

How it feels ‘on the ground’: The experiences of residents from a subnational island jurisdiction.

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Abstract: Beyond the houses of assembly, media, political hustings and the law courts, how is life on a small, subnational island jurisdiction played out? This paper is an attempt to explore and explain how islanders feel to be governed ‘on the ground’. It suggests that individuals and households seek to exploit global and local offerings and opportunities in a flexibly strategic combination, as well as out of sheer necessity. SNIJ residents will suffer the achievements and failures of the various layers of political officers, at home and abroad, while typically hedging their bets. Securing double residencies, undergoing multiple stints overseas for work and education, tolerating complex transportation routes and itineraries, becomes the order of the day, every day, for those who have the resources and capabilities of doing so; and the dreams and desires of those who cannot.

Keywords: small island states; subnational island jurisdictions

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Introduction

The growing literature about sub-state or subnational jurisdictions tends to dwell exclusively within the realm and behaviour of politico-economic elites. It deals with the tensions between metropolitan and local governance; the ‘games’ played out by politicians and political parties to score points by deploying strong rhetoric, accusing one side of neo-colonialism, neglect or indifference; and the other of corruption, ineptitude, disrespect for minority rights or irresponsibility. It focuses on the macro level, whereby more or less autonomy results from episodes of power play. The sites of enactment here are the houses of assembly, the media, political meetings, the law courts.

All well and good: this is a fascinating field of research, and the fact that scholars engage in it, and are likely to continue to do so, is testimony to its rich opportunities for reflection, examination and insights.

In this paper, I propose to strike clear of this approach, its methodologies and epistemologies. Instead, I will shift my sights from macro to micro, from elites to the general public, from those engaged in dealing with politicians, the media and senior public officers, to those dealing with the local state in its various ramifications. From elites to those struggling to survive: today, tomorrow, every day. The sites of enactment here are shorn of pomp and ceremony, though they may have their own rituals and rote behaviour: homes, neighbourhoods, family reunions, civil society events.

To do so, I will resort to my various experiences visiting various small (often island) states and territories; my awareness of the history of Malta (my country of birth) and its tumultuous years prior to its political independence from Britain in 1964; the subsequent relationship of Gozo (Malta’s smaller sister island) to the Maltese ‘mainland’; and the general

awareness I have developed from my readings in island studies, small state studies and subnational governance, also thanks to my editorship of, first, *Island Studies Journal* (ISSN: 1715-2593) over 11 years (2006-2016) and, since 2018, *Small States and Territories* (ISSN: 2616-8006).

Such an approach is not hard to justify: any comparative study of small island states (SIS) and subnational island jurisdictions (SNIJs) must also consider how it feels to be governed ‘on the ground’. The growing literature on ‘the resourcefulness of jurisdiction’ (e.g. Baldacchino & Milne, 2000; Hepburn, 2014; Rezvani, 2014) needs to also acknowledge and examine what it feels like to be the resident of a small island territory with an enduring, postcolonial connection with a metropolitan power (Baldacchino, 2010). After all, the banal and routine may not be dramatic; but they are also epic, in their own human way (e.g. Joyce, 1922).

A Few Caveats

Before I proceed, let us be clear on a few things.

a) *Intense and ultra-personal politics*

Local citizens are important actors in small jurisdictions, irrespective as to whether these are sovereign or non-sovereign. The intense scrutiny of politicians by their voters, and the reciprocally just-as-intense scrutiny of the voters by their politicians, remains powerful and is not likely to be mollified because of the different political status of the jurisdiction. ‘Voter-to-elected member’ ratios are much smaller in small states and territories than in larger polities (Baldacchino and Veenendaal, 2018), making the “ultra-personalisation” of politics inevitable (Corbett and Veenendaal, 2018). If anything, SNIJs are typically much smaller than SIS: when comparing 19 SIS and 16 SNIJs drawn from the Caribbean and Pacific, McElroy and Sanborn (2005) found that a SNIJ has, on average, around one third of the population of a SIS (with a mean population of 139,000 for a SNIJ; 375,000 for a SIS); and around one fourth of its land area (with a mean value of 1,870 km² for a SNIJ; 7,580 km² for a SIS). As such, the locking embrace between politician and voter in a SNIJ can be presumed to be even tighter than in a SIS.

