords of Chagossian forced migrants. In turn, this had the effect of further rendering them as 'the Other' against their landlords and in a predominantly

¹⁸⁰ See Laura Jeffrey, 'Forced Displacement, Onward Migration and Reformulation of "Home" by Chagossians in Crawley, UK', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 36, 7 (2010): 1099-1117.

white English-speaking country and reaffirmed their exiled 'colonial' status.¹⁸¹ The legal challenges, moreover, brought disparate populations in the UK, Mauritius and the Seychelles together through reaffirming their belief in their right to return and further engagement with the imagined community of a homeland.

This is markedly different from other territories, namely the Falkland Islands, where an identity on the periphery brought closer association with the UK. As Chagossian people are ethnically black they lack the kinship with the UK making retention easier as the population could be removed. The subsequent development of Chagossian identity formed in exile and this allowed the British government to use the territory for defence purposes in light of the Cold War. However, the strengthening of this identity, which has led to legal challenges, may force the British government to cede control of sovereignty back to Mauritius allowing the Chagossian people to return home. The recent ICJ rulings may force decolonisation quicker than envisaged.

The discussion of the Imperial factor drew on evidence from the east of Suez decision in the 1960s, BIOT discussion at Westminster, and the Commonwealth's indirect and ambiguous role. US military use of Diego Garcia redressed the east of Suez withdrawal as the BIOT allowed a British military presence, in partnership with the US government, to be retained in the Indian Ocean. This shows that retention assisted UK defence during a period characterised by reduction in military personnel and access overseas. Withdrawal also left a power vacuum that the US and UK feared the Soviet Union would fill necessitating use of Diego Garcia as counter to this. Metropolitan factors also drove retention through budgetary concerns. Diego Garcia proved attractive because it would allow leverage in the Indian Ocean at a much-reduced cost to Britain. Coupled with a political culture in London that largely accepted the US need

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

for Diego Garcia, and population removal, the motivation in Westminster and Whitehall was to create the BIOT to suit both domestic and foreign policy agendas. As Longinotti argues, the east of Suez decision was a strategy that endorsed maximum domestic welfare spending at the expense of overseas defence spending.¹⁸²

The opposition of Commonwealth littoral states to US military use of Diego Garcia directly strained Commonwealth relations and exposed the tensions in the organisation. With the British government trying to maintain influence with the Commonwealth and satisfying US demands the three circles concept was tested. The BIOT symbolised the issues the Commonwealth faced and added more pressure on an organisation that was split over Southern Africa. However, by prioritising the 'special relationship' over Commonwealth relations additionally highlights the BIOT's importance to British defence strategy. Disregarding Commonwealth concerns illustrates the direction of UK foreign policy in the period and highlights the Commonwealth's downgrading in UK thinking by the late-1960s.¹⁸³

The International dimension is obvious in propelling the retention of Diego Garcia. Cold War *realpolitik* was a driver for the BIOT's creation in 1965 as US military exploitation was for geostrategic advantage. US unease at increasing communist military excursions into the Indian Ocean, alongside extended diplomatic reach, grew with the reopening of the Suez Canal in 1975, meaning countermeasures were needed. British withdrawal allowed the US to increase its presence by using British territory to pursue Cold War policy. US military occupation (albeit as a leaseholder), therefore, challenges the notion of anti-colonial United States because Washington gladly embraced British colonialism to further its foreign policy aims. Through

¹⁸² Longinotti, 'East of Suez', 318-340.

¹⁸³ Ashton, 'Commonwealth', 73-94.

use of the BIOT, the US assumed a vicarious colonial role in the Cold War which assisted strategy in the Middle East and Central Asia geared towards countering communist influence. The British government benefitted by leasing the island for US military use and secured a defence partnership in a period when the 'special relationship' was under strain. The Indian Ocean became increasingly central to international politics and decolonisation strengthened Sino-Soviet communist influence through linkages with newly-independent states. Leasing the island from a European ally removed the need for a problematic African or Asian landlord from the equation, further suiting US defence needs. International pressures at the UN and from the NAM did challenge the creation, and subsequent expansion, of the BIOT. But the UN's colonial policy largely unbothered Washington and London, emphasising again the limited role of the UN in forcing decolonisation. That also allowed retention to occur. The Cold War outlook influenced geostrategy providing a rationale for creation and then retention.

Nevertheless, the Internal and Imperial dimensions need to be considered in tandem with the International factor. British agency allowed the metropole to create the BIOT and metropolitan support of the US military base through the language and practice of imperialism demonstrated how central its creation was for UK foreign policy. When coupled with a community not deemed worthy of permanent residency largely because of its ethnic origins and lack of kinship ties to the UK, population expulsion and re-colonisation of the archipelago was enabled. This makes the Internal dimension equally important in explaining retention. Local population dynamics permitted the metropole to be a driver in realising US foreign policy aims.

Chapter Five: Brunei

Introduction

This chapter examines the retention of Brunei's British protected status following the Sultanate's refusal to join the Federation of Malaysia in 1963, which "came at the end of a spate of decolonisation."¹ From July 1963, Brunei remained bound to the UK for a further 21 years despite periodic reminders from the British government in 1968, 1973 and 1979 that the status-quo was unviable in light of geopolitical shifts. Why, then, was Britain prepared to push Brunei into independence while other remnants of Empire were retained and in some cases, such as Diego Garcia, were deemed very useful? Britain did have substantial economic and strategic interests in post-1963 Brunei: through oil and financial sectors and in the presence of a Gurkha battalion. This emphasises how other factors influenced British colonial policy towards a territory Britain was actually keen to divest and in which a UK presence (both military and economic) could be retained despite the end of formal protection. Integrating these other factors – international and internal - into the Brunei story will provide a nuanced analysis of the Sultanate's protracted independence. The complexities of decolonisation will be evident, particularly the role of the Sultans who were aloof to the diffuse realities of post-war imperialism and British power.

The discussion of Internal factors will analyse the Sultan's 1963 decision to abstain from the Federation of Malaysia in 1963 which, alongside the 1971 and 1976 agreements which renegotiated the protectorate treaties, was an important juncture maintaining the colonial relationship with Britain beyond the 'Wind of Change' era. What will be highlighted is the personality of both Sultans Omar and Hassanal and their ability to manipulate the UK

¹ A.J. Stockwell, 'Malaysia the Making of a Neo-Colony', *Asian Affairs*, 33, 3 (1998): 227.

government through their leverage, bringing more favourable terms in negotiations and holding up Britain's full divestment from the protected state.² Additional metropolitan-peripheral relations explored are Bruneian internal affairs, which were fully devolved to Brunei by Britain in the 1959 constitution but which transferred power to the Sultan and not the Bruneian people.³ The partially-elected legislature had its first elections in 1962, but the Brunei Revolt at the end of that year halted political development as the Sultan resisted constitutional change. Therefore, as a protected state, Britain was obliged to uphold a non-democratic polity, which embarrassed Westminster and the FCO.

The Imperial dimension of this case study initially draws upon Britain's interest in natural resources, notably oil exploitation. By understanding how the UK benefitted from the oil-rich Sultanate and its relationship with the Anglo-Dutch Shell petroleum group allows economic aspects to be explored in developing a continuing colonial relationship. This will counter the argument that indigenous Brunei-specific factors slowed down decolonisation by emphasising that a protracted independence was not entirely frustrating, but actually beneficial for British interests in a period of metropolitan financial infirmity. Additional business aspects will be examined, such as the role of the Crown Agents and their administration of the Sultan's currency reserves, which can be viewed as an extension of the work of the ODM.⁴ The large holdings by the Sultanate in the London market meant that pressure was applied to the Crown

² Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddin reigned from 1950-67 after which he stepped down in favour of his eldest son, Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah. On his abdication, Omar formally handed control over to his son yet remained his son's personal advisor and after independence in 1984 became the Minister of Defence and Colonel-in-Chief of the Royal Brunei Armed Forces.

³ A.V.M Horton, 'British Administration in Brunei 1906-1959', *Modern Asian Studies*, 20, 2 (1986): 373.

⁴ The Crown Agents were a quasi-independent administrative body under CO supervision, and from 1964 ODM supervision. The Agents operated under a wide latitude and as well as procuring supplies raised non-aid finance (for example, for infrastructure projects) for colonial governments. During decolonisation their remit changed allowing the Agents to take on commitments in independent nation states. In 1997, the Crown Agents were privatised and were no longer an arm of the British government. See David Sunderland, *Managing British Colonial and Post-Colonial Development: The Crown Agents, 1914-1974* (Woodbridge, 2007).

Agents to persuade the Sultan not to diversify reserves as it would be damaging for Britain.⁵ These large sterling reserves that the Sultan maintained in London helped alleviate British currency pressures in the 1970s during energy crises and recession and the chapter will examine these metropolitan benefits as a driver in maintaining links (both colonial and neo-colonial). Nonetheless, these currency reserves gave the Sultan an advantage in political negotiations, providing leverage given his potential to disrupt the operations of Brunei Shell Petroleum (BSP) and his being able to withdraw investments from London and diversify currency reserves away from sterling to manipulate the British government into maintaining the status quo. The Sultan's plans to delay independence removed the control of decolonisation away from the UK to the Sultan with renegotiations actually maintaining the imperial link. The Imperial level of analysis will also examine the developing investment market in the Sultanate, which coincided with decreasing British political interest in Brunei. The shift to the EEC resulted in the British government changing priorities and while investment remained buoyant in Brunei the political capital needed to maintain the imperial link was diminishing in the 1970s.

The International aspect of Brunei's delayed decolonisation looks at the global political landscape, and, as Hyam argued, decolonisation within Southeast Asia can be understood through the prism of the Cold War.⁶ The creation of the Federation of Malaysia was supported by Britain and the US for increased security in the Southeast Asia region as this Anglophile country would mitigate the global fears of spreading communism. The UN's role will also be analysed to show how UK and UN thinking on Brunei was in this case remarkably similar as both wanted to see the Sultanate's independence. Nevertheless,

⁵ Ibid., 90 n.133.

⁶ Hyam, 'Dynamics of British Imperial Policy', 45.

Brunei's stubborn clinging to protected status hindered this process and demonstrates a lack of international agency pushing Brunei's independence.

Internal Factors in the Delayed Independence of Brunei

The 1963 Malaysia Decision

Through the 1959 change in Brunei's constitution, Britain maintained control of the Sultanate's external affairs but relinquished control of internal affairs (though still retained responsibility for internal security). Simultaneously, the residency system dating from 1906 was ended. Subsequently, implementation of a larger federation began to change the political landscape of Anglophone-Southeast Asia. British policy in the region was directed towards establishing a larger independent federation, inclusive of Malaya (independent in 1957), the crown colonies of North Borneo, Sarawak, and Singapore, and it was very much hoped, Brunei. Bringing together these disparate states, which had little in common except for all experiencing some form of British rule or protection, had a rationale that went past constitution-making and was an "economic and political expediency for the departing colonial power."⁷ Merging these states offered a practical solution to absolve Britain from imperial commitments, and was also practical for the future of the Borneo Territories which were underdeveloped and at risk from an aggressive Indonesia. 'Greater Malaysia' afforded Britain a favourable ally and a pro-Western bloc in a politically-volatile region.⁸ Federation also answered the small-state problem in Southeast Asia, with Brunei, Singapore and the Borneo Territories all areas deemed too small by population or territorial size to function on their own. The Federation appealed through relinquishing Britain from its obligations while promoting political development in a

⁷ Tan Tai Yong, *Creating Greater Malaysia: Decolonisation and the Politics of Merger* (Singapore, 2008), 2

⁸ Bolstering Borneo against Indonesia was an important part of British strategy in Southeast Asia. After the independence of Indonesia from the Dutch (declared in 1945, but internationally recognised in 1949) Sukarno moved the country leftwards. His authoritarian and anti-western leanings worried Western nations (especially after the nationalisation of Dutch businesses in the late-1950s) and the USA supplied aid to Sukarno to counter this. With Brunei refusing to join Malaysia, Harold Macmillan posited, "Having squeezed the Dutch dry, they will turn on Britain." Harold Macmillan, *At The End of the Day* (London, 1973), 256.

larger state. As the Commissioner-General in Southeast Asia, Lord Selkirk, noted, “the only hope of constitutional advance lies in the federation with Malaya.”⁹

At the beginning of negotiations between Southeast Asian states, the British government was worried that Malaysia would be a ‘shotgun wedding’ and not a solution that would be beneficial to both Malaya and the Borneo Territories. Bruneian entry into the Federation would remove the protectorate from British responsibility, but the UK also had to protect Brunei’s identity with the Bruneian delegation seeking “assurances that the position of Islam, and of Malay as the national language, would be maintained after Malaysia.”¹⁰ The protection of Brunei’s oil reserves and its political status was also an important factor in early negotiations. With British pressure to join Malaysia, a committee was established in Brunei for accession to the Federation, which explored the safeguarding of local interests.¹¹

Discussions of Brunei’s entry into Malaysia in 1963 emphasised the protracted and difficult circumstances the British tried to manage. The Sultan’s prestige and Brunei itself played an important role in the negotiation process, and this was summarised in a telegram to the CO in February 1963:

Brunei has never been a colony proper and consists of the remnants of probably the oldest Sultanate existing in the world today. She is financially extremely strong and there is deep national pride in Brunei, which has in some way been more deeply offended by Malayan officials than either of her neighbours [Sarawak and North Borneo]. The sum of Brunei’s aspirations appears to be complete independence and complete security.¹²

⁹ Tan Tai Tong, *Greater Malaysia*, 63. A thorough investigation was undertaken of North Borneo and Sarawak by Lord Cobbold commissioned by Prime Minister Harold Macmillan. This ascertained the views of the Borneo people on federation with Malaysia and recommendations were based on their assessments. Brunei was never included, and no public opinion assessment was ever made on Bruneian ascension into the Federation. The Commission supported Malaysia because it “created a stabilising factor in the region” and “forestalls claims on the Borneo Territories.” Memorandum on Malaysia, 4 July 1962, CAB 129/110/6.

¹⁰ Tan Tai Tong, *Greater Malaysia*, 63.

¹¹ Marie-Sybille de Vienne, *Brunei: From the Age of Commerce to the 21st Century* (Singapore, 2015), 135.

¹² Telegram from Singapore to CO, 2 February 1963, FCO 141/13044.

The above quotation encapsulated the pride and sense of distinctiveness felt by Brunei and it anticipated the problems that Britain would encounter in the late-1960s and into the 1970s. The Brunei elite wanted local autonomy but also highly-valued the umbrella of British protection which upheld its autocracy meaning divestment for Britain would be hard to achieve. This also impacted on the negotiations with Bruneian reluctance to lose this special status with Britain through joining a larger federation.

Brunei chauvinism explained Sultan Omar's indifference towards Britain and the Malaysian Federation, and he was both aware of his strong position as a potential partner in Malaysia, as well as how much Britain wanted the Federation to succeed. Those hopes were expressed by the High Commissioner in Kuala Lumpur, who informed the CO in May 1963 that "things are starting to move [in Bruneian acceptance of Malaysia] due to the Governor in Jesselton [North Borneo]'s unremitting efforts" in encouraging the Bornean states to federate with Malaya.¹³ MPs in London also pushed for the success of Malaysia, with cross-party support for Brunei's consolidation into a federation. In July 1963, when the Sultan had decided that Malaysia was not the right direction for Brunei, Conservative MP Colin Turner asked "How can Brunei possibly stay out?", and Arthur Bottomley, for Labour, declared that "[Britain] cannot go on upholding the Sultan as an autocratic leader."¹⁴ It was hoped that this strategy of managed decolonisation would allow Britain to continue to wield political influence in Southeast Asia, pass on the onerous task of internal security and create a viable political entity for the supposedly unsophisticated societies of the Borneo Territories.¹⁵ However, negotiations were not effective in federating Brunei, and while the other Borneo Territories successfully merged,

¹³ Telegram from CO to Governor, Jesselton, 25 May 1963, FCO 141/13010.

¹⁴ Malaysia Bill, HoC, Volume 681, Column 991, Friday 19 July 1963.

¹⁵ Subritzky, 'Konfrontasi', 211.

Brunei remained outside. This consequently left Britain protecting a territory it did not particularly desire.

The Sultan's attitude in negotiations was both pleasant and awkward. His difficult personality was apparent, and correspondence between London and Bandar Seri Begawan vexed ministers when a planned trip to London for negotiations in June 1963 was nearly cancelled as the Sultan claimed he did not have adequate attire for the trip.¹⁶ The same trip was almost derailed as the Sultan refused to talk to Malayan leaders, and insisted that British politicians be used as intermediaries in the negotiation process because he trusted the latter more.¹⁷ Additionally, the Sultan requested adequate entertainment when in London, with ministers employing the Queen to regale him, "which she should make known with minimum delay."¹⁸ The Sultan's intransigence during a crucial part of the negotiation process revealed his ambivalent position and he deliberately complicated matters to suit his own agenda. The London trip in June 1963 was devised for Bruneian and Malaysian parties to come together with the hope that an agreement on the terms of Brunei's entry could be reached "removed from the area of local emotion."¹⁹ But the Sultan's problems with Malaysia made him cling to the British government. Exploiting the monarchical connection and only speaking to British ministers, shows Omar's continued allegiance in the negotiation process. The British had no choice but to accept his requests, stressing how the Sultan controlled the process.

Moreover, the Sultan was "sticking to his guns and making no concessions at all."²⁰ The reluctance to share oil revenues with Kuala Lumpur, alongside fears of a changing Bruneian

¹⁶ Telegram from High Commissioner to CO, 30 June 1963, FCO 141/13010. It was decided that the Sultan could visit Saville Row to have suits made.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Telegram from Governor, Jesselton to CO, 22 June 1963, FCO141/13010.