b) *SIS versus SNIJ: look again*

Small island states and subnational island jurisdictions are not mutually exclusive categories. Many subnational units form part of political assemblages dominated by larger, distant, typically mainland states, including the world’s colonial powers: Denmark, France, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom (in Europe) as well as the United States, Australia and New Zealand. Let us call these Class I SNIJs. But, even here, a country like New Zealand is itself an archipelago and can itself be considered small. Then, there is a second set of SNIJs whose destiny it is to belong in a dyadic orbit with a not-much-larger, and much closer, small island unit. Let us call these Class II SNIJs. Opportunities for largesse and patronage from the bigger player may be few and far between; on the other hand, given that there is no huge disequilibrium between the two players, the concerns and politics of the small player are often nagging the politicians on the bigger island. Thus, considering the Caribbean, we face these two sets of SNIJs, one of which is itself party to small island states (see [Table 1](#)):

Table 1: The Island Caribbean: SNIJs, including those that form part of SIS.

Class I SNIJ	Colonial Power
Montserrat	UK
Cayman Islands	UK
Turks & Caicos	UK
Anguilla	UK
British Virgin Islands	UK
Aruba	NL
Curaçao	NL
Bonaire	NL
Saba	NL
St Eustatius	NL
Sint Maarten	NL
Puerto Rico	US
US Virgin Islands	US
Martinique	F
Guadeloupe	F
St Martin	F
St Barthélemy	F
San Andrés y Providencia	Colombia

Class II SNIJ	SIS
Barbuda	Antigua & Barbuda
Nevis	St Kitts-Nevis
Tobago	Trinidad & Tobago

It appears that small island units do not like being administered by other small islands. Anguilla effectively shifted from a Class II to a Class I SNIJ in 1967 (Clarke, 1971), although this status was only formally recognised in 1980. The French island of Saint Barthélemy for many years formed part of Guadeloupe, which is an overseas region and department of France. In 2003, the island voted to secede from Guadeloupe and became its own overseas collectivity (COM) of France. The Netherlands Antilles followed suit and broke up in October 2010: its five-and-a-half islands also prefer direct lines of communication to the metropole. Hence the transition and graduation from Class II to Class I; with Aruba already leading the way in 1985. Presumably Chuuk, currently part of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), a Pacific island state in a ‘compact of free association’ with the US, may wish to secede from FSM for the same reasons, and securing a direct line to Washington DC (Mulalap, 2016). Nevis almost succeeded in cutting itself off from St Kitts in a plebiscite in August 1998. One hears regularly of calls by Tobago for session from Trinidad; and there are separatist sentiments in Barbuda (Sanders, 2018). Additionally, from the Shetlands (in relation to Scotland) to the Marquesas (in relation to Tahiti), small island units have the potential for a repeat of the Anguilla tactic: they would rather remain parts of their current sovereign state (UK, France respectively) than become parts of an independent state (Scotland, Tahiti respectively) (e.g. Thomson, 2015).

c) *Politician and voter: look again*

We also need to be wary of a second (at times artificial) distinction, this time between politicians and voters. In the world's smallest polities, and especially federacies like the Federated States of Micronesia or the Comoros, one may find an exaggerated number of elected representatives in proportion to the size of the population. Geographical discontinuity (such as the existence of archipelagos) as well as bi-cameralism – a legacy of British and US Colonialism (Anckar, 2018) – increases the obligation to elect or appoint more politicians into office. To these need to be added those politicians who are out of office, but who obviously are considered to maintain some influence or clout with their erstwhile political parties. With the extensive family and friendship networks that pervade small island societies, it is thus more likely that voters will know many politicians via multiple roles (growing up together, attending the same school or church, working together, living in same neighbourhood ...) as well as being cousins, uncles or partners (e.g. Farrugia, 1993). Thus, most SNIJ residents could be trusted to be able to call upon at least one close friend or relative who is active in politics.

The small state with the highest MP/citizen ratio is possibly the Republic of San Marino: 60 elected MPs for a population of 30,000. But it is not an island.

The small *island* state with the highest proportion of elected officials might be Palau. This country has a bicameral system, with both a Senate (13 members) and a House of Delegates (16 members). This makes 29 elected politicians for a population of 20,000.

The subnational island jurisdiction with the highest MP/citizen ratio is possibly Pitcairn: its Island Council has seven elected members, for a population of about 50. In no other island territory is over 10% of the population made up of elected politicians (Wouter Veenendaal, personal communication, March 2019).