²⁰ Telegram from High Commissioner of Brunei, 26 June 1963, FCO 141/13010.

political landscape and the loss of monarchical status in the federation (which following established Malayan precedent would be based on a rotating Kingship between the states), were principal concerns for the Sultan and he ultimately refused to join. By the end of June 1963, Omar was advising the British that he would look for “a stronger defence treaty with the UK” and he fully rejected membership.²¹ Newspaper reports in Brunei from 12 July 1963 reported that, “Brunei’s future lay with Britain.”²² These suggest the agency of the Sultan in driving the maintenance of an imperial link. With the decision solely resting with Omar it was necessary for the British to concede to his wishes, especially when the British government was eager to reduce its imperial commitments. Additionally, Bruneian prestige influenced the Sultan’s approach throughout the process with his refusal to relinquish political and economic control. His attachment to the UK was deep, resulting in a ruler who wanted ‘independence’ but on his terms. There was no incompatibility in his mind between Bruneian control of local affairs and an ongoing economic and defence dependence on Britain. Once again, the development of a strong national identity did not necessarily mean eschewing the colonial relationship.

Aside from the Sultan’s personal proclivities, the future of natural resources played a substantial role within the Malaysian Federation negotiation process and Brunei’s decision not to join. Brunei has been described as “entirely a creature of the British Government and Shell Brunei” with oil and UK-linked business forming the bedrock of the economy.²³ This resulted in a local political system that did not want to surrender revenue or protection by a larger power. Brunei’s accession to the Federation of Malaysia meant it would relinquish a substantial slice of this revenue and, as it was richer in natural resources than the other Borneo territories, Tunku Abdul Rahman, the Prime Minister of Malaya (and later Malaysia), was keen to benefit from

²¹ Outward Telegram from High Commissioners Office to Colonial Office, 01 July 1963, FCO 141/13010.

²² Outward Telegram from Secretary State for Commonwealth Relations to Acting High Commissioner in Kuala Lumpur, 12 July 1963, FCO 141/13010.

²³ D.W. Fryer, *Emerging Southeast Asia* (London, 1979), 316.

these tax streams. Bruneian oil revenue was in fact seen as a crucial financial underpinning for the Federation as a whole.²⁴ However, the Sultan was unwilling to share profits from resources in Bruneian territory and this hampered the negotiations. To grant concessions to Brunei meant that “Sarawak must be afforded similar treatment with regards to oil”, which would have further reduced revenue from oil across the new enlarged state.²⁵ The Bank of England’s belief that Bruneian oil fields were being exhausted, even after new offshore fields were discovered in the Southwest Ampa deposits in 1963, counters (to some extent) the argument that the central issue was oil revenue.²⁶ Even so, in June 1963, Malaya was seeking assurances in the negotiations for a share of oil revenue as a condition for Brunei to join the Federation.²⁷

The central position of oil revenues during the negotiations reveal their importance. The Tunku wanted the oil revenues because to exclude them, and then allow Brunei to join the Federation, would greatly reduce Brunei’s taxable capacity.²⁸ The High Commissioner in Sarawak noted the importance of taxable oil revenue as it made “the biggest difference [for the Federation] and comes from the right of the Federation to tax new oil discoveries.”²⁹ The Sultan was distressed at the idea of losing this oil revenue and was concerned that the Tunku was exploiting the revenue issue for his own gain to make Malaysia succeed.³⁰ Whether the Sultan was foresighted in realising the long-term benefits from oil revenue is debatable, but the additional Ampa deposits discovered clearly heightened the oil revenue issue.

²⁴ Oil was not the singular resource issue and the Sultan was wary of any tax on products “from the land be them any mineral” and that the revenues would go to the federal government in Kuala Lumpur. Brunei’s position was that any resource and revenue contributions from Brunei should always be acknowledged as voluntary and not compulsory permanent exactions. Telegram to Secretary of State from High Commissioner, Brunei, FCO 141/13011, 15 April 1963.

²⁵ Telegram to Secretary of State from Governor, Kuching, 27 April 1963, FCO 141/13011.

²⁶ White, *British Business in Post-Colonial Malaysia*, 33-34.

²⁷ Telegram from UK Representative in Kuala Lumpur to Governor, Jesselton, 10 June 1963, FCO 141/13044.

²⁸ Greater Malaysia-Brunei Problems, 4 July 1963, DO 169/261.

²⁹ Telegram to Governor, Jesselton from CRO, 22 June 1963, FCO 141/13010.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

BSP allegedly would also have benefitted from a Brunei outside of Malaysia. Ranjit Singh suggests that Shell engaged in Machiavellian oil politics to prevent the Federation from succeeding.³¹ However, as White argues, the antipathy of Indonesia to Malaysia and Brunei, and the British army maintaining a presence in an ‘independent’ Brunei after 1963, actually created uncertainty for long-term oil security.³² P.M. Linton, CEO of BSP, was admittedly anxious over the long-term objective for the Sultanate and how that would affect profits as uncertainty would impact future production.³³ Nevertheless, Brunei did not join the Federation given the Sultan’s fears of losing valuable oil revenue, once again highlighting his autonomy from both imperial government and imperial business and the role of the indigenous factor in prolonging colonialism. The Brunei position on natural resources pressured the Sultan to reject the Malaysian Federation and operated as the initial action that caused the retention of Brunei’s protected status. This was undesirable for the British government as it frustrated plans for both winding down and maintaining influence in Southeast Asia, resulting in ongoing responsibility contrary to UK decolonisation policy.

The decision by the Sultan to refrain from joining Malaysia in July 1963 pleased the population of Brunei, and on his return Omar was met with “groups demonstrating in support of the Sultan.”³⁴ The Sultan never felt welcome within the negotiation process given a “lack of warmth from Malaya”, and the protracted and difficult process exasperated all parties and strained relationships making a resolution unlikely.³⁵ Natural resources influenced the Sultan to such a degree that it was the driver for his decision in 1963, and his protection of this revenue

³¹ D.S. Ranjit Singh, *Brunei, 1839-1983: The Problems of Political Survival* (Singapore, 1984), 189-190 cited in White, *British Business in Post-Colonial Malaysia*, 48. This also counters Poulgrain’s argument in *Genesis of Konfrontasi* that Shell orchestrated the Brunei insurrection as a means to keep Brunei out of Malaysia and thus maintain a higher share of the proceeds from oil and gas extraction.

³² White, *British Business in Post-Colonial Malaysia*, 48.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Telegram from High Commissioner, Brunei, 18 July 1963, FCO 141/13010.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

was interdependent with the maintenance of British protection of both his state and oil deposits. This satisfied the Sultan as he would maintain the imperial link and keep royalties without conceding to Kuala Lumpur on state autonomy. In June 1963, negotiations were adjourned “as the Sultan left to sign a new contract with Shell” highlighting where the Sultan’s loyalty and priority lay.³⁶ By August 1963, Brunei carried on with its “virtual independent existence” neither part of a Federation nor a fully-fledged independent state.³⁷

The role of the Sultan and the issue of resource exploitation emphasise a difficult metropolitan-peripheral relationship. British willingness to offload Brunei into a larger Southeast Asian federation was frustrated by the Sultan’s pride and protection of natural resources. The 1963 decision demonstrates the Sultan’s agency in internal matters relating to Brunei, and as a protected state and not a directly-controlled colony, the British government was constrained through its lack of influence over domestic Bruneian matters. The UK could not immediately divest but didn’t want to maintain the current relationship either, leaving the British government in a bind holding an embarrassing remnant of Empire.

The Internal Political Situation in Brunei

The Brunei Revolt of December 1962 occurred during the negotiations to form the Federation of Malaysia.³⁸ Led by A.M. Azahari, in opposition to Brunei’s federation with ‘Greater Malaysia’, the revolt has been viewed subsequently as an important factor in the Sultan’s

³⁶ Telegram to Governor, Jesselton from CRO, 22 June 1963, FCO 141/13010.

³⁷ Fryer, *Emerging Southeast Asia*, 316.

³⁸ The revolt was orchestrated by the TNKU (North Kalimantan National Army), a militia equipped and supported by Indonesia and the revolt is regarded as a primary stage in the Indonesian-Malaysian Confrontation. It was a shock to the British government and the Sultan who, three days before, asserted that “no trouble is imminent.” Party Rakyat Brunei, Indonesia and the TNKU Background, 5 December 1962, FCO 141/12715. However, the uprising quickly failed. Nevertheless, in context it had far-reaching consequences. It influenced the Sultan’s decision not to join Malaysia, stalled political and constitutional development, and enacted a state of emergency, which Brunei is still under to this day. Poulgrain, *The Genesis of Konfrontasi*. While fanciful, Poulgrain provides a neat, if conspiratorial, view on the revolt using oil as a basis for its beginning. See also H. A. Majid, *Rebellion in Brunei: The 1962 Revolt, Imperialism, Confrontation and Oil* (London, 2007).

resistance to join Malaysia in 1963, and changed Brunei indefinitely as the uprising “effectively obliterated the articulate, prominent and strongest political party.”³⁹ If successful, in its aim of forging an alternative Brunei-led confederation of northern Borneo, the revolt would have altered the political landscape of Southeast Asia and frustrated the creation of Malaysia through realising Indonesian aims since Jakarta was opposed to Malaysia. A consequence of failure, however, was a much stronger Sultanic hold over government, which after 1962, “flourished by resisting political change.”⁴⁰ The insurrection interrupted constitutional development and resulted in the British government protecting an autocratic state after 1963 (which was highly embarrassing during an era of self-determination). The British were keen to press the Sultan on constitutional advance “for fear of further unrest” while simultaneously disengaging from its Bruneian commitment with merger into Malaysia an ideal vehicle to achieve this.⁴¹

After the insurrection, the Sultan presented a progressive image and the prospect of greater democracy for the Bruneian people, with the “Brunei government, after the rebellion, looking forward to further constitutional development.”⁴² The British High Commissioner was pleased as it suited UK aims of promoting political development, reporting that it had long been the declared policy to “increase elected representation.”⁴³ Talks between HMG and the Sultan in 1963 and 1964 envisaged direct elections with full adult suffrage. However, in reality, the Sultan was reluctant to introduce constitutional change, was apprehensive about elections, and would not give up his autocratic powers.⁴⁴ Instead, the population was bought off with Brunei’s

³⁹ J.S. Sidhu, *Historical Dictionary of Brunei Darussalam* (Lanham, 2010), Ixxv. Poulgrain, *Genesis of Konfrontasi* and H.A. Majid, *Rebellion in Brunei: The 1962 Revolt, Imperialism, Confrontation and Oil* (London, 2007) also stress the far-reaching consequences of the revolt’s swift suppression through influencing the Sultan’s decision not to join Malaysia, the stalling of democratic development, and the enactment of a state of emergency, which Brunei is still under to this day.

⁴⁰ Stockwell, ‘Britain and Brunei’, 786.

⁴¹ Abdullah, ‘Brunei’s Political Development’, 258.

⁴² High Commissioner, Brunei to CO, January 1963, FCO 141/12689.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Confidential FCO Report on Brunei, November 1964, FCO 24/1966.

advances in education provision and economic growth which narrowed the gap between rich and poor. Neither Sultan Omar nor his subjects had little appetite for political change.⁴⁵

The internal political situation from 1963 embarrassed the British as they were protecting a state which had experienced little constitutional development. The detainment of politicians after the 1962 insurrection was a hindrance to progressive politics, and with the Bruneians said to have “a natural aptitude for duplicity” there was a fear on the part of British administrators that a plebiscite called by the Sultan would result in independence (an idea the British could not contemplate before constitutional development had occurred).⁴⁶ As Selkirk exclaimed in March 1963 “nobody would have any satisfaction in Brunei being independent for 24 hours!”⁴⁷ The limited democratic development in Brunei was thus another hindrance to the creation of the Federation. As powers would have been relinquished to Kuala Lumpur it would have constitutionally placed the Sultan on a par with the other heads of state in the Federation.⁴⁸ The British were aware that Brunei had made some political advancement, but more was needed. The Sultanate’s inclusion in the Federation would have forced Bruneian politics to become more inclusive as a state within a federation where parliamentary politics operated, and regular elections were held. Brunei’s refusal to join meant that the Sultan continued to enjoy full executive authority and did not hold elections.

Nevertheless, the British did benefit from Brunei’s unwillingness to develop constitutionally through the Kingdom’s contribution to the Sterling Area because the Sultan had the executive

⁴⁵ Statement by Sultan of Brunei in conversation with Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Commonwealth Affairs, 7 July 1967, CO 24/205.

⁴⁶ Dennis White, High Commissioner, Brunei to Selkirk, 8 March 1963, FCO 141/12689.

⁴⁷ Selkirk to White, 18 March 1963, FCO 141/12689.

⁴⁸ The Head of State of Malaysia is the *Yang di-Pertuan Agong* (‘He Who Is Made Lord’) and is elected from the other 9 Sultans for a period of five years. The Sultan of Brunei would have shared his status with the other Sultans in what had become more and more of a ceremonial role. See Constitution of Malaysia, [http://www.agc.gov.my/agcportal/uploads/files/Publications/FC/Federal%20Consti%20\(BI%20text\).pdf](http://www.agc.gov.my/agcportal/uploads/files/Publications/FC/Federal%20Consti%20(BI%20text).pdf), [accessed 29 January 2019].

authority on where to invest his state's revenue surpluses (an issue which is discussed in more depth below). The Sultan was also confident that if no constitutional progression was made the British would still protect the state, regardless of whether it was embarrassing for the British, and this would include suppression of future internal aggression or rebellions as per the Gurkha intervention in December 1962.⁴⁹ The British government did press the Sultan "to move rapidly towards a fully democratic political system, constitutional monarchy and independence."⁵⁰ However, the Sultan saw no attraction in political evolution and wanted his finger in every pie in the state.⁵¹

Additionally, outside of bilateral intergovernmental relations, BSP's operations in Brunei positioned the oil-extractor as an important stakeholder in political developments, especially after the 1962 insurrection which caused anxiety for fear of a repetition. Linton expressed his concerns about Bruneian politics and the potential harm to profits, in a letter to the High Commissioner, informing that he had "little faith in the [Brunei] police force."⁵² Concurrently, Linton's correspondence detailed how difficult the Sultan was with BSP being used a broker between the Sultan and HMG. BSP wished Brunei to be pushed towards a constitutional monarchy.⁵³ Indeed, BSP regretted Brunei's ambiguous statehood in 1963 highlighting that neither the British government nor big business were happy with the Sultan. There were fears that internal security would hamper long-term oil production with the profits potentially impacted by the uncertainty of Brunei's political status. This cast doubts on the feasibility of

⁴⁹ This idea has been explored by Abdullah, 'Brunei's Political Development', 237.

⁵⁰ Macintosh, High Commissioner, Brunei to Wallace, Assistant Under-Secretary of State, 2 November 1963, CO 2010/1457.

⁵¹ Abdullah, 'Brunei's Political Development', 251.

⁵² Linton to High Commissioner, 30 August 1963, FCO 141/13058. The High Commissioner conceded that the police force in Seria was "wholly unsatisfactory", even though Linton was probably being "alarmist." See Letter from High Commissioner of Brunei to Colonial Office, FCO 141/13058, 6 September 1963.

⁵³ Private letter from Linton to the CO, 6 September 1963, CO 1030/1530.

the state. It was not ready for independence, nor willing to join Malaysia, rendering the British government stuck in association with an archaic and autocratic state.

Aside from Britain, third-party countries also had misgivings about the “slow progress to political democracy.”⁵⁴ In 1966, Japan was negotiating purchases of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) from Brunei and the Tokyo Gas Company (TGC) approached the British Embassy in Tokyo because it was “worried about potential instability which might lead to arbitrary price rises.”⁵⁵ The agreement was far-reaching. Japan would import 140 million cubic feet of gas a day for at least 15 years, and it would provide benefits to the UK exchequer through BSP’s operations, develop the internal economy of Brunei, and provide stability and greater trading opportunities.⁵⁶ The British embassy in Tokyo downplayed the internal political situation, even though *Konfrontasi* with Indonesia was still not officially finished, and informed TGC that constitutional development was in its early stages with potential threats from Indonesia constituting “minor nuisance raids.”⁵⁷ Additionally, the British embassy advised that political instability in Algeria did not hamper gas imports to the UK, so future problems should not occur for imports to Japan if instability arose.⁵⁸ The British directly benefitted from this agreement as revenue earned by Brunei was invested into the Sterling Area and the lack of political progress was actually beneficial to Britain. This provided an obvious intersection between Bruneian internal and British imperial concerns with the benefits for UK financial stability more important to the metropole than the ethics of the domestic situation in Brunei.

⁵⁴ ‘Something Nasty in the Sultanate’, *The Guardian*, 13 May 1971, FCO 24/1084.

⁵⁵ Tokyo to FO, 27 April 1966, FO 371/187685.

⁵⁶ FO to Tokyo, 2 July 1966, FO 371/187685.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ Telegram from the FO to Tokyo, 4 May 1966, FO 371/187685.

Nevertheless, the political situation still left the British in a bind. The lack of political development and whether Brunei should be independent, become part of Malaysia, or carry on as a protectorate impacted on business interests who were worried about uncertainty (especially before the end of *Konfrontasi* in August 1966). But a summary of the Bruneian internal situation by the High Commissioner in 1968 observed that the biggest threat to the British actually came from Sir Omar and the influence he wielded over his son despite his abdication in 1967. This influence could scupper British disengagement protracting independence longer than desired.⁵⁹ If a proposed British withdrawal of Gurkha troops, part of the 1959 constitutional renegotiation and the east of Suez decision, was not achieved amicably, Sir Omar might “provoke trouble for British interests in Brunei.”⁶⁰ The report went on to describe the ex-Sultan – importantly the monarch who made the decision to keep Brunei out of Malaysia – as “emotional, unpredictable, and mentally unbalanced.”⁶¹

The British government after 1966 ignored the internal political situation. While it was embarrassing to protect the state, the end of *Konfrontasi* meant there was political stability in Southeast Asia and Brunei could slowly move towards independence. Also, business grew as the UK benefitted from sterling investments, which would have been harder to maintain in a constitutional monarchy. However, the lack of political change also frustrated British plans for independence. The Sultan having executive authority meant that he alone dictated the country’s future and he wished that to be in a continued relationship with the UK. The lack of British control over internal affairs meant Britain had no influence over this and could only slowly wind down its external responsibility for Brunei.

⁵⁹ Summary of the Internal Political Situation in Brunei from the High Commissioner, 19 August 1968, FCO 24/220.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

Protracted Independence

With the renegotiation of the Anglo-Bruneian treaty in 1971, the Sultanate remained a relic of empire. As one Briton in Brunei put it in *The Guardian*, “thirty years after we left India we are still here. It is an anachronism.”⁶² The same respondent went on to describe how it was hard to be sure whether it was 1976 or 1906 in Brunei when watching men at the Royal Yacht Club raising glasses, and seeing British engineering work undertaken within the country.⁶³ Decolonisation had apparently changed the developing world, yet in Southeast Asia, colonialism remained in an enclave on Borneo.

Vietnam War notwithstanding, by 1966, maritime Southeast Asia had stabilised. The *Konfrontasi* between Indonesia and Malaysia officially ended in August and an independent Brunei – whilst still not preferred by Britain over integration with Malaysia – was the political reality. In light of the east of Suez wind-down British policy was to “secure the end of the 1959 Agreement with Brunei and leave behind a stable state. Our aim is to release ourselves of these responsibilities by the time we leave our bases in Singapore and Malaysia.”⁶⁴ The year 1966 provided the British government with the means to pursue full independence as external aggression no longer threatened Brunei, meaning it could be argued that there were no British military obligations under the 1959 treaty. The aim was to coincide this disengagement from Brunei with military withdrawal east of Suez and the reduction of commitments in Southeast Asia.

⁶² ‘A World Without End?’, *The Guardian*, 14 July 1976.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Affairs on Brunei – Future Policy, 25 July 1967, FCO 24/205.

The 1971 east of Suez withdrawal directly impacted Brunei as the “British garrison in Brunei will be withdrawn in the autumn of 1968 and will not be replaced.”⁶⁵ However, the Sultan was unmoved by this suggestion, informing that matters of internal security were the responsibility of the British government under the 1959 Agreement, which stated that “Her Majesty having complete control of the external affairs of the state, agrees at all times to protect the State and the Government.”⁶⁶ HMG, eager to be relieved of its commitment, warned the Sultan “that independence for Brunei is now something that would happen sooner rather than later, the Sultan must consider the implications and prepare for this.”⁶⁷ The Sultan was stubborn and while he appreciated British frankness, it was non-negotiable that he could be responsible for Bruneian security, and “took exception to the way negotiations on constitutional advance were handled.”⁶⁸ This left the British with a predicament. Ministers were stuck between a 1959 obligation, and the “guiding principle to get rid of our commitments to Brunei.”⁶⁹

With political divestment inevitable *at some point*, it was decided that the British government needed to give the Sultan “reasonable notice” of the change in the relationship, which was decided in July 1968 as two years hence – that being the internationally accepted standard by the Attorney-General.⁷⁰ Using this time-frame, the aim was to have Brunei as a fully independent country by 1971, even though it was noted, “as with all Oriental problems, solutions take time.”⁷¹ The solution did indeed take time, and the Sultan refused to accept the reality of independence. Additional talks were held which further delayed the withdrawal of troops in the timeframe preferred by the British with the Sultan having a “lack of desire of

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Meeting with the Sultan of Brunei, 7 July 1967, FCO 24/205.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Background notes for the UK Mission to the UN to the Committee of 24, June 1967, FCO 24/219.

⁶⁹ Discussions with the Sultan, 28 June 1967, FCO 24/205.

⁷⁰ Notes on Brunei, 31 July 1968, FCO 24/219.

⁷¹ FCO note on Brunei, January 1968, FCO 24/225.

independence.”⁷² The problem troubled the Wilson government, as well as Malaysia, Singapore and the High Commissioner in Brunei. The latter neither had “any clear idea about what to do with Brunei, nor how to play our hand.”⁷³ The delay inevitably continued the quasi-colonial relationship as the 1959 treaty renegotiation had not been resolved. In January 1970, the Sultan wrote to the FCO expressing “bitter disappointment” that the talks in the 1960s had provided no sustainable outcome and “he was now as concerned as we were to find a position from which the relationship between Brunei and Britain could be considered again to reinforce the mutual friendship.”⁷⁴

The 1970 General Election altered the negotiating situation. The change in government from Labour to Conservative adjusted the timeframe that the British government sought, and the achievement of agreement was pushed back until late-1970. As was noted in the FCO, this was beneficial to Brunei in extending the protected status, as the Sultan’s negotiators “are probably stalling in the hope that a change in government will solve the problem.”⁷⁵ The conclusion of the talks changed the Heads of Agreements between the Sultan and the British government, and in November 1970 the tone had shifted towards the British willing to “amend the 1959 Brunei agreement. In particular to limit the defence commitments and to divest ourselves of responsibility for Brunei’s internal security.”⁷⁶ The renegotiation had finally relinquished Britain from responsibility for Bruneian internal security, but the UK still retained responsibility over external affairs. While this was not what the Labour government wanted in 1968, the renegotiation had changed the terms to be more beneficial to the British government while suiting the Sultan as responsibility for external defence still resided in London. The

⁷² W.A. Ward to Permanent Secretary, FCO, July 1969, FCO 24/429.

⁷³ D.F.B. Le Breton to Ward, April 1969, FCO 24/429.

⁷⁴ Memorandum by the Secretary of State, March 1970, FCO 24/725.

⁷⁵ Notes on Brunei, July 1970, FCO 24/727.

⁷⁶ D.P. Aiers to Wilford, November 1970, FCO 24/729.

change in government was an advantage to the Sultan who took advantage of a more favourable Conservative government willing to revise some of Wilson's east of Suez withdrawals, thus allowing a defence relationship to continue.

Nevertheless, the 1971 agreement was not indefinite and formal notice was served again in by Callaghan's Labour government in 1976. This was initially rebuked by the Sultan and his father. However, Britain took a tough line and countered the Sultan with "if he does not come [to negotiations in London] then HMG would terminate our political and defence arrangements unilaterally."⁷⁷ The British were firmer in their position and wanted to conclude the relationship with Brunei, even though they were "fond of the country and [the] Sultan."⁷⁸ Malcolm MacDonald, a former Colonial Secretary and Commissioner-General in Southeast Asia, and long-time friend and confidante to Sir Omar, personally wrote a letter asking the Sultan to recognise the political reality, which would allow "ministers to propose better terms to Parliament and allow a better agreement to be reached securing Parliament's acceptance."⁷⁹ MacDonald's plea for Brunei to recognise the reality was based on the agreement that unilateral withdrawal was not beneficial to either country.⁸⁰ Acceptance would allow for favourable terms and a gradual independence of Brunei.

The Sultan delayed implementation of the 1976 agreement until 1978. With final arrangements taking place in June 1978, the aim was for a five-year deadline from signature to end the current arrangement, and to modernise the relationship between two sovereign nations. Similar to the

⁷⁷ J.A. Davidson, High Commissioner, Brunei to D.A. Walker, Treasury, 30 October 1976, T 381/93.

⁷⁸ Galsworthy to Male, Assistant Under-Secretary, 3 May 1976, FCO 24/2266.

⁷⁹ MacDonald to Sir Omar, 27 April 1976, FCO 24/2266.

⁸⁰ MacDonald's close relationship with the Sultans is examined by B.A. Hussainmiya, 'Malcolm MacDonald and Brunei: Diplomacy with Intimacy', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 45, 3 (2014): 393-418. Hussainmiya explores MacDonald's role in safeguarding Brunei's independent status in 1963 and how MacDonald's approach contradicted his contemporaries in London.

1963 Malaysia negotiations, the Sultan requested that there should be a member of the Royal Family present upon signature, something the FCO were keen to react to positively in order to get the deal done.⁸¹ However, the Sultan's resistance carried on through the final negotiations reaching a "delicate stage" in late-June 1978. Sir Omar was adamant that the period should be six years from signature, and his son, the current Sultan, impressed that it should be five years from signature at some point in early-February 1979. The date was apparently important for the Bruneians due to "omens" but plainly this was an excuse to extend the colonial relationship with the Sultan perplexed why such a small amount of time could not be conceded.⁸²

Eventually the agreement terminating protected status was signed on 7 January 1979 and came into effect on 31 December 1983. Throughout the 1970s, geopolitics in Southeast Asia changed allowing Britain to fully pursue independence and use the five-year window to prepare Brunei for political independence. What is evident is the desire on the part of both Sultans to keep Britain engaged as the protector of Brunei. Their difficult attitudes in negotiations and the refusal to pursue constitutional development was part of this strategy to maintain the relationship for as long as they could. This was frustrating for successive British governments, especially as they had no influence in Bruneian internal affairs. This indicated the British had difficulty in maintaining their policy of decolonisation and retraction of military commitments as they were obliged to protect a country that refused independence and clung tenaciously to British power. This suggests that the maintenance of the imperial link was driven by Internal factors and the colonised, not the colonisers. This questions the core-peripheral role as the periphery drove retention against metropolitan wishes. Oil reserves and Sterling were the main factors in this retention of colonial status and pushing the Sultans to maintain the status quo for

⁸¹ B. Smith to Martin, 13 June 1978, FCO 15/2405.

⁸² Telegram from Secretary of State to Hong Kong Department, 28 June 1978, FCO 15/2406.

fear of losing key revenues. This also explains the lack of political change. The maintenance of the status quo meant that both Omar and his son fundamentally did not want to promote democratic politics, as long as the British government looked after Brunei.

Imperial Factors in the Delayed Decolonisation of Brunei

The focus of the discussion of the Imperial dimension is on natural resources, business links, and attitudes in Westminster and Whitehall. Analysing big business as a barometer of British influence allows us to show whether or not the Imperial factor was a driver in Brunei remaining attached to the UK. How far can Imperial factors be viewed as British agency in keeping Brunei as a remnant of Empire? As Brunei was not a full colony, this provided a different perspective as Britain lacked influence in the protectorate's internal affairs. This meant economic links were important as Britain tangibly gained from Bruneian oil wealth and the resulting Sterling reserves. How far these economic benefits drove Britain to delay decolonisation will be examined. The Crown Agents, as a body associated with the CO and then the ODM, directly benefited from Brunei's oil wealth and their activities will be analysed to show how the British government managed this oil wealth. What will be evident is the shift from political influence to investment banking, which is representative of the trajectory Brunei took after 1963. The shift towards the EEC was detrimental to Brunei as it reduced political and industrial connections but was necessary at the time for the British government. There will also be analysis of politics at Westminster and how political parties viewed the Brunei problem, especially the leverage that such large Sterling reserves gave the Sultan in the ongoing relationship.

Natural Resources and Sterling

After Sultan Omar rejected joining Malaysia, Brunei continued being a British protected state. While the case study has already presented the role of oil in the negotiation process, analysis will move to focus on how oil influenced Brunei's development post-1963. Measuring natural resources as a driver for continued protected allows the thesis to explore neo-colonial attitudes

towards decolonisation. Even though Brunei was a protected state, its internal affairs were autonomous and BSP acted as an informal means of British influence in Brunei. This emphasises that there were substantial benefits in maintaining some form of imperial link.

By 1970 Brunei had become the fourth largest producer of oil in the Commonwealth, producing 50.7 million barrels a year and ranking only behind Nigeria, Canada and Trinidad. The revenues from these operations, in turn, helped Brunei have a “thriving economy.”⁸³ Additional investment came from Japan’s Mitsubishi, in partnership with BSP, to create the first LNG plant in the Western Pacific to export LNG, most of which was exported to Japan.⁸⁴ BSP and oil and gas dominated the Bruneian economy, and since the 1960s the extensive benefits Brunei subjects enjoyed (free healthcare, free university education, and subsidised rent) known as ‘Shellfare’ were thanks to oil revenues underpinning an extensive welfare system.⁸⁵

The UK never directly received oil from Brunei, but it created a steady income through the accumulation of Sterling reserves during a volatile time for Britain’s currency. The retreat from Sterling in the post-war world impacted the British economy and total Sterling denominations were down from approximately 30 per cent in 1964, to approximately 10 per cent by 1972, and this emphasises the importance of Brunei’s contribution to the Sterling Area.⁸⁶ BSP investment in Brunei was also beneficial to the British government. With total investment of £25 million in oil operations in Brunei by 1968, the loss of Shell’s operations would have dented the

⁸³ Confidential Report on Brunei, Parliamentary Interest in Brunei in the UK, undated (c. November 1970), FCO 24/1084.

⁸⁴ LNG is natural gas that is liquefied for ease of safety and concern. The plant in Brunei was established in 1969 and was opened in 1973. The Government of Brunei owned 50 per cent and Shell Overseas Trading Limited and the Mitsubishi Corporation owned the other half. Currently, it annually produces 6.71 million tons of LNG that is shipped to Japan and South Korea. See www.bruneilng.com.

⁸⁵ Mark Landler, ‘The Royal Treatment; Ruling Family Feuds as Oil Income Drops in Brunei’, *The New York Times*, 27 August 1998, <http://www.nytimes.com/1998/08/27/business/the-royal-treatment-ruling-family-feuds-as-oil-income-drops-in-brunei.html> [accessed 03 November 2017].

⁸⁶ John Singleton and Catherine R. Schenk, ‘The Shift from the Sterling to the Dollar, 1965-76: Evidence from Australia and New Zealand’, *Economic History Review*, 68, 4 (2015): 1161.

Sterling Area “between £3-£4 million per annum.”⁸⁷ During a period when many countries were moving away from Sterling in the wake of the November 1967 devaluation of Sterling it was beneficial to have a pro-British territory like Brunei maintain economic links with Britain to help the domestic economy. This was in direct contrast to the Falklands discussed in Chapter Three where we found that the Islands’ doubtful economic value to the metropole actually encouraged Whitehall bureaucrats to seriously consider offloading to Argentina to save on public expenditure and facilitate the export drive to South America.

A brief for the visit of the Foreign Secretary in April 1968 clearly set out Bruneian contributions to the UK’s balance of payments and the Sterling Area. In 1968, oil sales were worth £38 million to Brunei and from that £7 million went to the Brunei state, and, in that same year, Brunei held £101 million Sterling reserves in London providing support for the Sterling Area.⁸⁸ This was a reduction from £136.6 million in 1965, but still made Brunei the fourth largest holder of Sterling behind Australia (£325 million), Malaysia (£302.7 million), and the Irish Republic (£158.9 million).⁸⁹ The large sales benefitted the Brunei state and the Sultan, allowing him to invest further into the Sterling Area. This was directly tied to the retention of Brunei’s protected status: a continuing relationship pleased the Sultan, further boosting Sterling reserves.

Like other oil-rich states, the late-1960s and early-1970s was a period marked by a rapid increase in oil production in Brunei. The kingdom’s oil revenue increased from B\$199.7m in 1968 to B\$1,564.37m in 1975, partly due to increased oil prices that came with the ‘shocks’ of the 1970s. The 50:50 split of profits also produced the most beneficial relationship for Shell in

⁸⁷ Defensive Speaking Notes, October 1968, FCO 24/237.

⁸⁸ Briefing of a visit from the Secretary of State, April 1968, FCO 24/234.

⁸⁹ Sterling Holdings of Commonwealth Countries, Bank of England Balance of Payments, September 1965, 2A69/4, BoE.

Southeast Asia. Shell's relationship with the Sultan's government was sometimes highly strained as in the operations of a new agreement after 1968.⁹⁰ Nevertheless the ongoing 50:50 division of revenues contrasted with neighbouring Indonesia, which negotiated a 60:40 agreement with overseas oil companies in 1963 with the larger share going to the Indonesian government.⁹¹ Bruneian oil production was averaging 127,000 barrels a day in 1968, and was important for the Sterling Area. The Treasury in the late-1960s stressed the importance of oil as it was "the largest single item among the dollar payments in the Sterling Area" emphasising that any contribution from oil from anywhere within the British-controlled currency zone was welcome.⁹² The reliability of Brunei also offered attractive prospects as it was an "important holder of Sterling, and to date a stable one" as the Bank of England stressed in early-1968.⁹³ After the internal and geopolitical problems had subsided with the end of Indonesia's Confrontation in 1966, the stable political situation in Brunei presented secure opportunities to promote core-periphery links.

However, the Sultan wanted to manipulate this situation especially when BSP and the Brunei government renegotiated their percentage split of profits in 1975, with BSP generously offering the Brunei authorities a 50 per cent participation in oil production. Sir Omar informed BSP that this was far too high, and a more preferential rate would be 25 per cent Brunei and 75 per cent BSP participation rates.⁹⁴ Both John Cordingly, Managing Director of BSP, and the High

⁹⁰ BSP was financially worse off, with more concessions given to the Bruneian government and new earnings which could only be generated through the discovery of more oil fields. It is apparent that Shell was frequently exasperated with the Bruneian Government and the Sultan, and : the *modus vivendi* (agreement) of a 50/50 split between the government and Brunei Shell was used as a tool for Shell to explore for more finds. The new agreements placed a considerable strain between the two parties, and it is interesting to see that even BSP, which had provided much wealth for the Sultan and for Brunei, had as much trouble negotiating with the Sultan as the British and Malayan governments did in 1963. See correspondence between Walker, Treasury and the FCO, June-August 1975, FCO 24/2104.

⁹¹ White, *British Business in Post-Colonial Malaysia*, 48.

⁹² Steven Galpern, *Money. Oil and Empire in the Middle East: Sterling and Postwar Imperialism, 1944-1971* (Cambridge, 2010), 100.

⁹³ Letter from Bank of England, 16 February 1968, FCO 24/234.

⁹⁴ Walker to Burgner, Assistant Secretary at the Treasury, 14 January 1975, FCO 24/1024.

Commissioner in Brunei suspected that this was a ploy to keep a significant British investment in Shell thus maintaining UK protection for longer. But, this was not welcome as the Labour government was looking to negotiate for independence the following year. Although it seems unusual for the Sultan to want less of a stake in BSP, this episode underscores the resolve of the Sultan in preserving the connection with the UK. Through a business link preferable to Shell, this would entrench the UK further into Brunei, making the bond harder to break.