Higher education, employment, health

If that is the case, what then would be the 'bread and butter' issues that SNIJ publics would be most concerned about, and would want to lobby their local and very accessible politicians on?

To be noted here is that quality of life indicators for citizens of SNIJs tend to be systematically better than those of their neighbouring sovereign island states. Longevity, infant mortality, gross domestic product at purchasing power parity, employment and literacy rates ... all indicators consistently point towards a statistically significant better quality of life for SNIJ residents (McElroy and Sanborn, 2005). This is presumably the case not only because their metropolitan overseer can afford to pump money and expertise into state-of-the-art hospitals, clinics, schools, water treatment plants as well as welfare services in the SNIJ itself; but also because the metropole makes itself accessible to SNIJ residents who may wish or require services, or jobs, in the metropole proper. The United Kingdom was the last major power to grant citizenship, with the right of abode, to the 200,000 residents of its 14 overseas territories by 2002 (Moore, 2000; Mycock, 2009). Here, we acknowledge that the citizens of one particular UKOT, the British Indian Ocean Territory, remain cheated of their right of abode *in their own territory* (Alexandre & Koutouki, 2018); and the workers who live on Ascension cannot claim the right of abode (Royle, 2006).

Thus, many of the social concerns of SNIJ and SIS citizens, will be driven by the desire to secure high quality resources or services *locally*. But, unlike SIS residents, SNIJ residents may be just as keen to secure access to these same resources in the metropole, over and above, or instead of, expecting to have them be made available at home. This latter option is likely to provide services that are of better quality, even though they may be logistically more difficult to get to and exploit.

One can presume that the pursuit of higher education, employment and health are paramount concerns of island publics. In SNIJs, the discourse may be heavily directed towards securing these services locally, while still maintaining the right to such services in the metropole for SNIJ citizens as they apply to metropolitan citizens.

For the children of many small islands – and as with those of various remote rural communities (Vodden et al., 2015) – progressing up through compulsory education may already entail relocating to a larger island (in an archipelagic state) or to a larger town/city, in order to be able to attend primary or secondary school. The experience is reminiscent of boarding school: a culture of nomadism and mobility becomes ingrained already in islander childhood and adolescence. The transition to college or university in a metropolitan city becomes a natural next step, preferably supported by one's family and the state, for those who aspire and can afford the move. SNIJ publics can be expected to demand loans, fee waivers, subsidised accommodation and a number of specific, reserved places for the enrolment of their children in courses on the mainland that may have a limited student intake. For example, every year in August, a specially chartered airplane takes some 200-300 young Arubans to the Netherlands, all of them enrolled at universities and schools that offer education not available on the island. Arubans are Dutch nationals; so they are entitled to all benefits that European Dutch citizens enjoy, from the moment they are safely landed at Amsterdam Schiphol Airport.

Health issues affecting SNIJ residents may also involve a stint overseas. In some cases, as with eye and dental care, the specialist may be flown or shipped over to the island territory from the metropole a certain number of times per year. However, the treatment of complex diseases or operations requiring specialist interventions would be undertaken in larger and better-equipped hospitals in the metropole, where specialised staff would be in attendance. SNIJ publics would once again expect air ambulances services to take them quickly to sites where better facilities and personnel are available, and demand subsidised accommodation for the patient and close relatives in the metropole for the duration of the treatment and post-op convalescence (Gould and Moon, 2000). The resort to tele-medicine may reduce the take-up of this expensive course of action (Cullen, 2017; Norton et al., 1996).

Regular employment on small islands is often limited to the public service and a few private firms often offering services while operating as monopolies. Demand for these positions will be intense, and may be subject to nepotism and political favour (e.g. Davis & Crocombe, 1979). SNIJ citizens may be obliged to seek employment elsewhere, or prefer to do so to escape 'cabin fever' and local entanglements, and the resort to ascribed and particularistic criteria (e.g. Baldacchino, 1997; Lowenthal, 1987, p. 39). The least these persons should expect is that they do not suffer discrimination when competing for jobs in the metropole.

Critical Connectivity (preferably one way only)

For all this to happen, connectivity between SNIJ and metropole needs to be both available and affordable. This is a critical issue for small island residents, for whom the ferry or airline connection to the respective metropole – France, the Netherlands, Denmark, US, UK, Australia or New Zealand – is not just a vital umbilical cord but also typically the gateway to the rest of the world (Stuart, 2008). Few SNIJs control or own their own airline or ferry

services: the Åland Islands is one notable exception, with its own cruise ship lines operating in the Baltic Sea (Lindström, Kinnunen and Fellmann, 2015). Commercial flights to Norfolk Island, an Australian territory, are only offered by Air New Zealand (Graham, 2018). There is much at stake in assuring that travels to and from the island by ship and plane and to specific destinations are in place, and at prices that can be afforded by the locals (and not just well-heeled tourists).