Britain was displeased that such a deal would hinder plans to make Brunei fully independent more quickly. However, this continuing relationship and the position of BSP in Brunei did directly benefit the UK. Correspondence within the South West Pacific Department in the FCO in 1974 explicitly stated this advantage:

Shell maintains its Group Financial Headquarters in London and under the agreement made in 1948 with the Treasury it keeps very large cash reserves here, so that the financial benefits to the UK are in practice greater than the 40/60 split between the British and Dutch interests would suggest. As an example, Mr. Chivers, Treasury Department, said that in 1973, in very round figures, Shell made a net profit of £500 million; dividends to The Hague accounted for £150 million, but as they used very little sterling for foreign investment, some £350 million had been retained in the UK giving us the benefit of some 70% of Shell's global profits.⁹⁵

Nevertheless, even though the Bank of England and the Treasury emphasised the valued contribution Brunei made to Sterling, the FCO encouraged Brunei to “further diversify their supply source.”⁹⁶ As was noted in Qatar in the 1960s, large reserves were an asset and a liability as large Sterling holdings by one country meant there was too much metropolitan exposure in case of a sudden withdrawal.⁹⁷ This gave Brunei's Sultan leverage, and the risk of Brunei's large economic stake disappearing meant there was British dependence on the Sultan. When revising the 1959 treaty in 1967, the FCO warned the Prime Minister that the Sultan “acts

⁹⁵ Minute by P.G. de Courcy-Ireland for Hickman, 7 February 1974, FCO 24/1976.

⁹⁶ Memorandum on Brunei by the Ministry of Power, 23 August 1967, FCO 24/234.

⁹⁷ See Smith, ‘Persian Gulf’, 334.

irrationally” and “we could not properly prevent him from withdrawing his sterling reserves [if no new agreement was signed], and he could certainly reduce Shell’s present level of profits.”⁹⁸

In 1970, the Treasury warned:

If we do not comply with the Sultan of Brunei’s request for the continuance (for an unspecified period) of the arrangements whereby Britain is responsible for Brunei’s external affairs, the Sultan may take reprisals by, inter alia, interfering with the operations of [the] Brunei Shell Petroleum Company.⁹⁹

Preceding the Callaghan government’s negotiations from 1976, the Treasury were worried by “any sign that Brunei might make a significant shift in reserve management policy” and asked to be kept fully informed over negotiations with the Sultan over independence.¹⁰⁰ The Treasury’s involvement worried the FCO as it might mistakenly have revealed to the Sultan his strong position in the negotiation process, “and if the Treasury are determined that the Brunei boat must not be rocked, we might be forced into a reversal of the present agreed policy.”¹⁰¹ These conflicting interests between government departments challenged what should take precedence in pursuing political autonomy: economics or politics. While political interference was constrained after 1959, the FCO still had a stake in the independence of Brunei, but so did the Treasury and Bank of England. The economic benefits that Britain gained proved a counterweight to FCO ambitions to drive independence and this intra-departmental wrangling within the UK government goes a long way in explaining the protracted independence of Brunei.

This also stresses the economic importance of Brunei to Britain. The Sultan had leverage over the British government in negotiations, including the ability to disrupt British businesses working within Brunei, and this influence was a predicament for the British as they were caught

⁹⁸ FCO to Prime Minister, FCO 24/234.

⁹⁹ Derrick to Steel on Marshall’s minutes, 20 April 1970, T 225/3546.

¹⁰⁰ Treasury to Wilford, FCO, 21 July 1975, FCO 24/2104.

¹⁰¹ Wilford for Goronwy-Roberts, 24 January 1975, FCO 24/2104.

in an unwelcome situation. The use of oil and Sterling as weapons underscores the British government's reliance on Sterling reserves as it was willing to accept the Sultan's demands which sustained the relationship far longer than Britain ideally wanted. Additionally, disruption of business would have had a negative effect on the balance on payments for two reasons: oil was cheaper in the UK as it was purchased from British companies (Shell and BP), opposed to foreign companies, and this contributed to large invisible earnings by selling this oil to foreign countries.¹⁰²

In the late-1970s, with the final agreement for Brunei's independence looking likely, the Treasury was actually advising the best course of action was to reduce Brunei's Sterling holdings. The method to do so would be through the "resurrection of the old idea of a dollar loan from Brunei to a UK nationalised industry, but to attach to this that the loan would be running down existing holdings of sterling."¹⁰³ This would be formalised by a US\$50-\$100m loan to Brunei through a reduction in Sterling holdings and then loaned into a UK nationalised industry, payable at 8.0625 per cent interest and fully repaid seven years from the date of signature for independence.¹⁰⁴ David Walker of the Treasury wrote to, Edward George, Bank of England, that this would "meet the bill admirably."¹⁰⁵ This opportunity did not become policy, mainly as there was a limited amount of time for the Brunei Investment Advisory Board to follow such action in the light of the 1978 agreement being signed which moved Brunei to independence.¹⁰⁶ However, diversification of Brunei's future holdings shifted the reserves more to currencies such as the German Mark and the Japanese Yen. A positive outlook from

¹⁰² Confidential Note on Oil and Balance of Payments, 29 January 1974, FCO 24/1976.

¹⁰³ Walker, Treasury to John Dibben, Crown Agents, 25 May 1977, T 381/169.

¹⁰⁴ Outline of Terms on which a Private Placement might be arranged, May 1977, T 381/169.

¹⁰⁵ Walker to George, 26 May 1977, T 381/169.

¹⁰⁶ The advisory board was established in 1976 and was run by the British government and the Crown Agents to manage the Sultan's investment in London. On independence, Brunei withdrew its investment portfolio from the Crown Agents and created the Brunei Investment Agency (BIA).

the Malaysian government facilitated this. Kuala Lumpur looked favourably on Brunei and wanted to see it enjoy self-determination allowing the Sultan to diversify his political and economic relationships and move towards independence.¹⁰⁷

Urging Brunei to move past total reliance on Sterling prepared the country for independence. This diversification would reduce Brunei's economic reliance on the UK, but also British dependency on the Sultan's Sterling reserves. This allowed Britain to pursue independence without dire economic consequences and allowed the Labour government to enter into new negotiations. The reliance on Brunei's Sterling provides a material causal factor for protracted independence. Retention was maintained for so long as Britain could not risk divestment, and it was not until Sterling balances and the economic situation improved that full independence could be explored. However, as much as government bodies wanted a move away from Sterling, Brunei did not fully leave the Sterling area until 2001 (17 years after independence).

The Business of Decolonisation

Aside from natural resources and Sterling, there were other important economic interests within Brunei that benefited the metropole. The contribution to Sterling was part of a network of business connections that contributed to the enduring colonial relationship and Brunei's protracted independence. The Crown Agents and the City of London managed the Sultan's investment portfolio, with the City eager "to cream off commission, which was important to the financial houses."¹⁰⁸ This contributed to additional core-periphery links which maintained the Sultanate's protected status long past the 'Wind of Change' in the early-1960s.

¹⁰⁷ Record of Conversation between Lord Catto, Chairman and Chief Executive of Morgan Grenfell and Goronwy-Roberts, 21 July 1978, T 381/169.

¹⁰⁸ David Malcolm McBain interviewed for British Diplomatic Oral History Programme (BDOHP), April 2000, 33-38. Accessed from University of Cambridge website, <https://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/media/uploads/files/McBain.pdf> [accessed 10 September 2019].

The Crown Agents represented another layer of British interests in Brunei.¹⁰⁹ The Crown Agents rated Brunei “in the top three” of its investment activity by country in 1975, ranking only behind Abu Dhabi and Hong Kong. The Agents realised that the best approach was to establish a more permanent body in Brunei to facilitate business, which would eventually become the Brunei Investment Advisory Board. However, the Crown Agents were self-serving (that is, profits were distributed amongst themselves and the income they received was from a percentage of profits made). Hence, they advised the Sultan in 1974 to diversify away from Sterling with no consultation with the Treasury or the Bank of England.¹¹⁰ Even though the Bank and the Treasury would eventually advise the Sultan to diversify, the Crown Agents were keen to manage future investments and so encouraged diversification for Brunei to boost their own profits. Brunei’s investments were so beneficial to the Crown Agents that they realised what a “good wicket we were on.”¹¹¹ This also benefitted the Bank of England, however, as Crown Agents’ management of Sterling contributed to the Bank’s reserves, which in 1966 totalled £122 million.¹¹²

The Crown Agents’ eagerness to manage Bruneian investments took on further significance in the late-1970s as the body was in financial difficulty. By 1975 they had received a loan from the government for £85m, had immense funds (£160m) tied up in property and would have to write £97m off their operations for 1974.¹¹³ As was noted in the Commons, the Crown Agents acted with little regard for government and their account activities were “a saga of

¹⁰⁹ Sarah Stockwell has explored “connecting threads” during decolonisation and how the Crown Agents in Africa were one of many institutions that promoted British models, traditions and influence in decolonising and post-colonial states. ‘Exporting Britishness: Decolonization in Africa, the British State and its Clients’ in Miguel Banderia Jerónimo & António Costa Pinto (eds), *The Ends of the European Colonial Empires: Cases and Comparisons* (Basingstoke, 2015), 148-177.

¹¹⁰ Thomas Brimelow, Permanent Under-Secretary to Secretary of State, 7 March 1975, FCO 24/2104.

¹¹¹ High Commissioner, Brunei to L. Bevan, FCO, 13 February 1975, FCO 24/2104.

¹¹² Official Foreign Reserves of OSA Countries, December 1966, 2A69/4, BoE.

¹¹³ Note of a meeting between the Permanent Under-Secretary and the Chairman of the Crown Agents, 6 March 1975, FCO 24/2104.

incompetence and inaction.”¹¹⁴ This propelled the body to be interested in Brunei’s surplus funds and the management of the Sultanate’s investments. The enthusiasm with which the Agents managed investment provides another tier of influence over a remnant of Empire. Alongside private companies, such as BSP, the Crown Agents reveal a quasi-state or government-linked corporation connection to Brunei and another link which drove retention and made independence problematic.

Indeed, the agreement that Brunei would achieve independence at the end of 1983 led to the withdrawal of the Crown Agents’ access to its investment funds. In early-1983, the Sultan removed the £3bn invested through the Crown Agents and banned them from bidding for government contracts in Brunei indefinitely.¹¹⁵ Born from a misunderstanding between the UK and Brunei over the future of the Gurkha battalion within Brunei after independence, this cancellation was taken as the Sultan punishing the UK for independence and military withdrawal.¹¹⁶ The new £3bn contracts to manage the investment fund, the largest in the world at the time, were awarded to two US banks.¹¹⁷ The strain this placed on the Crown Agents was severe. The Sultan accounted for the majority of the body’s £1.5m profits and afterwards the Agents ran a net loss of £750,000 per annum, which necessitated the loss of 400 jobs.¹¹⁸ The connections between the metropole and the periphery had shrunk after Bruneian independence was enacted. With remnant status ended so too was a substantial economic association between the UK and Brunei. This saga of the Crown Agents only serves to underline the economic benefits which could be had from colonial retention (and especially for a UK economy struggling to hold its own in the trying global financial circumstances of the 1970s and 1980s).

¹¹⁴ Crown Agents, HoC, Volume 940, Column 731, 1 December 1977.

¹¹⁵ ‘Brunei ban on Crown Agents may be Lifted’, *Times*, 23 February 1984.

¹¹⁶ ‘Americans take over £3bn Brunei Role’, *Times*, 3 August 1983.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ ‘Crown Agents may shed 400 jobs to survive financial crisis’, *Times*, 1 October 1983

The 1970s oil shocks, which increased oil prices, attracted banks from the City of London to Brunei, with “a procession of investment advisors and merchant bankers... passing through Brunei seeking a share of the rapidly growing wealth.”¹¹⁹ The bankers’ interest in Brunei’s surplus funds had to be managed by *somebody*, and this promoted the Crown Agents’ interest in Brunei. British banks had confidence in investments that were managed by an arm of the UK government. This is also revealed in the “procession of bankers” who on arrival in Brunei visited the State Financial Officer, who was a former British civil servant. They never visited the Sultan as he was largely regarded as useless on financial matters.¹²⁰ In 1975, John Shuter, Head of the Crown Agents, visited Brunei with two representatives from the leading merchant bank, Rothschilds, and asked about how Rothschilds could “get into the business of managing Brunei reserves.”¹²¹ However, Rothschilds were doubtful about the Crown Agents’ competence and decided that Brunei was inappropriate given fears of anti-Semitism in an Islamic country. Concomitantly, however, Jardine Fleming (a Hong Kong-based investment bank) called upon John Lee, the financial officer, asking him about managing the Brunei surplus.¹²² Banking and investment interests in Brunei increased in the 1970s and the increase in oil prices made the Sultanate a more attractive prospect. The economic links built on the foundations of earlier and ongoing oil connections marked Brunei as a top investment opportunity. This maintained British links within the country while political divestment was occurring and symbolises again an ongoing British economic interest within the protectorate.

However, not all business opportunities-links were attractive. Third-party interest in the National Bank of Brunei was limited: only incorporated in 1965 there would have been only partial investment from oil funds prior to its establishment. There was also little interest from

¹¹⁹ Telegram from High Commissioner in Brunei to FCO, 20 February 1975, FCO 24/2104.

¹²⁰ McBain interview, BDOHP, April 2000.

¹²¹ High Commissioner, Brunei to P.A.B. Thomson, 24 February 1975, FCO 24/2104.

¹²² Ibid.

Gulf States to invest in Brunei, partially given the economic and political similarities, which would be “coals to Newcastle.”¹²³ In addition, the Treasury and Bank of England wanted the Crown Agents to be a step removed from the financial situation. The debts that the body had accrued and bad publicity in the UK made the Treasury and the Bank of England worried that the “Sultan would become disenchanted with the Crown Agents” jeopardising British commercial connections.¹²⁴ The Bank of England proposed that it should manage some of the money itself meaning that there was another “British foot in the door” but this would suggest a level of political endeavour in favour of retention of protected status when the British government was pushing independence.¹²⁵

Brunei looked favourably on UK business and banking. The development of this sector led the Bank of England to believe there were moves to make Brunei an offshore financial base, which was helped by the 30 per cent income tax rate (10 per cent lower than in Singapore, for example).¹²⁶ This allowed companies in Southeast Asia to route transactions through Brunei and benefit from low taxation under supervision from Sterling Area authorities providing financial stability. Further banking exploration was undertaken by the Hongkong & Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC) for the creation of a currency market in Brunei, which would allow non-residents of the Sterling Area to place US Dollar deposits in HSBC’s local branch.¹²⁷ While this was not intended to make Brunei a global sub-centre of the offshore oil market, it underscored a maturity in Brunei’s banking and financial services. With HSBC registered in Hong Kong (that is, in British-administered territory), expansion of HSBC’s operations would benefit London through a larger customer base and higher revenue. However, Brunei’s

¹²³ J.A. Davidson, High Commissioner to Brunei to W.J. Watts, Deputy High Commissioner, Singapore, 2 April 1975, FCO 24/2104.

¹²⁴ Note for the File by J.W. Moffatt, May 1975, FCO 24/2104.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

¹²⁶ C.W. Fogarty, British High Commission, Kuala Lumpur to the Treasury, 16 February 1971, 2A158/12, BoE.

¹²⁷ John Lee, State Financial Officer, Brunei to D.F. Stone, Bank of England, 12 July 1971, 2A158/12, BoE.

insistence on remaining entrenched in the Sterling Area posed problems for British banks in Brunei. Authorities did little to relax limits on holdings of non-Sterling currencies, which stymied banking because it prevented large switches out of sterling.¹²⁸

Even though links were created to develop financial relationships through private enterprise, trading relations between Britain and Brunei would change in the 1970s. With British accession to the EEC in 1973 Brunei became an Overseas Country and Territory (OCT) with import tariffs applied for goods and services from the UK.¹²⁹ After British accession to the EEC, all countries in the community operated equal tariffs on imports from and exports to Brunei. Set at 20 per cent, this tariff uniformity was established by the Lomé Convention of 1975 beginning a framework for aid and trade relations between the EEC and external countries in the Global South. Sir Omar, keen to maintain advantageous bilateral relations with the UK, was anxious to preserve British preference and was displeased with this adjustment.¹³⁰ Initially unaware that such an increase in tariffs would apply to Brunei, the Sultan was shocked by the suddenness of their application and the raising of the price of British automobiles, for example, by B\$1000.¹³¹ Sir Omar saw the imposition as “bureaucratic foolishness” and he wished to strengthen, not impede, trade with Britain. British officials, aggrieved at another twist in the Brunei relationship, acknowledged that preferential trade would have to end at some point with the long-term benefits from association with the EEC benefitting Britain far more than any preferences with Brunei.¹³² This provides direct evidence of the British government’s changing relationship with its dependent territories. The UK’s refusal to maintain Brunei’s beneficial

¹²⁸ Room B (Sterling Liaison) to Barber, July 1971, 2A158/12, BoE.

¹²⁹ The OCTs were established under the Treaty of Rome in 1957 and were not part of the EEC but were associated with it. The common external customs tariff did not apply to OCTs, but they could claim customs on goods imported from the EU on a non-discriminatory basis. European Commission website, https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/regions/overseas-countries-and-territories-octs/oct-eu-association_en [accessed 1 November 2018].

¹³⁰ P.A.B. Thomson to J. Gabriel, Department of Trade, 3 November 1975, FCO 24/2105.

¹³¹ ‘Custom Hike Shocks Houses’, *The Borneo Bulletin*, 30 October 1975, FCO 24/2105.

¹³² Gabriel to P.A.B. Thomson, 5 November 1975, FCO 24/2105.

trading link shows the shrinking financial dependency that the UK had on Brunei. This is representative of how industry and Europe was more important to the British government by the 1970s and how changing international considerations dictated bilateral relations over time. Here, EEC benefits far outweighed the advantage of one dependent territory, and this was an important factor in Britain forfeiting its imperial connections for closer economic ties with Europe. Though in this case economic disengagement was taking place in the later 1970s, not the late-1950s and early-1960s as argued by Holland and Cain/Hopkins.

With banking and the Crown Agents' financial activities providing increasingly attractive prospects in Brunei from 1963, it is significant that British agreement to join the EEC in 1973 would have profound effects on Brunei. While overseas banking commitments endured, and the Crown Agents continued to manage reserve funds, trade was hampered by tariffs placed on goods. Coming in 1975, four-years before the final negotiation on independence, it seemed that British association with Brunei was time limited. Prospects lay in continental Europe with retraction of commitments in Southeast Asia. This might suggest that British industrial interests were being given greater priority than financial ones. Shell, however, provided a lasting link with its 'neo-colonial' role in extracting and exporting gas and oil.¹³³ The economic (and also military) links that were maintained after independence indicate the limited impact of decolonisation in Brunei. Independence changed things in name only, and the financial connections that endured (albeit without the Crown Agents) suggest a British neo-colonial role begging the question did Britain really ever leave its last protectorate of empire?

¹³³ Although, as demonstrated above, Shell's sense of exposure in 1963 after Brunei's refusal to join Malaysia and its frustrations with the 1968 production agreement contradict the notion that there was a peaceful relationship between the oil giant and the Sultanate's regime. Moreover, as we have also seen, from the 1970s Shell shared its exploitation rights with Japanese interests, further emphasising the limits to a neo-colonial role in Brunei.

Westminster, Whitehall and Brunei

Changes between Conservative and Labour governments played a significant role in the delayed decolonisation of Brunei. The negotiations in the 1960s and 1970s can be directly mapped onto changes in government which does suggest (in the case of Brunei at least) that party-political persuasion had an important influence on the nature and timing of decolonisation. The 1963 Malaysia proposals under Macmillan's Conservative government were renegotiated by Wilson's Labour government in 1968 and which pushed for full independence. But the Sultan delayed negotiations until 1970. This was advantageous to the Sultan as the new Conservative government maintained protected status with a reduced defence commitment. The agreements of the late-1970s, which formalised independence occurred under the second Wilson and Callaghan governments, which again were amended for defence purposes by Thatcher's Conservative government in 1983. This clearly shows the perspectives of each political party, and while Macmillan's aim was to federate Brunei with Malaysia, Conservative governments generally maintained the protectorate link with Labour governments wishing to divest from overseas commitments.

The 1966 decision to end the agreement with Brunei was announced by the Labour government which pushed for full independence by 1970. This corresponds with Labour's wider foreign policy, which was mindful of defence costs and the embarrassment of ongoing colonial relationships. The full garrison would be withdrawn in September 1968 with an accompanying push for constitutional reform under Labour's plan and this fell in line with the Wilson government's east of Suez military withdrawal where overseas defence costs were considered too high to bear.¹³⁴ In light of Wilson's 1964 victory, which promoted a more ethical foreign policy, the offer of independence came with caveats of greater political development and

¹³⁴ A.H. Reed, head of Far East Department, CO to Secretary of State, 6 October 1967, FCO 24/224.

democratic freedom within the Sultanate.¹³⁵ The late-1960s push for Brunei's independence came at the end of *Konfrontasi*, with complete termination of lingering defence agreements part of the east of Suez withdrawal policy. It was also impressed on the Sultan that there must be democratic reform in the state, which had stalled after the 1962 insurrection, and this should be part and parcel of independence from the UK.¹³⁶

Nevertheless, Heath's victory in 1970 changed the relationship and overturned Labour's aim of independence. The quick change in policy made the Sultan suspicious as he initially thought that he was being beguiled by the British government. Some of this distrust was attributed by British mandarins to the Sultan "not taking his pills", but more likely was his fundamental suspicion of HMG, especially after previous Labour proposals wanted to end the protective relationship as soon and as far as possible.¹³⁷ However, the re-election of Wilson in 1974 immediately changed government policy to end the colonial relationship which would protect British economic interests in a pro-Western stable state. On re-election, the Labour administration served a one-year notice to review the 1971 agreement with negotiations starting in 1976 to prepare Brunei for independence. An agreement was finally achieved in January 1979. The Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation signed in 1979 extended the presence of the Gurkha battalion until December 1983 (the date of independence and eight years after notice was served by the British government).¹³⁸

While the 1979 agreement absolved Britain from further commitments in Southeast Asia past 1984, the election of Margaret Thatcher in May 1979 brought to power a Conservative regime that was more sympathetic to the Sultan and his requirements. The 1979 agreement was

¹³⁵ Vickers, *Labour's Foreign Policy*, 58.

¹³⁶ 'Brunei Staves off Freedom', *Singapore Herald*, 25 November 1970, FCO 24/729.

¹³⁷ A.R. Adair, High Commissioner, Brunei to Wilford and Aiers, FCO, 4 December 1970, FCO 24/729.

¹³⁸ Goronwy-Roberts to Sultan of Brunei, 28 September 1978, 93/214/1A8, BoE.

amended in 1983 to provide a continued presence for the Gurkha battalion and for use of jungle training by the SAS and Hong Kong-based regiments.¹³⁹ Thatcher's renewal of defence commitments suited the UK's foreign policy of the 1980s, with the Falklands War seeming to highlight the need for a military presence across the globe. The re-establishment of a Gurkha battalion rejuvenated the bilateral relationship after formal political decolonisation.

Westminster's priorities concerning imperial commitments are made explicit when examining Brunei. The Labour governments' push for independence can be understood in their foreign policy preferences which promoted human rights and self-determination but also involved a pragmatic defence policy during the first Wilson administration. Protection of a small state in Southeast Asia was out of kilter with the policy of military retraction east of Suez. Conservative governments positioned themselves as maintaining the relationship with Brunei, but this also must be viewed through the prism of their foreign policy perspectives. With Heath committed to revising the east of Suez decision, and factoring in British economic problems and the Sultan's support of the Sterling Area, meant that rushed independence was not practical. The Conservative government of Margaret Thatcher even relied on the Sultan after political independence. Economic problems in 1985 resulted in Thatcher asking the Sultan to convert US\$10 million of its reserves into Sterling to support British banks - something he agreed to straight away.¹⁴⁰ The Conservative Party's maintenance of the Sultan's position is important for highlighting how political allegiances in the metropole influenced developments at the periphery. Independence was delayed as the change in government from Labour to Tory was

¹³⁹ UN Decolonisation, December 1983, UN Website, http://www.un.org/en/decolonization/pdf/decolonization/decon_num_20.pdf [accessed 1 February 2019]. The agreement was amended by David Cameron's government in 2015 which reaffirmed the deployment of a Gurkha battalion in Brunei. HMG Exchange of Notes, February 2015, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419724/TS.7.2015_Web_Acc.pdf [accessed 1 February 2019].

¹⁴⁰ K.U. Menon, 'Brunei Darussalam in 1987: Modernizing Autocracy', *Asian Survey*, 28, 2 (1988): 257. This was also widely reported in the press in 1987 alongside the US\$10 million that was lent to the Contras at the request of President Reagan. In 1985 the Sultan also purchased the Dorchester Hotel in London for £43m.

favourable to what the Sultan wanted, and his support of the UK after independence indicates his affection for Conservative governments. Aside from economic and financial links, political connections were important in determining Brunei's constitutional trajectory.

Much of this imperial-level complexity can also be explored through the differences between Whitehall departments. As we saw earlier, there were differing attitudes in the Treasury, the FCO, and Downing Street over how to approach Brunei. The economic stakes meant the Treasury had a larger voice in policy matters than other departments. This was due to British domestic problems, which presented a dilemma to governments in the 1970s. Forceful resolution of the Brunei issue in Britain's favour was impeded by imperial economic circumstances (even for Labour governments). The UK financial situation in the 1970s was bleak and the Sultan's massive Sterling reserves supported a currency that was beset by problems. The end of the Bretton Woods system ended Sterling as an international currency and the movement to a free-floating currency hampered the pound further.¹⁴¹ The original proposal of unilateral withdrawal had to be abandoned in 1976 as there was "little prospect of sterling becoming stronger, particularly since the TUC [Trades Union Congress] conference, which will hopefully approve a pay limit policy. In these circumstances a unilateral move would endanger these sterling holdings."¹⁴² This indicates that slowing down full decolonisation of Brunei was actually preferable in economic terms and the UK government were just as reliant on Brunei as much as Brunei depended on the UK. This in turn produced more involvement across the departmental spectrum and more disagreements over which

¹⁴¹ Schenk, *Decline of Sterling*, 357-393.

¹⁴² A.C. Galsworthy, Private Secretary to Goronwy-Roberts to Male, Assistant Under-secretary for Asia, 28 April 1976, FCO 24/2266. In order to slow the rise of inflation the UK government brought in an incomes policy in agreement with the TUC to limit wage growth. This reduced the average wage growth from 27.6 per cent in 1975 to 13.9 per cent in 1976. This was to reduce pressure on Sterling which fell 25 per cent against the dollar in nine months resulting in the Labour government requesting an IMF loan. See '1976 Sterling Crisis Details Made Public', *Financial Times*, 9 December 2005, <https://www.ft.com/content/93cb0260-68f4-11da-bd30-0000779e2340> [accessed September 2019].

interests should be prioritised in policymaking, serving to slow up a decisive break or significant change of relationship with Brunei. This was again in contemporaneous contrast to the Falklands where, as we saw in Chapter 3, a lack of significant financial value to the UK and acute strains on the public purse induced Whitehall-wide alarm at the implications of the Shackleton Report, and transfer to Argentina continued to be explored.

The discussion of the Imperial factor in Brunei has examined economic and financial connections to highlight their importance in maintaining the imperial link. As Brunei was never a crown colony, and after 1959 Britain only had influence over its external affairs, there was no unilateral policy towards Brunei. While British governments wanted to politically divest, protracted independence occurred as the Sultan had economic leverage over the UK through his large Sterling holdings in London. This meant independence could not be forced and the protracted process created further financial links, adding additional layers cementing the protective relationship. Moreover, the difference between political parties indicated differing perspectives on Brunei and, while stasis might have been preferred by Conservative ministers, that did not apply to Labour Cabinets. Even so, metropolitan financial crisis in the late-1960s and in the mid-1970s also induced a pragmatic approach to Brunei under Labour governments. The Imperial level of analysis has shown a complex picture with many tiers to the Anglo-Bruneian relationship which all contributed to the Sultanate remaining a protected state two decades past 1963.

International Factors in Brunei's Delayed Decolonisation

The International aspects of Brunei's retention as a protected state are more difficult to identify and determine. The Sultanate had limited concern in US-UK relations and Southeast Asian geopolitics (aside from during *Konfrontasi*). The UN was not as loud over Brunei as it was for the Falkland Islands and Brunei did not attain the same degree of criticism as the BIOT did. Nevertheless, the future of Brunei was influenced by regional politics through *Konfrontasi*, which can be examined through a Cold War lens. Highlighting the regional tensions induced by Indonesian antipathy towards the Malaysia project and how that influenced the retention of Brunei further emphasises the fear of spreading communism in Southeast Asia. The east of Suez decision and defence costs also situate Brunei within British international power politics. While the retraction east of Suez was a British political decision in this section our analysis will draw attention to its wider impact in Southeast Asia. Likewise, the UN's role provides an intragovernmental dimension and given that Brunei was a protected state regarded as an ongoing form of colonialism it was monitored by the Committee of 24.

Brunei in Southeast Asian Geopolitics

The Federation of Malaysia was born on 16 September 1963, yet with the arrival of the new state came protest from Indonesia resulting in the Indonesia-Malaysia Confrontation (*Konfrontasi*). This was an undeclared war along the border between East Malaysia and Kalimantan (Indonesian Borneo). President Sukarno's aim was to unravel the Malaysian federation in opposition to what he saw as a devious plot to create pro-Western Malaysia undertaken by the "henchmen of neo-imperialism and neo-colonialism."¹⁴³ Brunei, a small and vulnerable state in Southeast Asia, was affected by *Konfrontasi* because Indonesia viewed it as

¹⁴³ Relations with Brunei, July 1963, FCO 141/12687.

inextricably linked to the US and the western side in the Cold War.¹⁴⁴ Brunei's rejection of Malaysia in 1963 frustrated plans for a large federation in the region to counter communist influence. Rather, Brunei remained as a protectorate and Britain became responsible for the country's defence during an unpredictable conflict. Although not joining Malaysia, Brunei was still a target of Sukarno's ire because the Sultanate remained an enclave of western colonialism in his view and with a border with Kalimantan.

Konfrontasi formally started in early 1963 with Sukarno's initial aims to stall the creation of Malaysia. Yet, the British government "was strongly opposed to" any delay in the 'Grand Design' and was eager to divest itself from its Southeast Asian imperial commitments.¹⁴⁵ With the recent Cold War crisis in the Congo, and a changing international political climate reasoning that colonial rule was redundant, Britain retained influence in Malaysia through the creation of a strong state in a sensitive region which was susceptible to Sino-Soviet pressure.¹⁴⁶ Far from stalling Malaysia, Confrontation strengthened the need for a federation to stop Sukarno "absorbing the three Borneo territories [Sarawak, Sabah and Brunei]."¹⁴⁷ The war, argues Subritzky, was a Pyrrhic victory for the UK in which it exposed British vulnerability in Southeast Asia, and actually aided military withdrawal from Southeast Asia quicker than originally envisaged.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁴ Subritzky, 'Britain, *Konfrontasi*, and the End of Empire', 209.

¹⁴⁵ Telegram from FO to Washington, 3 August 1963, FCO 141/13035.

¹⁴⁶ On the Congo Crisis and linkages between the Cold War and decolonisation which provide a comparable situation to the creation of Malaysia see John Kent, 'The Neo-Colonialism of Decolonisation: Katangan Secession and the Bringing of the Cold War to the Congo', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 45, 1 (2017): 93-130.

¹⁴⁷ Telegram from London to Governor, Jesselton, 3 August 1963, FCO 141/13035.

¹⁴⁸ Subritzky, 'Britain, *Konfrontasi*, and the End of Empire', 209.

It was a costly and lengthy war for Britain with the deployment of over 54,000 servicemen.¹⁴⁹ Many of these were based in Brunei due to its proximity to Indonesia, and the Sultan was aware that “Brunei was deemed invaluable as a base for meeting Indonesian Confrontation.”¹⁵⁰ However, the conflict presented the British with limited international support. The US government was unwilling to explicitly support the British in the region as doing so would turn Sukarno against them with a fear that he would orientate more and more to the Sino-Soviet bloc. Additionally, while the US was keen for the Malaysian Federation to succeed, Washington regarded it as very much a British issue in which the US should not interfere.¹⁵¹ This was because the US government provided the Indonesians with US\$278 million in economic aid before 1963 in order to stave off communist influence and Washington regarded Indonesia as an important country in the region for its policy of containment.¹⁵² Tun Abdul Razak, Deputy Prime Minister of Malaya, in a conversation with President Kennedy, explained that Indonesian insecurity was born from jealousy over Malayan prosperity after independence, which “had been a blow to Indonesian pride.”¹⁵³ With US policy in Southeast Asia directed at Indonesia, and the escalation of the Vietnam War under Kennedy and Johnson, there was little capital left to spend on Malaysia and *Konfrontasi* which left Britain largely responsible for Anglophone Southeast Asia. The strategic importance of Southeast Asia did not go unnoticed amongst US policy-makers. As Washington’s ambassador in Jakarta stressed, the “vast riches of this archipelago [Indonesia], its sea lanes and harbors, its natural resources, and well proved ability of its people to survive under hardships of both war and peace, importance of keeping these resources from international Communist domination is, I am certain, vital to West and

¹⁴⁹ David Easter, *Britain and the Confrontation with Indonesia, 1960-66* (London, 2004), 5.

¹⁵⁰ ‘Brunei Rejects Hints at Joining Malaysia’, *Times*, 26 August 1965.

¹⁵¹ Special National Intelligence Estimate, *FRUS, 1961-1963*, Vol. XXIII, Southeast Asia, 20 February 1963.

¹⁵² A. Roseman, ‘US Commitment in Southeast Asia’, *Current History*, 54 (1968): 7-14.

¹⁵³ Memorandum of Conversation between Razak and Kennedy, 24 April 1963, *FRUS, 1961-1963*, Vol. XXIII, Southeast Asia, 24 April 1963.

free Asia alike.”¹⁵⁴ This did eventually create a synergy between the US and the UK by 1964. As Edward Peck, Assistant Under-Secretary of State at the FO, put it to Washington: “what South Vietnam is to you, Malaysia is to us”, and “jointly we stand, divided we fall.”¹⁵⁵ Moreover, as we saw in the previous section on the Imperial factor, Japanese energy interests were deeply concerned by potential instability in Brunei, and the economic revival and prosperity of Japan linked to Southeast Asian markets and raw material supplies had been a touchstone of US Cold War containment policy since the early-1950s.¹⁵⁶

This probably made Brunei harder to decolonise. The global Cold War meant that British bases in the region contributed to stopping the advance of communism. With Brunei a British protectorate, it would have been necessary to maintain some control in the aftermath of Malaysian federation in September 1963 and Brunei’s non-incorporation. Examining Southeast Asia through this lens emphasises anxiety concerning the spread of communism. Indonesian support and funding of left-wing nationalists in Brunei, leading to the 1962 insurrection, was central to the internal Bruneian situation after 1963 and provides an intersection between foreign policy, geopolitics and decolonisation.¹⁵⁷

Drawing a connection between Brunei and *Konfrontasi* raises the issue of Bruneian security. Troubles in the region threatened the protectorate and highlighted how fragile the Brunei state was especially given its oil supplies (to pro-Western Japan especially). Indonesian aims for

¹⁵⁴ Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State, 1 March 1963, *FRUS, 1961-1963*, Vol. XXIII, Southeast Asia.

¹⁵⁵ Peck minute, 29 January 1964, FO 371/175090 cited in Matthew Jones, *Conflict and Confrontation in South East Asia, 1961–1965: Britain, the United States, Indonesia and the Creation of Malaysia* (Cambridge, 2002), 58.

¹⁵⁶ Aaron Forsberg, *America and the Japanese Miracle: The Cold War Context of Japan’s Post-war Economic Revival, 1950-1960* (Chapel Hill, 2000), 40-60; Robert McMahon, *The Limits of Empire: The United States and Southeast Asia since World War II* (New York, 1999), 75.