In Mauritius, tourism entrepreneurs from Rodrigues, its SNIJ, had to lobby their central government in order to subsidise the air link service between the two islands, threatening to use the ‘ethnic card’ in the process (Wergin, 2012). In nearby Réunion, fewer airline options and available flights that are more expensive than on Mauritius, restricts ease of resident mobility and dampens the growth of tourism on the French SNIJ (Gay, 2012). In Bermuda, British Airways maintains a monopoly over flights between the island and the UK: residents complain of high costs, delays, cancellations and shoddy service with ageing aircraft on the route (e.g. Neil, 2015; Slight, 2018). The UK “has historically enjoyed an upper hand in negotiating air rights for British carriers [notably British Airways] to fly to dependent states” (Lin, 2018, p. 41). The situation with French dependencies is uncannily similar: air access, in most cases, is through Paris; and, to make matters worse, in some cases, to the airport at Orly (ORY) rather than Roissy-Charles de Gaulle (CDG), which is France’s main connecting hub for long haul flights. This inferior and limited connectivity, has no direct access to a non-French airport in Europe, does not support a European but only a domestic tourism clientele (Gay, 2009, 2017). Meanwhile, in the Maltese archipelago, 82% of residents of the island of Gozo have voiced their support for a fixed link between the two islands: a 13-km tunnel under the seabed should link the islands by 2024 (Formosa, 2015; Martin, 2018).

While SNIJ residents covet connectivity, they do so as long as it serves *them*. Many are concerned about the flipside of easy access: the ‘invasion’ of expatriates who come to work and settle or retire on their island home (perhaps attracted by low tax regimes). Indeed, a number of such SNIJs have legislation in place to make it difficult for ‘non-belongers’ (e.g. Ahlbom, 2014) to add themselves to the local SNIJ population. Living in Åland requires a strong command of the Swedish language; Jersey and Guernsey have specific and “intentionally discriminatory” property markets for foreigners, to protect locals from housing price inflation (Le Rendu, 2004, p. 60); Bermuda maintains a register of fixed housing stock that is available for foreigners only (Baldacchino, 2010, p. 81). The islanders’ concern may have some merit: while SNIJs tend to have lower populations than SIS, they gravitate towards higher population densities (McElroy and Sanborn, 2005). And their very small size allows them to secure asymmetrical, unreciprocated deals with the metropole (Baldacchino, 2006; Baldacchino & Milne, 2006; Stevens, 1977).

Preserving ‘cultural identities’

And yet, not all seamless connections with the metropole are welcome. SNIJ residents, as much as their leaders, have been troubled by the pressure applied by metropolitan states for them to adopt or abide by some of “the same basic standards of good government” (Clegg, 2015, p. 3) that apply in the metropole. These include international human rights obligations. Such top-down actions implicate values and freedoms which SNIJ citizens do not necessarily condone, with which SNIJ citizens do not necessarily agree, and with whose negotiation and adoption they would not necessarily have pursued. Resistance and opposition to these interventions are often represented and articulated at home as attempts to preserve distinct ‘cultural identities’ in the face of globalisation, as well as legitimate pushbacks against blatant neo-colonialism. This is abundantly clear in relation to homosexuality. For example, the United Kingdom’s Parliament decided to impose legislation to decriminalise homosexual acts between

consenting adults in private by means of the Caribbean Territories (Criminal Law) Order 2000. But this move did not go down well in the UK's Caribbean Overseas Territories. Indeed, it has not ended all discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation in the Territories, in particular Bermuda and the Cayman Islands. In the Caribbean, the territories where LGBT+ partners are most tolerated, and welcomed in the guise of higher spending tourists, are the Dutch and French SNIJs. In contrast, sovereign island states, like Jamaica and Barbados, with no heavy external hand to force and oblige reform, still have 'buggery' laws in place. Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago's laws prescribe the harshest punishment for 'buggery' committed between two consenting adults: a life sentence and 25 years in prison respectively (ILGA, 2012).