¹⁵⁷ See John Sidel, ‘The Fate of Nationalism in the New States: Southeast Asia in Comparative Historical Perspective’, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 54, 1 (2012): 139-142.

control of northern Borneo also included attacks on oil installations in Brunei.¹⁵⁸ Poulgrain's conspiratorial analysis of a nexus between oil, the Cold War and intelligence (with an Anglo-American plot with BSP to keep Brunei separate from Malaysia to secure profits from oil extraction) has already been called into question in this chapter, given Shell's concerns over security in the long-term.¹⁵⁹ Nevertheless, Brunei's decision to not join Malaysia meant Britain had to defend the small state against external aggression ensuring that the Sultan continued to rely on British protection during the 1960s. This resulted in the Sultan being unwilling to relinquish external defence when it came to renegotiation in 1968. His fear of another insurrection along the line of the 1962 revolt or a revival of Indonesian aggression resulted in his increased reliance on British support, especially as political, financial, and military assistance had been provided by Indonesia to the Brunei rebels in 1962.¹⁶⁰

However, far from thwarting political integration, the 1962 insurrection brought the other Borneo territories closer to Malaya; ironically, the instability produced greater cohesion for the enlarged Federation.¹⁶¹ The creation of Malaysia on 16 September 1963 was met with anger and riots outside the British embassy in Jakarta and communist-inspired riots in Sabah and Sarawak where leftists were keen to capitalise on resentment towards Malaysia.¹⁶² In the long-term *Konfrontasi* failed with a *coup d'état* effectively ousting Sukarno in 1965, and eventually producing a pro-Western and anti-Communist state in Indonesia. This provided an overwhelming relief for the US and British governments.¹⁶³ In turn, this presented opportunities for divestment of the colonial relationship. With greater stability in the region,

¹⁵⁸ Easter, *Britain and Confrontation with Indonesia*, 92.

¹⁵⁹ Poulgrain, *Genesis of Konfrontasi*.

¹⁶⁰ Special National Intelligence Estimate, *FRUS, 1961-1963*, Vol. XXIII, Southeast Asia, 20 February 1963.

¹⁶¹ Majid, *Rebellion in Brunei*, 163.

¹⁶² 'Future States of Malaysia Celebrate', *Times*, 2 September 1963.

¹⁶³ Wm. Roger Louis, 'The Dissolution of the British Empire in the Era of Vietnam', *American Historical Review*, 107, 1 (2002): 2.

future policy could be explored concerning how Brunei would position itself and become independent.

Aside from the Cold War, 1960s defence interests and east of Suez policy had an effect on Brunei and its association with Britain after 1963. In 1962, Viscount Montgomery, the celebrated World War Two general, and a former Chief of the Imperial General Staff and NATO Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe, declared that “the Atlantic is safe, Europe is safe and the Mediterranean is safe: the potential danger spots lie elsewhere, in the Near East, the Middle East and the Far East.”¹⁶⁴ With awareness of future trouble spots, the British government identified defence and security needs in Southeast Asia. The 1962 Defence White Paper reaffirmed the “interest in the preservation of peace and stability in Southeast Asia”, which would now have to be secured increasingly in concert with the Australian and New Zealand governments.¹⁶⁵

Indeed, rising defence costs in the 1960s meant practicality could not meet expectations. There had to be balance “between the pressing need to restore our own economy, and the value to us...of being able to exert our influence abroad.”¹⁶⁶ This directly impacted Brunei which maintained a Gurkha battalion and under the east of Suez withdrawal plans this would have to be withdrawn with the Sultan maintaining his own defence force. Since the end of *Konfrontasi* in 1966, Brunei contributed approximately half the cost of the Gurkha battalion, which rose to £778,000 per annum in 1968.¹⁶⁷ In April that year, as part of the Wilson government’s negotiations, Sultan Hassanal declared that he was willing to pay the full Gurkha battalion’s

¹⁶⁴ The Statement on Defence, Viscount Montgomery, HoL, 21 March 1962 cited in Stuart Croft & Peter Dorman (eds), *Britain and Defence 1945-2000: Policy Re-evaluation* (Abingdon, 2013), 38.

¹⁶⁵ The White Paper on Government Expenditure, 1962-63, T 233/2347.

¹⁶⁶ Minute of Defence and Oversea Committee, 14 October 1964, CAB 148/4 cited in Subritzky, ‘Britain, *Konfrontasi* and the End of Empire’, 219.

¹⁶⁷ Secretary of State’s visit to Brunei, April 1968, FCO 24/237.

cost which would total over £1m.¹⁶⁸ This would maintain a crucial defence link with the UK and was a factor in driving the Sultan's wish to continue the imperial relationship.

The 1968 re-negotiating period to amend the 1959 agreement included an assessment of Brunei's defence costs as "the future of the relationship would have to be reconsidered in the light of Southeast Asian withdrawal."¹⁶⁹ This would have to "liquidate amicably our current obligations whilst safeguarding our interests (chiefly oil and Brunei's sterling reserves)" thus not jeopardising commercial and financial links with the state.¹⁷⁰ In light of this, the Sultan reconsidered his original offer and pushed for a defence arrangement that was shared between Britain and Brunei.¹⁷¹ This was a burden too large for HMG which unequivocally told the Sultan that defence expenditure must be met by Brunei itself.¹⁷² By May 1970, the Gurkha battalion was being prepared for withdrawal by the end of the year with no talks to be opened up on defence policy before the UK's general election in June. Heath's surprise win changed the agreement with a defence policy needed in Southeast Asia to protect the region from communist influence. Indeed, as the Wilson government had appreciated in July 1967, a full withdrawal by the 1970s would give the communist forces "immense encouragement...in Malaysia and Singapore."¹⁷³

International politics influenced Brunei's defence policy and its situation in Southeast Asia. The reliance on British defence can be understood by *Konfrontasi* as Britain was obliged to protect the state, making the Sultan unwilling to relinquish the battalion in case insecurity in

¹⁶⁸ Record of Meeting between the Commonwealth Secretary, Sultan Hassanal and Sir Omar, 7 April 1968, FCO 15/288.

¹⁶⁹ Confidential letter from the Commonwealth Office, 31 July 1968, FCO 24/218.

¹⁷⁰ Brief to the United Nations, 5 September 1968, FCO 24/218.

¹⁷¹ Meeting between Lord Shepherd, Minister of State, and Sultan of Brunei, 7 April 1970, FCO 24/730.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Cabinet Paper on Far East Defence: Consultation with the Governments of Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia and Singapore, 4 July 1967, CAB 129/131/16.

the region reoccurred. Maintenance of the defence link was another layer in the imperial connection to Brunei and its position in the Cold War as it could not “remain insulated from the uncertain gusts in which the winds of change blow through south-east Asia waters.”¹⁷⁴ While an important factor as a vehicle for maintaining core-periphery connections, the intersection with Imperial factors means the International level of analysis is limited in explaining Brunei’s ‘remnant of Empire’ status after 1963. Defence policy and its acceptable costs were decided in London and thus cannot be removed from the Imperial dimension explaining Brunei’s protracted decolonisation.

Brunei at the UN

Brunei joined the UN in September 1984, nine months after independence from Britain.¹⁷⁵ Relations between the UN and the UK concerning Brunei were never as difficult as the other case studies in this thesis, mainly because British government policy from 1963 was to fully decolonise Brunei at some point. While there had always been British intention to give colonies independence when they desired it under the UN principle of self-determination, Brunei was decolonised in contravention of the Sultan’s desire for a continued relationship. This placed the UN in a different position. The population had strictly speaking never been colonised because Brunei was a protected state and there was no unequivocal push for decolonisation on the part of the Bruneian people. Nor did Brunei have rival sovereignty claims. A territorial dispute did exist with the East Malaysian state of Sarawak over the Sultanate’s territorial claims to Limbang - the small delta that separates the two parts of Brunei. In the 1960s and 1970s, Sultan Saifuddin publicly announced his desire for Limbang to return to Brunei and made

¹⁷⁴ ‘Sultan in Talks on Brunei’, *Times*, 21 September 1968.

¹⁷⁵ The reason for the gap was that Brunei could not join during the Thirty-Eighth General Assembly Session and had to wait until September 1984 for the Thirty-Ninth Session.

several provocative visits to villages in the region.¹⁷⁶ This dispute was settled in 2009 through a wider Exchange of Notes on both land and maritime borders, but for 50 years it proved a thorny issues between both countries.¹⁷⁷ Even so, the Limbang sovereignty question was not of sufficient magnitude to prevent decolonisation compared with the Falklands and Argentina's claims.

Partially the UN was confused by Brunei's ambiguous status as a sovereign state. With Britain after 1971 responsible only for Bruneian foreign affairs, its international status was never clear. The Queen's representative in the state was the High Commissioner *in* Brunei, not *to* Brunei. The latter would have been the case if Brunei was an internationally-recognised state. Citizens also travelled on British passports even though the Sultanate accredited its own Dutch consul and issued its own currency.¹⁷⁸ The disruption of British long-term ambitions for Brunei by a tenacious Sultan, who did not want to relinquish the quasi-colonial relationship, meant that UN policy was vague. The fact that residents were not colonial peoples but also used British passports complicated Bruneian matters at the UN. This was evident in the UN's December 1975 Draft Resolution, which pushed for Brunei to be a fully-independent state under Resolution 1514 thus securing Bruneian inalienable rights under self-determination.¹⁷⁹ However, UK diplomats challenged this notion of non-sovereignty as Brunei had only ever been a protectorate and had "freely chosen to maintain the Treaty relationship."¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁶ Simon Francis, 'Brunei Darussalam: Stresses and Uncertainty 50 Years on from the 1959 Agreement with Britain', *Asian Affairs*, 40, 2 (2009): 199.

¹⁷⁷The Exchange of Notes declaration can be found at:

http://www.marineregions.org/documents/https://www.kln.gov.my_archive_content.pdf [accessed 8 February 2020]. The dispute was partly resolved by the increasing Islamisation of Brunei allowing Limbang to serve as a "safety valve" for Brunei residents, where "fruits forbidden under Islam can be enjoyed." Francis, 'Brunei Darussalam', 200.

¹⁷⁸ Michael Leifer, 'Decolonisation and International Status: The Experience of Brunei', *International Affairs*, 54, 2 (1978): 245.

¹⁷⁹ Resolution 3424, Question of Brunei, 8 December 1975,

<https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/001/37/IMG/NR000137.pdf?OpenElement> [accessed 7 February 2019].

¹⁸⁰ UK Mission at the UN to FCO, 8 December 1975, FCO 24/2095.

The UN's supervision of colonial matters angered the Sultan who viewed the UN's interference as diametrically opposed to his wish to remain a British protected state. In bilateral talks in 1977, which were moving Brunei to full independence, the Sultan was aggrieved by UN intervention "pushing him" towards full sovereignty.¹⁸¹ The British, as with the UN, disliked the ongoing dependent relationship, as it was untenable in prevailing circumstances with it hard for the UK to defend monarchical autocracy and protected status to international bodies.¹⁸² This created a rare synergy between the UN and the UK on a colonial matter. British policy aligned with the UN's to push for independence and in 1977 when the Sultan requested that the relationship be extended for 15 years, the British replied that they could not justify that to the UN.¹⁸³ This was a divergence from the UN's position on other dependent territories which caused the ire of the UK, especially in dealings with the Committee of 24 which Britain left in the early-1970s. The rare consensus signified how much the British government was aiming to end the formal political association, while maintaining economic links. Ending the formal relationship was in accordance with UN principles on colonialism (although Britain did not want to freely admit it that adhered to UN policy).

Nevertheless, while interests aligned over the independence of Brunei, the Sultanate's international oil sales embarrassed the British government at the UN. With the Iranian Revolution halting oil sales to South Africa in 1979 the shortfall was partly made up with Bruneian crude oil. Even though no formal economic sanctions were ever proposed at the UN against South Africa, the arms-sale embargo and Security Council Resolution S/4300 condemned Apartheid politics.¹⁸⁴ By the late-1970s, Brunei was the only country in the world

¹⁸¹ Record of Conversation between Minister of State, FCO and the Sultan of Brunei, 9 June 1977, T 381/169.

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Margaret Doxey, 'International Sanctions: A Framework for Analysis with Special Reference to Southern Africa', *International Organization*, 26, 3 (1972): 537.

that was openly selling oil to South Africa from BSP to Sasol, the South African fuel and chemicals company.¹⁸⁵ Sasol also directed oil to Southern Rhodesia so it was likely that Bruneian oil was reaching the illegal regime after bunkering and processing in South Africa.¹⁸⁶ Southern Rhodesia was under mandatory economic sanctions from the UN. These embargoes were opposed by many in the UK Conservative Party and were flouted by many governments including France, Portugal, South Africa and Iran, as well as by British multinational companies (including Shell).¹⁸⁷ In 1975, there were 70 cases of oil tankers sailing to South Africa from Brunei delivering nearly nine million tons of refined oil.¹⁸⁸ This was embarrassing for the British government, with a British-registered company providing oil that was supplied to pariah states in Southern Africa. Britain was depicted as violating sanctions against Rhodesia which the UN was attempting to orchestrate and implement.

Britain was also embarrassed by the Sultan at the UN as limited constitutional development pushed UN criticism of Brunei's political status under British protection. By the late-1970s, parallels were drawn between Brunei and Oman (which stopped being a British protectorate in 1970 but still enjoyed close economic and military ties to Britain). In contrast to Oman, however, Brunei remained an "embarrassment to the British at the UN" and, hence, the Sultan should "look at Oman very carefully."¹⁸⁹ It was noted that after full independence, Oman

¹⁸⁵ Bernard Rivers and Martin Bailey, 'How Oils Seeps into South Africa', *Business and Society Review*, 39, 4 (1979): 53.

¹⁸⁶ Letter from Bailey, 11 May 1975, FCO 58/1600.

¹⁸⁷ Oil sanctions were implemented from December 1966 through the Beira Patrol, which blocked oil being exported to Rhodesia via Mozambique. The sanctions largely failed and exposed splits in the Conservative Party between the right-wing Monday Club, which backed lifting sanctions, and those who backed sanctions. See Mark Stuart, 'A Party in Three Pieces: The Conservative Split over Rhodesian Oil Sanctions, 1965', *Contemporary British History*, 16, 1 (2002): 51-88; Hickson, *Conservative Right Since 1945*, 36; Christopher R.W. Dietrich, 'The Sustenance of Salisbury in the era of Decolonization: The Portuguese Politics of Neutrality and the Rhodesian Oil Embargo, 1965-7', *International History Review*, 35, 2 (2013): 235-255; Andrew Cohen, 'Lorrho and Oil Sanctions against Rhodesia in the 1960s', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 37, 4 (2011): 715-730.

¹⁸⁸ Richard Hengeveld and Jaap Rodenburg, *Embargo: Apartheid's Oil Secrets Revealed* (Amsterdam, 1995), 90.

¹⁸⁹ Telegram from D. Hawley, High Commissioner to Malaysia, 17 April 1978, FCO 15/2405.

maintained many British advisors as well as officers and this model of limited decolonisation could be applied to Brunei.¹⁹⁰ This disengagement from Brunei and consensus with the UN was helped by lack of friction with Brunei's Southeast Asian neighbours. In 1973, Malaysian agents engineered a jail-break by detained members of the pro-democracy and pro-independence PRB and, fearing "negotiations failing if there was too much shouting on the sidelines", UK ministers rebuked the Malaysian government in 1976 for seemingly supporting the PRB's cause at the UN.¹⁹¹ By 1978, however, talks to end the protection of the sultanate considered the opinion of the Malaysian government. The acceptance of Malaysian involvement by Sultan Hassanal was an important consideration when independence was coming, and Malaysia's willingness to explore Bruneian entry to the UN pleased the Sultan and the FCO as it indicated a stable geopolitical outlook in Southeast Asia. Alongside this, a 1978 assassination plot against the Sultan was swiftly dealt with by Datuk Hussein Onn, Malaysia's Prime Minister, through the arrest of alleged conspirators in Limbang inspiring confidence in the Sultan.¹⁹² These actions allowed Bruneian decolonisation to be actively explored. The acceptance of Brunei by Malaysia (and likewise the Indonesian government) meant the responsibility of maintaining external protection was not as necessary by the late-1970s.¹⁹³

Preceding this, after the Heath government's renegotiation of the 1959 treaty, the FCO developed ways Brunei could explore UN committee memberships (while not being a member

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ D.E. Brown, 'Brunei on the Morrow of Independence', *Asian survey*, 24, 2 (1983): 202; Record of meeting between the Acting Prime Minister and the Minister of State, Kuala Lumpur, 14 January 1976, FCO 15/2164.

¹⁹² Talks between Sultan Hassanal and the FCO, 25 June 1978, FCO 15/2406.

¹⁹³ The founding of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in August 1967 drew countries together after Confrontation. It established the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in the affairs of member states and was designed to accommodate Indonesia's claim to primacy without control. While Brunei did not join until 1984, the regional geopolitical situation had clearly become more settled by the 1970s. Nicholas Tarling, *Status and Security in Southeast Asian State Systems* (London, 2013), 132. Additionally, both Malaysia and Indonesia renounced claims to Brunei in 1978 which provided suitable geopolitical grounds to move Brunei to full independence. Brown, 'Morrow of Independence', 202.

of the General Assembly) as a way to integrate the sultanate into diplomatic organisations. The main priority was the International Labour Organisation, which promoted social rights and working standards, and was believed to be of “direct benefit to Brunei.”¹⁹⁴ Secondly, the World Health Organisation (WHO) was proposed as a vehicle to promote development, with the WHO anxious to help Brunei. While Brunei was not a fully independent sovereign state, the British government was exploring means to ready the state for independence highlighting the reduced colonial role which Britain desired by the 1970s. These overtures towards the UN allowed Brunei to begin diplomatic association before full independence and to prepare for membership of these bodies.

Through examining the UN role, it is evident that Brunei did not follow similar routes to other dependent territories. There was no attempted advancement of decolonisation as there was in the Falklands or denouncement of colonialism as with the BIOT. Moreover, Britain largely agreed with full independence and the UK by and large supported the UN’s desire for Brunei to be fully sovereign. This shows the differences between territories that remained, emphasising that no common policy could apply to all colonies. Hence, UK officials deployed the vagaries of the UN’s concept of self-determination to maintain sovereignty over the Falkland Islands but simultaneously worked with the UN to aid the transfer of power in Brunei. South African oil sales embarrassed the British government and provided additional motives for full political divestment. As oil sales to Southern Africa ran parallel to the final negotiations in 1978, these provided additional incentives not to protect a state which may have been in violation of UN sanctions. The UN, then, provided explicit support for Britain’s own policy of ending the Sultanate’s protected status, and this never provided as much headache for the UK as the Falklands or Diego Garcia.

¹⁹⁴ P.J. Streams to P. Gautrey, 29 September 1972, FCO 24/1693.