Marine Protected Areas

Another area where top-down rules may be in place concerns marine protected areas, which are now all the rage. In 2016, the UK announced plans to include the designation of MPAs around St. Helena and Pitcairn and a commitment to designate marine protection zones around Ascension by 2019 and Tristan da Cunha by 2020, safeguarding over 4 million km² of ocean in the process (Phys.org, 2016). France has declared a large MPA around New Caledonia; the US around Hawai'i; and Chile around Rapa Nui (Easter Island). While there may well be noble environmental reasons for taking these steps, there are also significant political effects. It is not a coincidence that large-scale MPAs tend to be declared in areas where there is least likely to be major opposition, especially from fishers. Thus, the distant waters of remote, subnational island jurisdictions are favoured candidates (Farran, 2018). Indeed, it is relatively easy and cheap for a state to declare and publicise climate change policies on its small islands offshore with small (or no) populations; rather than dedicate resources to the more difficult, more expensive and politically tougher task of deindustrialising at home.

Once again, the restrictions or prohibitions on human activity in such MPAs are most likely to impact the livelihoods of islanders who may have had little or no involvement in the decision-making process leading to the MPAs. Moreover, claims and promises made about the benefits of the MPA to local inhabitants – such as employment in eco-tourism, better and larger fish size catches in the long-term, and profitable visits by teams of researchers and scientists – may not be delivered, or remain elusive; while restrictions on fishing efforts may quickly kick in. MPAs may create a dangerous illusion of protection when in fact no protection is occurring: indeed, the scale of the areas involved would pose significant management and enforcement challenges to any state, let alone SNIJs and their distant metropolises. Additionally, the management of MPAs is often not representative, and assigns considerable powers to international organisations, thus marginalising local or indigenous people (Farran, 2018; Malatesta, 2018). Finally, one motivation behind the declaration of an MPA around the Chagos islands – one of Gordon Brown's last endorsements as UK Prime Minister – may have been meant as a "cynical attempt" to prevent resettlement of the Chagossians to their homeland (Harris, 2015; *also* De Santo et al., 2011; Johannessen, 2018). The human dimension of MPA designation and management is important for the sustainability of the initiative and must incorporate the buy-in of locals who may otherwise feel cheated and alienated (Christie, et al., 2017).

Climate Change

As the evidence for climate change builds up, small islands find themselves at the front line of its environmental impact. The Carteret Islands of Papua New Guinea have seen a wholesale emigration of their island populations (Connell, 2016); and the citizens of Tuvalu may soon count amongst the world's first climate refugees (Farbotko & Lazrus, 2012).

A quasi- ‘laboratory and control experiment’ situation came about in the devastating 2018 hurricane season in the Caribbean. No less than 22 out of 29 island states and territories were somehow affected by one or more storms that lashed the region. The resulting stories are mixed: they remind us that there may be differences also among small sovereign states and among small territories. SIS like Dominica or Antigua, shackled by sovereignty, had to fend for themselves and appeal for help to the international community (Popke and Harrison, 2018). Devastated Barbuda, a SNIJ, was at the mercy of Antigua to which the population was transferred; many have accused the central government in St John of having resorted to ‘disaster capitalism’, exploiting the situation and orchestrating a change in the island’s common land tenure system (Gould and Lewis, 2018). In contrast, the Heads of State of France, the Netherlands, the US and the UK were quick to pledge support in cash and in kind for their string of island dependencies, ranging from Martinique (F) and Saba (NL) to the US Virgin Islands and the British Virgin Islands. French President Macron, US President Trump as well as Dutch Prime Minister Rutte, visited some of their respective SNIJs, but not UK Prime Minister May (Clegg, 2018). Meanwhile, one of the world’s largest SNIJs, Puerto Rico, was left reeling from the aftermath of Hurricane Maria: for many months after the storm, electricity had not yet been restored to all households on the island (Rodríguez-Díaz, 2018; Zorrilla, 2017).

In all this, small islands and their citizens are becoming increasingly adept at playing the climate change card effectively, attracting funding for all sorts of projects. The real challenge may be to divert funds from the pet projects of donors – which seek to future-proof the islands, such as planting mangroves in coastal areas – towards activities that may not be climate change related, but are more pressing in the short term, such as building a clinic (Baldacchino, 2017).

Discussion

Connectivity is the crux of island life. But, in the case of subnational island jurisdictions, one connection looms ascendant: that with the parent state. Reminiscent of the ideal type, two-unit archipelago, the mainland-island dynamic suffers from both centrifugal forces as well as centripetal ones, as elites pull or push for more or less autonomy, or for more or less transfer of responsibility, to maximise what are often short-term interests, or simply to attempt ‘damage control’ (La Flamme, 1983).

This is standard fare in small island politics, and especially SNIJ politics. Domestic politics in a SNIJ might actually mean international relations. Meanwhile, individuals and households strive to exploit global and local offerings and opportunities in a flexibly strategic combination. Migration patterns suggest deliberate or opportunistic brain circulation and rotation. Phases of education, settlement, employment and health care often involve multiple sites of practice. Lives are lived glocally. Globalisation is selectively resented, suffered and yet embraced.

Keeping this in mind, it is little wonder that SNIJ residents, by definition, are likely to be more *mobile* than the citizens of SIS. Their freedom of access to the metropole is a cherished right; and often one of the reasons why SNIJ publics tend not to support independence (Baldacchino, 2004). This means that many are likely to travel to the motherland for education, employment, visiting friends and relatives and/or settlement. The latter can be presumed to become more significant if permanent relocation becomes unavoidable, given the

consequences of climate change, environmental disasters and sea level rise, as well as disenchantment with local political and economic trajectories (e.g. Sharpe, 2005, about Aruba). Such aspirations are premised on a freedom of movement at which the citizens of SIDS can only look with envy, as they are encouraged to build resilience at home and ‘stay put’, rather than migrate (Baldacchino, 2017). Bertram (2009) has shown that, with respect to the Pacific, the largest proportion of island populations who live outside their island of birth are those of SNIJs, and especially the very smallest. Thus, for example, there are more Tokelauans living in New Zealand than on Tokelau itself. The regular mobility of islanders from a SNIJ to their respective metropole throughout the life course and as a culturally engrained practice is a critical consideration (Connell, 2008, 2015; Guzzardo et al., 2016).

Conclusion: the pivotal umbilical cord

A day in the life of a SNIJ resident may start with a rude awakening. Extreme flooding, a volcanic eruption or an earthquake may oblige evacuation. But, mercifully, there is an identified hinterland to retreat to. Economic decline, high unemployment or political, religious or gender identity-driven persecution may oblige a similar resort to exile/ex-isle.

For less dramatic and less exceptional events, SNIJ residents worry about the same things that most people worry about. Nevertheless, in putting food on the table, in finding the love of their life, in landing the job and career that they aspire to, and in securing a decent future for their children, SNIJ islanders tend towards a trans-territorial paradigm, ‘mixing and matching’ home and away. This is more easily accomplished when everyone has relatives living elsewhere; and especially in just one particular country with lingering ties that suggest an ‘upside-down’ decolonisation (Baldacchino, 2010). In most cases – except perhaps where imperial France and the US are involved – the metropole would be very pleased to entice and let the small island go and secure its own sovereignty; but the small island will not take the independence bait and clutches firmly and stubbornly on into the future.

With SIS, the umbilical cord with the former colonial power has been summarily cut, although many links – nostalgic, commercial, touristic – will remain; and the metropole may wish to project ‘soft power’ anyway. For SNIJ residents, the umbilical cord is pivotal. Politicians will build and gamble their careers around how to use, bend, widen or restrict this “lifeline for the isolated” (Weeks, 1994) ... while ensuring that it stays firmly in place. This strategy can help leverage maximum material benefits from edgy metropolises; and insist that the allocation of such resources be subject to local control, cementing a ‘spoils’ driven politics (e.g. Buker, 2005).

The balance between “dependence and autonomy” (Oostindie, 2006) is a longstanding strategy, and is likely to remain so. This, notwithstanding the fact that the range of constitutional arrangements for SNIJs is huge. Some are fully self-governing, and could join the United Nations as full members if they wanted to (Cook Islands, Niue); others are managed closely from the metropole. Some SNIJs send political representatives to the patron state legislature (e.g. Åland); others do not. Some SNIJ residents enjoy free movement and full citizenship rights in the metropole; others do not. Such variations are vital since they demarcate the political space in which residents can operate.

Meanwhile, residents will suffer the achievements and failures of the various layers of political officers, at home and abroad, while typically hedging their bets. Securing double residencies, undergoing multiple stints overseas for work and education, smartly choosing transportation routes and itineraries, becomes their order of the day, every day, for those who

have the resources and capabilities of doing so; and the dreams and desires of those who do not or cannot.

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