Conclusion

The Internal, Imperial and International analysis of Brunei's prolonged independence after 1963 presents a complex picture. The influence that the Internal factor had as a driver in maintaining a colonial relationship cannot be overstated given the leverage the Sultan enjoyed in determining when Britain could finally retreat from Brunei. However, the discussion of the Imperial factor showed that this was not necessarily detrimental to British interests and the support the Sultan gave to Sterling was certainly considered beneficial in the 1970s. International factors were important in influencing British government approaches to decolonisation, and the regional geopolitical perspective shaped defence policy until independence in 1984.

The examination of Internal factors highlighted the protracted independence and the agency of a semi-autonomous state that tenaciously clung to British protection with an indigenous political situation that did much to frustrate plans for independence. The lack of constitutional development created a culture of government which was deemed advantageous to the Sultans and their desire to remain under British protection. While the Sultan as an autocratic leader provides an answer to why the colonial relationship continued and why there was a protracted independence, the Internal explanation has to be viewed alongside the Imperial to understand how the former operated.

The analysis of the Imperial level showed how business and financial links developed as political links were reduced. The substantial economic links with Brunei were beneficial to the Sultan, but also directly beneficial to the UK-led Sterling Area. The benefits that were secured during this period were advantageous to both parties making protracted independence more likely. The Imperial factor worked as the vehicle through which the Internal engine led colonial

retention. The Sterling reserves gave the Sultan leverage over the UK, and at crucial junctures in the 1960s and 1970s that supported the UK economy. However, towards the end of the relationship, UK dependency on Brunei was reduced, especially after Britain joined the EEC. This allowed Britain to push for decolonisation and this provides evidence of a change in British priorities and an economic disengagement from Brunei. The political parties' role in Brunei was explicit in how they approached the protectorate, and it is telling that even when political independence was assured the Thatcher government renewed the defence relationship with the Sultan.

Through looking at Brunei from an international perspective there are clear insights into how continued Cold War defence priorities contributed to the maintenance of the imperial relationship. However, the International framework also provides a vehicle through which to understand the Imperial dimension as political decisions in the metropole impacted on defence policy in Southeast Asia. Discussion of the UN highlighted how there was a common position between the UK and the organisation, which proved markedly different to other dependent territories. This emphasises how there was no policy that suited all remnants of Empire. The territories were diverse and had many variables influencing their trajectory during decolonisation. However, Bruneian oil sales and lack of constitutional development did not cause retention but rather increased the pressures for decolonisation meaning that aspects of the International situation were chauffeuring the Sultans in the opposite direction to which they wanted to travel.

A germane question to ask is, rather than colonial retention was it Bruneian tenacity that prolonged protected status? The Sultans were resolute in their positions and Britain reaped benefits while there were opportunities available. In light of the east of Suez decision there was

less justification for Brunei's defence role, and it was only that the Sultan contributed to the Gurkha battalion that it remained. The UK capitalised on the Sultan's position but was largely eager to divest from the relationship. Britain maintained the semi-colonial relationship, but Brunei was not a remnant that was either desired or much needed. Rather, it was a vestige that could not be readily disposed of.

Conclusion

The thesis has presented three case studies of colonial retention which have been analysed through Internal, Imperial and International lenses. Collectively, these measure the extent to which the 3 Is influenced retention opposed to decolonisation. The thesis has presented retention through a wide analysis which has broadened the study through many factors, contributing to historiographical debates on post-war imperialism and decolonisation. Additionally, there is a large temporal frame which has understood how changes over time affected different colonies, as well as the varying influence metropolitan priorities and international geopolitics had on these contrasting remnants of Empire. This conclusion will draw together the strands of analysis in order to understand retention on a wider scale as well as being attentive to how the thesis has contributed to the wider historiography of twentieth-century imperialism and decolonisation.

When judged against the theoretical perspectives it is apparent that each of the case studies correspond to each of the 'Is'. The Falklands neatly exemplifies retention through cultural links and a pro-British nationalism, aided through the metropolitan reaction to a sense of kith and kin. Diego Garcia, created and retained after the wave of decolonisation in the late-1950s and early-1960s, supports closely the role of International factors and the US in dictating the terms of retention, but also how International factors facilitated Britain remaining a colonial power in the Indian Ocean by piggybacking on US global power and exploiting Cold War geopolitics. Brunei dovetails the Internal and the Imperial factors with the Sultan a key actor who did not want the protected status to end. His tenacity and leverage drove Brunei to remain attached longer than the British government wanted. Yet, Britain benefitted from the relationship

through Brunei's financial contribution to British economic stability at a time of acute international pressures on Sterling.

However, while one or more of the 'Is' are prominent explanations in the case studies they are supported by other explanations. Analysis of the Falkland Islands emphasises the role of identity in creating a strong kinship to Britain which resulted in a displaced nationalism that was hard for Britain to reject.¹ However, this belies the influence of imperial considerations which unwittingly created colonial inertia through Whitehall inter-departmental wrangling's, and a strong backbench lobby group at Westminster that proved influential over ministers and the FCO. The Falklands Lobby as an actor on behalf of the periphery promoted the Britishness of the Islands in the metropole and this was influential in determining their future. In turn, the imperial government reacted with an economic survey that provoked debate, and which unwittingly drove retention as it was clear the colony either had benefits or was not so easily disposed of. Global concerns also factored into retention with geo-strategy and the UN both important during decolonisation. The exploitation of notions of self-determination in opposition to territorial integrity intensified the Islanders' sense of themselves as British peoples and, as the UK manipulated UN Resolutions on this matter, the UN was largely ineffectual in resolving the problem to its liking.

¹ This displaced nationalism had a parallel with the 1965 UDI in Southern Rhodesia. This gave the British an additional colonial problem in the 1960s, and both the Falklands problem and the Rhodesian one was, arguably, born from an assertion of Britishness. The white settlers in Southern Rhodesia faced the threat of the 'Other' in the guise of black-majority rule and used the UDI to defend this 'Britishness' with Ian Smith, Southern Rhodesian Prime Minister, continuing to pledge allegiance to the Crown. Both the Falklands and Southern Rhodesia deployed a similar nationalism. But there were quite different outcomes. The Falkland Islanders' version of 'Britishness' drove closer association to the 'motherland' to preserve local identity, which contrasts to Southern Rhodesia which separated from the 'motherland' to protect against black-majority rule. Both 'colonial' problems reached their high-point in the early-1980s. In 1980, the independence of Zimbabwe ended British *de jure* colonialism in Southern Africa but, in contrast, the 1982 Falklands War cemented British claims in the South Atlantic. See Kate Law, 'Pattern, Puzzle, and Peculiarity: Rhodesia's UDI and Decolonisation in Southern Africa', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 45, 5 (2017): 721-728; David William Kenrick, *Decolonisation, Identity and Nation in Rhodesia, 1964-1979: A Race against Time* (London, 2019).

Similarly, Diego Garcia which proved expedient given international pressures and the Cold War geopolitical situation rendered the retention of colonies in the Indian Ocean valuable. Yet, imperial considerations cannot be overlooked. The east of Suez withdrawal decision was significant in reorienting British foreign policy and can be directly linked to the creation and retention of Diego Garcia. The geopolitical value that was placed on the colony meant an Indian Ocean presence (in tandem with the US) could be maintained, and this suited British government foreign policy aims. The approval by Parliament and the acceptance of Diego Garcia as a leased base, regardless of political party, only contributed further to the importance of the Imperial factor in retention. The Commonwealth discussion also illuminates British policy. Throughout the analysis it was clear that Diego Garcia was representative of the UK orientation towards the US and away from the Commonwealth because Britain's relations with the latter were under strain. The Internal factor also influenced the Imperial dimension in retaining the colony. The lack of kinship with Britain meant that population eviction was easier to undertake through a stress on the non-indigeneity of the Chagossians. Rather than solely International considerations aiding retention, the Internal situation assumed an important role as population removal realised the geopolitical aims and assisted the metropole in its amelioration of the rundown east of Suez and promotion of the 'special relationship' with Washington.

Brunei also highlights the variants in each theoretical facet. The Internal factor was a strong influence on the protracted independence. The Sultan's tenacity and his strong attachment to the UK meant he was unwilling to lose the imperial link. His leverage also influenced the metropole to directly maintain the protected status as to end it would harm Sterling and the British economy. Even though the metropole benefitted economically, there was actually no metropolitan driver to maintain the status quo. In reality, imperial governments reacted to the

Sultan. The role of the International dimension is also important. *Konfrontasi* meant that defence of the sultanate had to be maintained and this bolstered the Sultans who relied on continued British protection. The paradox with Brunei is that Britain ended its protectorate link despite there being substantial economic interests. This points to the reality that retention was not necessary to secure continued economic interests given the entrenched position of Shell in Brunei and a regional geopolitical environment conducive by the late-1970s to continued oil extraction by the subsidiaries of multi-national enterprises.

These case studies allow the themes of decolonisation to be examined and understood through retention. The inversion of the 3 Is of decolonisation as operators in retention has expanded the historiographical analysis to bring these smaller areas into post-war imperial history. The Internal analyses revealed colonial identity and culture as preserving colonial status, but also showed that lack of perceived kinship promoted retention as much as a pro-British nationalism. The tendency for British officials to stress the non-indigeneity of the black Creole population of Diego Garcia, who had lived on the Island for as long as predominantly Anglo-Saxon people had lived on the Falklands, exposes a racial dimension to the case studies. Had the Bruneians been white and Christian, one wonders whether the Sultanate would have been so willingly surrendered to independence. The nature of the periphery was a leading factor in colonial retention and much like Robinson & Gallagher's thesis on the role of the periphery in imperial expansion, the same idea can be expanded to argue for the maintenance of colonialism after decolonisation.² This is brought out in existing studies of Gibraltar where it has been stressed that an imperial identity was not forced upon the territory's inhabitants by Britain. Rather, Gibraltarians co-opted a British identity for their own interests in resistance to decolonisation

² John Gallagher & Ronald Robinson, 'The Imperialism of Free Trade', *The Economic History Review*, 6, 1 (1953): 1-15; Robinson & Gallagher, *Africa and the Victorians*.

through integration with Spain.³ There is an obvious similarity with the Falklands and the Argentinian threat here but also with Brunei where the British connection was co-opted by the Sultans to avoid incorporation into Malaysia and to suppress a pro-Indonesian nationalism. There are parallels additionally with a constituent nation of the UK. In Northern Ireland during the 1950s and 1960s, the prospect of decolonisation by integration into the Republic of Ireland reinforced a loyalist identity and a distinctive nationality within the UK amongst Protestants.⁴ The periphery, therefore, has done much to cement imperial links. In contrast to the separatism of Southern Rhodesia's white settlers after 1965, Falklands Islanders, Gibraltarians, Northern Ireland Protestants and Brunei's elite chose continued union with Britain as the best means of preventing decolonisation and so protecting their distinctive identities.⁵

What is also evident though is metropolitan agency in retention. Politics at Westminster was influential in maintaining control of the Falkland Islands, and even though less overt for Diego Garcia and Brunei, there were still political considerations influencing colonial retention. The Commonwealth, while not a driver in its own right, was considered in the equation of colonial retention and its examination for Diego Garcia indicated the changing British foreign policy concerns in the era. This counters the notion that the end of Empire elicited little concern in imperial circles.⁶ Across all three case studies is the influence of International factors over the metropole. The US and UN were not direct drivers themselves, but the metropole reacted to changing global circumstances in its attitude towards the 'bits left behind'.

³ David Lambert, "'As Solid as a Rock'": Place, Belonging and the Local Appropriation of Imperial Discourse in Gibraltar', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 30, 2 (2005): 206-220; see also Gold, 'Identity Formation'; Peter Gold, *Gibraltar: British or Spanish?* (Abingdon, 2004).

⁴ Ollerenshaw, 'Northern Ireland', 242; Lowry, 'Ulster Resistance'.

⁵ Lowry 'Rhodesia'.

⁶ Ian Hall, 'The Revolt Against the West: Decolonisation and its Repercussions in British International Thought, 1945-1975', *International History Review*, 33, 1 (2011): 3-64.

This thesis then challenges the idea of “metropolitan infirmity” as a cause for decolonisation and that the end of empire was beset by the “onslaught of colonial nationalism.”⁷ Diego Garcia shows that colonies could still be useful to the metropole while the Falkland Islanders utilised their self-identity to bring about greater kinship and familiarity with metropolitan Britain. This demonstrated that actors in both the core and the periphery imagined alternative forms of sovereignty, which allows us to re-examine the postcolonial present.⁸ As Darwin posits:

It bears repeating that for an empire which declined from thirteen million square miles and nearly 500 million inhabitants in 1914 to a handful of rocky outposts . . . fifty years later . . . the absence of any serious or sustained debate on the direction of imperial policy and the consequences of imperial decline is somewhat surprising.⁹

The case studies have provided ways to address the consequences of imperial decline. Diego Garcia demonstrates a clear direction in British policy with a remit designed to lessen imperial decline. Whereas, the case of Brunei reveals local tenacity and the positive repercussions of drawn-out decolonisation, which could preserve British overseas interests. The Falklands, meanwhile, allowed Britain to reassert a modicum of national pride with journalists and the Thatcher government presenting the conflict as the Empire striking back.¹⁰

If we bring these case studies back to the question of whether British decolonisation was a pattern or a puzzle it is possible to argue that the remnants do point to an illogical trajectory of decline. In contrast to Diego Garcia, Brunei and the Falklands were not welcomed as remaining in the imperial fold. There were plans in the FCO during the 1970s to offload Brunei and the Falklands, but other political and economic considerations within other branches of UK government – both parliamentary and administrative - prevented an orderly consistent retreat.

⁷ Louis & Robinson, ‘Imperialism of Decolonization’, 462; Darwin, *End of the British Empire*, 85.

⁸ Michael Collins, ‘Decolonisation and the “Federal Moment”, *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, 24, 1 (2013): 36.

⁹ Darwin, ‘Fear of Falling’, 133.

¹⁰ Phillip Pugh, ‘The Empire Strikes Back: The Falklands/Malvinas Campaign of 1982’, *Mariners Mirror*, 93, 3 (2007): 310.

The erosion of British world power, which actually led to “further efforts to hold together the remnants of world power” is clearly manifest in the case studies.¹¹ The psychological and material benefits of remaining imperial led to holding on to vestiges of global status suggesting the remnants had tangible as well as emotional benefits for metropolitan Britain.

This, then, raises the question of how decolonisation should be classified and periodised. Decolonisation as a twentieth-century phenomenon saw colonies become independent nation states; the fact that some places remained attached to the UK, as in the case of the Falklands; were created to remain attached, as in the case of Diego Garcia; or, were left with a colonial status much later than the ‘traditional’ ‘Wind of Change’ era, as in Brunei, points to decolonisation as an ongoing process. As the introductory chapter set out, the envelope of decolonisation neglects to situate the legacies and tangible remains of the British Empire. Darwin’s claim that there was “nothing straightforward” about the Empire’s end is true, but his work still has an underlying assumption that it ended.¹² The Empire is still manifest in the twenty-first century. The British kith and kinship of the Falklands, the occupation of Diego Garcia, and the strong attachments that remain between Britain and Brunei, highlight the difficulties in tackling a subject as large as the end of Empire.

This twenty-first century Empire can be found through the other BOTs (as literal places that are still ‘red’ on the map), but also through the promotion of the Empire in the UK’s post-European future. The potential Commonwealth trade links, based on historical ties, shared language and similar legal traditions, has been encouraged by Brexiteers who point to the “Empire 2.0” and the supposed alternative economic vehicle that the Commonwealth could

¹¹ Darwin, ‘Pattern or puzzle’, 206.

¹² Darwin, *Unfinished Empire*, 342.

provide.¹³ For example, increased trade with Australasia, rectifying the apparent mistake and betrayal when Britain joined the EEC in 1973, and the embrace of Hong Kong, India and Singapore into an Anglosphere constellation of trade have been posited.¹⁴ Moreover, these Commonwealth trade links are aligned with expanding strategic links east of Suez. Most notably, the establishment of HMS Juffair in 2018, a permanent naval facility in Bahrain. This chimes with Boris Johnson's desire to reverse the military disengagement from the Middle East and Asia.¹⁵ This banging of the Empire drum, particularly by Conservative administrations, has a long tradition in the wake of decolonisation – Johnson's rhetoric is remarkably similar to Thatcher's justification for the recovery of the Falklands in 1982 explored in Chapter 3.¹⁶ Much of the leave vote in the 2016 referendum was arguably stimulated by imperial nostalgia and this has encouraged ex-imperial ties to be revisited in the twenty-first century. As Olusaga has written, imperial nostalgia is an enduring theme in British culture that goes back to the late-eighteenth century and the thirteen colonies of the American eastern seaboard given the wealth and global influence that came with overseas possessions (and recent developments are not therefore an aberration in British history).¹⁷

¹³ Phillip Murphy, *The Empires New Clothes: The Myth of the Commonwealth* (Oxford, 2018), 193. It is worth noting the imperial and Commonwealth links of many Brexiteers. Douglas Carswell, former UKIP MP, spent his formative years in Uganda and Lord Ashcroft, a Tory party donor, spent much of his childhood in British Honduras and Malawi.

¹⁴ 'Commonwealth Summit: Can Britain still Shape the World Post-Brexit?', *The Guardian*, 19 April 2018. This is also notwithstanding that in June 2020, MPs considered a change to British Overseas National (BNO) passports by extending British visas to Hong Kong residents in light of potential PRC reforms of Hong Kong. This would change the residency status of up to 3 million residents and also change the agreement between China and the UK that has been in place since 1997. Not only does this expand the Anglosphere, but also shifts the parameters of British citizenship in previous colonies of the British Empire. See 'Boris Johnson lays out visa offer to nearly 3m Hong Kong citizens', *The Guardian*, 3 June 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jun/03/britain-could-change-immigration-rules-for-hong-kong-citizens> [accessed 10 June 2020].

¹⁵ 'UK's Military Seeks New Place in the World after Brexit', *Financial Times*, 23 December 2019.

¹⁶ Although as demonstrated in Chapters 4 and 5, Labour administrations were not averse to continued colonialism in Diego Garcia and Brunei if it suited geopolitical and financial imperatives, and during the Falklands conflict the Labour frontbench refrained from public critique. Stewart, 'Falklands War'.

¹⁷ 'Empire 2.0 is a Dangerous Nostalgia for something that never existed', *The Guardian*, 19 March 2017.

The 2016 referendum has been seen as a referendum on Britain and its history, as much as it was on the relationship with the EU, and the lack of imperial reckoning was influential in the leave vote.¹⁸ In March 2020, YouGov ran a poll on attitudes towards the British Empire with 32 per cent of respondents viewing the Empire as a force for good. In comparison, 17 per cent had negative perceptions.¹⁹ The ‘Fifth British Empire’ in this sense is not a “concept too far”, especially if we reiterate Darwin’s characterisation of the Empire as a “work in progress” and his notion of a “pattern” in British decolonisation after 1945 deriving from constant “efforts to hold together the remnants of world power”.²⁰ The ‘imperial fantasies’ exposed in 2016 have links to the remnant Empire. The British colonial past (and indeed present) underpinned the impression that it was a country bigger, stronger and more influential than it really was.²¹ Thompson explored this “imprint of Empire”, which generated much purchase in the 1980s, and how the rise of empire structured the notion of a British identity.²² Paradoxically, however, alongside reaching out to the old colonies, the 2016 referendum result has placed the fabric of the ‘English Empire’ of the UK in peril with rising Scottish nationalism and increasing interest in Northern Ireland - across the traditional sectarian divide - in unification with Eire.²³

Certainly, this study presents evidence on the complexities of empire. As Mackenzie argues, the myriad of styles of rule should place emphasis on the product and not the process. Through

¹⁸ See David Reynolds, *Island Stories: Britain and its History in the Age of Brexit* (Glasgow, 2019).

¹⁹ ‘British Empire Attitudes’, YouGov, <https://docs.cdn.yougov.com/z7uxxko71z/YouGov%20-%20British%20empire%20attitudes.pdf> [accessed 29 April 2020].

²⁰ Darwin, ‘Fourth British Empire’, 16, 29; Darwin, ‘Pattern or puzzle’, 206.

²¹ ‘Britain’s Imperial Fantasies have given us Brexit’, *The Guardian*, 3 February 2018.

²² Andrew Thompson, ‘Imprint of Empire’ in Andrew Thompson (ed), *Britain’s Experience of Empire in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford, 2011), 344.

²³ Brexit has been seen as “nationalism colliding” with Scottish nationalism, which is more pro-European, facing an English nationalism. Because of this, the future of Scotland in the UK is in doubt with another independence referendum mooted by the Scottish Nationalist Party. Nicola McEwen, ‘Brexit and Scotland: Between Two Unions’, *British Politics*, 13 (2018): 65-78. Brexit is also noted as pushing Northern Ireland closer to Eire with English politicians “doing more to unite Ireland than nationalists managed in a century”. However, it is important to note that many in Northern Ireland would still wish to remain in the UK. ‘Do the Irish want Unification?’, *Financial Times*, 14 November 2019.

this we can break down the barriers and study continuities and gain comparative insights on global issues while also reversing the gaze.²⁴ Framing this study in comparative analysis then provides insights for the future of imperial history. Aside from the distinguishing feature of the study being a synthesis of understudied colonies, this thesis has provided ways in which to analyse the territories as part of an imperial system. As imperial history and its historiography has evolved beyond formal empire, through to transnationalism, so too can the study of smaller territories and their enduring links to Britain propel imperial history beyond those areas that achieved independence in the ‘Wind of Change’ era of decolonisation.

Even so, the case studies also underscore the way that different remnants were perceived and treated. As historians have accepted, the Empire was not monolithic and nor are the territories that have been retained.²⁵ All three case studies were retained for different reasons, whether that be geopolitical factors, such as Diego Garcia to offset the withdrawal east of Suez; kinship and domestic politics as in the Falklands; or, lack of capability or will to fully decolonise, such as in Brunei’s case (to the late-1970s at least). The acceptance that no one territory is the same is important. Mandarins in Whitehall had to factor in many interlocking reasons for colonial retention, and this is evident in the disparate and different colonies that remained. Similarly, the international situation highlights that no ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach could work. The differing circumstances that colonies operated in made blanket policy impossible to achieve. Hence, colonies were retained for a variety of reasons. This presents a more contemporary challenge - because the geopolitical situation has changed, identity is fluid, and ‘neo-colonial’ links remain with many areas that have decolonised. The BOTs will have to adapt to changes in contemporary circumstances and find new roles.

²⁴ J.M. Mackenzie, ‘The British Empire: Ramshackle or Rampaging? A Historiographical Reflection’, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 43, 1 (2015): 116.

²⁵ See Robert Johnson, *British Imperialism* (London, 2003), 1-12.

The BOTs face an uncertain future with Britain outside the EU. Since the UK's departure from the EU on 31 January 2020, the BOTs are no longer classified as OCTs by the EU. Brexit will stop all EU funding for the BOTs (although, because of the transitional period, the trading relationship and laws will still apply until the end of 2020). If a future trading relationship between the UK and EU is established then the OCT status will change to reflect that.²⁶ The Falklands could lose access to science and development funding, the loss of political clout through no longer being a member of the Association of Overseas Countries and Territories and the imposition of tariffs on imports from the EU.²⁷ The fears of the FIG are not felt in independent Brunei. In August 2018, a UK trade delegation was sent to promote the defence bonds and friendship that have existed between Britain and Brunei for many years, and with that came reassurance of HMG's post-Brexit commitment to Southeast Asia and Brunei.²⁸ In December 2018, then Defence Secretary, Gavin Williamson, saw Brexit as an opportunity for Britain to become a "true global player" with increasing defence spending and new military bases in the Caribbean and Southeast Asia – with Brunei mooted as one of the potential hosts.²⁹ On the other hand, the UK's loss of a UNGA vote on the Chagos Islands in 2017 was notable through the abstention of most EU members in which the "distinct lack of EU support has been connected to growing concerns of declining UK influence in light of the UK's decision to leave the EU" as well as Britain's apparent subservience to the US, and, contrary to HMG's 'Global Britain' rhetoric, the UK's "difficulty finding a middle point between the US and Europe".³⁰

²⁶ See the European Commission's website, https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/regions/overseas-countries-and-territories-octs/oct-eu-association_en [accessed 1 November 2018].

²⁷ *Penguin News*, <http://www.penguin-news.com/index.php/headlines/all-headlines/15-politics/41-brex-it-and-the-falkland-islands> [accessed 08 February 2019].

²⁸ 'Brunei, UK Vow to Further Bolster Defence Ties', *Borneo Bulletin*, 22 August 2018.

²⁹ 'Britain to become a "true global player" post-Brexit', *Daily Telegraph*, 30 December 2018.

³⁰ Jess Gifkins, Samuel Jarvis & Jason Ralph, *Global Britain and the British Overseas Territories: Resetting the Relationship* (London, 2019), 12.

Hence, reflecting the mish-mash that was and is the British Empire, Brexit's impacts will not be felt to the same degree by all BOTs and OCTs, but Britain's withdrawal from the EU will lead to a change in relationship. HMG has promised all BOTs that they will be funded for a year after Brexit, covering funding that is already pledged. After this date support will cease.³¹ Questions are posed by the media wondering if Britain could take back the Falklands today, generating further anxiety about British decline. What is clear is that accommodating BOTs in a post-Brexit world will be challenging. Britain going it alone impacts on these territories as support will not be readily available from third-party countries (especially within the EU) if substantive international issues arise (notably the ongoing dispute with Argentina over the Falklands).³² Problems with the BOTs were acknowledged in 2019 by the House of Commons' Foreign Affairs Committee which suggested a need for reform and a reassessment of their links to the UK. The Brexit vote, Hurricane Wilma in 2017 and the passage of the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act, which requires BOTs to publish registers of beneficial ownership, have meant a revaluation in recent years. The problems at the ICJ with Diego Garcia have shone a light on controversial areas that are associated with the UK and show that retention continues to come with considerable international legal and ethical problems.³³

What these case studies shed light on is Britain's standing within the world today and in this we have encountered themes of British defence and foreign policy, international geopolitics, and the role of the periphery in the imperial dynamic. The synthesis of these factors has shown the value in cross-analysing territories, which allows nuances to be explored in the imperial system and also highlights commonalities and themes. While ambitious in scale, the

³¹ Funding for BOTs if there's a no Brexit deal, Parliament UK, http://data.parliament.uk/DepositedPapers/Files/DEP2018-1007/Funding_for_British_Overseas_Territories_if_theres_no_Brexit_deal.pdf [accessed 21 May 2020].

³² 'Global Britain in the United Nations', 12.

³³ Gifkins, Jarvis & Ralph, *Global Britain*, 6.

connections drawn contribute to an evolving imperial history. A methodological approach that relies on comparison also creates a jumping-off point for this area of history allowing reflections on different territories, which in turn feeds into larger discourses about Britain's place in the world. As Brexit moves Britain towards a post-European future, the imperial ghost still haunts British foreign policy.

Appendices

Appendix A

The Falkland Islands. Letter from the Falkland Islands, November 1979, FCO 7/3686

We Plead for our Colony, Rugged and Fine
 Far down the Atlantic, Past Equator Line
 A British Colony, and Proud to be so,
 The Following Points We think you should know

Great Britain once with Naval Might
 Off these shores hove into sight,
 Declaring to all the World that Day
 British these Islands are going to stay

The Settlers came, the Colony grew,
 Hardships Suffered by the Early Few
 Like many a pioneer of old
 They carved a history worth being told

Political upstarts from the Argentine
 Claim the Islands from time to time,
 With each Argentine Contract our Rights do Fall
 They threaten the future of us all

Deep rooted love for our Islands we feel
 Deep rooted anger as the Argentine steal
 Through contracts and deals, the right to decide
 Supply to the Islands, and which air-flight we ride

With fish in abundance, perhaps oil in sight
 And potential investment by Alginate,
 With world natural resources in a state
 Can UK afford to leave us to an Argentine fate

Apart from a purely financial view
 We will give this moral pointer to you
 A duty if honour UK took long ago
 When these Islands they settled as empire did grow

The Falkland Islands are loyal and true
 To the flag red, white and blue,
 Do not sell our people short
 We are British in body, soul and thought

So put the Argentine contracts in a box
And send them via the BA [Buenos Aires] Docks,
And in a letter be sure to tell
The Argentine to go to hell

Appendix B

Shackleton Report Recommendations. Falkland Islands Newsletter, November 1979, FCO 7/3686

Recommendation	Action	Falkland Islands Office Comment
Extension of Grasslands Trials Unit [GTU]	GTU Complement has been increased from 4 to 6. Official Development Assistance (ODA) now has standing Committee who closely monitor GTU	50% implemented, 2 new staff not 4
Establishment by phases in Agriculture Department by FIG	FIG seeking part-time Officer.	Shackleton recommended 8 staff. FIG seek 1
Establishment of smaller farm units by FIG to widen the ownership of land	Being implemented	Commercial initiatives only
Continuation of grants for fencing land	Agreed	Local Committee unaware of developments
FIG assistance in land improvement	Agreed	Not implemented
FIG should seek to improve themselves in Falkland Islands Company [FICo] policy making	FIG sought to establish closer personal relations	FICo believe there is little basis for FCO claim
Government Recurrent Finances		
FIG should increase taxation by 5% and increase rates of capital allowances	Implemented	Agreed
FIG should increase personal taxation and introduce income relief	Implemented	Agreed

FIG should increase import duties	Done	Agreed
FIG should consider appointing a firm of UK stamp dealers to replace Crown Agents	Considered. Retain Crown Agents with improved marketing	Action successfully taken
FIG increase licence fees for wildlife exports	Implemented	Agreed
FIG should increase Stanley rates and compulsory health insurance scheme	Implemented	Agreed
Appointment of Chief Executive	Not implemented	Agreed
Appointment of a Development Officer responsible for day-to-day economic development	Implemented	Post vacant since November 1978
Executive Council [Exco] and Legislative Council [Legco] committee appointments	Rejected	No comment
Non-Exco/Legco members to be co-opted	Implemented	No comment
Sub-committees to be established dealing with specific aspects of broader subjects	Implemented	No comment
Exco and Legco given financial authority	FIG consider not practical	No comment
Consideration for Community Councils for expressing local views	Rejected by FIG	Local committee supports recommendation
Sheltered Housing/old people's homes	Held over until funds available	Essential development
Review of medical charges	Done	Agreed
Consideration to be given to construction of a patient's hostel	Held over until funds available	Not implemented

Stanley hospital, update standards	Implemented	Agreed
A health visitor/district nurse should be appointed	Nursing sister appointed	Agreed
Environmental Control and Resource Management		
FIG should establish an environmental committee with a scientific advisor	FIG consider current legislation adequate	Agreed
FIG enact a national resource ordinance	FIG consider current legislation adequate	Agreed
Falkland Islands Research Agency	FIG consider current legislation adequate	Agreed
Centralisation of secondary education with additional facilities	Underway	Agreed
Camp teaching to be improved	Underway	Agreed
Overseas secondary scholarships should be phased out when new secondary school built	Underway	Agreed
Vocational Training introduced	Underway	Agreed
Clerical assistance for Education Department	Implemented	Agreed
FIG should control, through a Community Education Officer, adult education and social development fund	FIG at present developing expanded school education programme.	Agreed
Appointment of a permanent social worker	Rejected	Committee sees need for social worker
Consideration of Camp wage structure	Industry sees present agreement satisfactory	Agreed
Revision of FIG scales	Implemented	Agreed

Revision of cost of living index	Implemented	Agreed
FIG to consider financial and staffing problems	Done	Agreed
FIG to consider establishing formal forum for Civil Servant's Association	Implemented	Agreed
FIG collate statistics on population, emigration, immigration, jobs and opportunities	Implemented	Agreed
Social Infrastructure		
FIG to transfer housing loans scheme to commercial banking operations	In absence of any interest by overseas banks, the facilities of the Savings bank are being extended	Continued absence of housing funds is a major cause of young islander's leaving
Camp workers to be given opportunity for house purchase	Under discussion	Not implemented. No action taken
FIG to review housing improvements	Allocation of £160,000 from Colony funds	Agreed, but further developments urgently awaited
FIG should ensure minimum fuel holdings	Implemented	Agreed but YPF [Argentine oil company, <i>Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales</i>] agreement makes FI dependent on Argentina for fuel
YPF agreement implemented	Partial implementation	As above
Oil jetty to be examined	Rejected	Committee sees need for deep-water wharf
Reintroduction of local newspaper	Implemented	Agreed
Manpower and Population		
Review problems of "brain drain"	Carried out	Agreed but brain drain continues
HMG offer OSAS [Overseas Service Aid	Rejected	Agreed

Scheme] terms to qualified islanders living in UK

FIG to improve company recruitment	Under discussion with private sector	No evidence discussions have taken place
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Investment and Banking

FIG should offer investment incentives through loans for projects	FIG loan fund for small enterprise and young farmers established	Agreed, but fund is inadequate for requirements
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FIG to approach UK banks to provide commercial banking services	Considering adaption of local facilities	No comment
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FIG to establish Revolving Loan Fund	FIG loan fund for small enterprise and young farmers established	No comment
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Commercial bank may absorb government savings bank	Extend the facilities of Savings Bank	No comment
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HMG to consider relaxing exchange control regulations	June 1979 budget removed UK exchange controls up to £5m	No comment
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Tertiary Sector Services

FIG to encourage wholesale and retail trade	Done	No comment
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Consideration to expanding coastal shipping	Implemented – Communications Study 1978	Agreed but no action has taken place
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Improve Stanley Road and investigate Camp roads	Underway	Provisions inadequate
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Internal Telecommunications and Broadcasting

FIG to replace system for 24-hour communications	Still under discussion	No action taken to meet this urgent need
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Improvement to be made to quality and content of local broadcasting	ODA [Overseas Development Administration] loan of £8000 for improvement	Need for stronger admin and improved programme content
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	and BBC advisor recently visited	
Introduce TV to the Camp	British Council adviser visited but recommended against	Introduction of TV considered very necessary
Transport		
HMG to finance extension of permanent airfield by 950 metres to accommodate short/medium haul jets	ODA willing to offer feasibility study.	Implementation necessary for economic development
FIG to ensure FICo take account of Islander interests in decision affecting freight	FIG to establish closer personal relationship with FICo	FICo believe greater initiative needed by FCO
Internal air service	Implemented	Agreed
Establishment of knitwear industry	Flourishing knitwear co-operative founded	Exclusive local enterprise project
Tourism		
Tourism development to be commissioned	Limited study carried out	Agreed
Appointment of commercial tourism	FIG approves general terms	Agreed
Consideration of concessionary finance for accommodation and travel facilities	FIG approves general terms	Agreed
Tourist facilities in Stanley	FIG approves general terms	Agreed
Control tourism standards	FIG approves general terms	Agreed
Ecological monitoring	FIG approves general terms	Agreed
Mineral Oil Resources		
Enactment of a new mining ordinance	Under consideration	Agreed

Appraisal of Birmingham University's seismic data and purchase and evaluate commercial seismic lines	Overtaken by US seismic survey	Agreed
HMG to monitor oil developments in Argentina	Underway	Agreed
Industry and Crafts		
FIG to encourage small scale projects	Visit to demonstrate the tanning of hides	Agreed
Feasibility study on meat collection and freezing	Awaiting GTU findings	Not implemented
FIG to commission survey by Shellfish resource	FICo have undertaken pilot Shellfish programme	Promising results
Exploratory fishing survey	Desk study commissioned	Not implemented and no publication
Fish farming pilot scheme	Report by ODA in final preparation	Agreed but still waiting on publication
Monitor krill and fish resources south of Antarctic convergence	British Antarctic Survey [BAS] working on this	Agreed
Population monitoring and growth rate of seals	Not yet happened	Agreed
South Georgia legislation on live specimens to be extended to Falklands.	Implemented	Agreed
FIG and professional associations to standardise methods of recording financial data	Under discussion	Agreed
Appointment of Horticultural advisor	FIG carried out survey and rejected	Committee see this as essential
Establishment of sheep importation advisory panel	Under discussion	Not implemented
Agricultural education and training included in school syllabus	Implemented	No evidence this has been implemented

Appointment of wool
marketing adviser

Appointed under
Commonwealth
Foundation Technical
Co-Operation

Agreed

Aquatic Research

Periodic survey finance by
UK Trade Association
[UKTA] of Falklands
fresh water

Underway

Agreed

FIG to consider study of
kelp resources

Approaches made to
companies

Nothing can be done until HMG give a
sovereignty pledge.

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