

**National University of Public Service
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- PhD candidate -

**The status and security problems of the dependent territories of
the United Kingdom and the United States of America**

PhD dissertation

Thesis-booklet

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**The definition of the scientific problem and justification of the research on
the topic**

The interest and the firm belief of importance of the subject of the dependent territories have been matured in me gradually over many years. I have always been interested in the history of the exotic regions, so during my historical studies of Eötvös Loránd University, I had specialized in the world outside Europe and the former colonies.

In 2006 I wrote my thesis on the topic of Cuban-American relations in the 20th century, paying special attention to the history of the Guantánamo naval base. During my studies at ELTE also attended to the Corvinus University of Budapest Faculty of Public Administration, but I had not lost my interest towards the Caribbean, I have been publishing articles and studies from 2007, on the subject. On the bases of these I passed into the Doctoral School of Military Sciences of the Zrínyi Miklós University of National Defense, with the leadership of Professor Dr. Szabó A. Ferenc.

After my graduation at the Corvinus University, the Faculty of Public Administration offered me an assistant lecturer status, so I have been participating in the educational activity of the Department of Social Theory since 2009. With the formation of the National University of Public Service in 2012, united my place of work, where I have been teaching, and the Doctoral School, where I have continued my research and doctoral studies.

Due to the profile of the university I've taken part in several research on the topic of public administration, which were published later, but in the center of my interest were still the international processes took place in Caribbean, so almost every year I published articles

in scientific journals. During my research in the region I noticed to an interesting phenomenon, that there are more dependent territories than independent sovereign states. My initial goal was to the introduce security situation of all dependent territories located in the Caribbean Sea, from the British Bermuda through the American Puerto Rico and the French Martinique and also the Dutch Curacao. Increasingly absorbed in the subject revealed the exciting world of dependent territories it formulated in my mind that in my thesis I present *all* the world's dependent territories - British, French, Danish, Dutch, American, etc. However, I realized that this would have exceeded the frame of the dissertation. Finally – with the valuable help of my supervisor - I found that my work would only examine and compare the dependent territories of the United Kingdom and the United States. I choose these two countries, as both have a significant number of remote areas: the UK, has fourteen British Overseas Territories, and the United States has also fourteen Insular Areas.

I believe that examination of the topic is very timely, for several reasons. On the one hand, comprehensive work in this topic has not yet been published since the political transition a in Hungarian language, and there are territories, which history, political status, significance (based on my research) are totally unknown in Hungary.¹ The reason of it is probably its small geographic area, low population, and apparent insignificance in the “high politics”, but - as I present in my work – in many cases, these are situated in geopolitically important areas, from where significant territories can be kept under control.

Narrowing down the study area is also justifiable by the fact, that the navy the of these two countries are often characterized by military historians as blue water navy, in other words these countries has such naval capabilities that can cover the oceans of world.

The further reason why I believe in the significance of the topic is that the UN declared the period of 2011-2020 to the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. Almost all of the analyzed territories appeared in the list of non-self-governing territories of the UN, in other words these are colonies. Would it be anachronism the existence of these territories in the dawn of the XXI century? I find it very interesting that while the United Kingdom was a traditional colonial power, in contrast the U.S. itself is result of an anti-colonialist movement, nevertheless both country possess territories those are considered colonies. However, the political systems of both countries are democratic, so there are no institutional barriers to the development of self-government.

¹ Prior to the political transition in the eighties, several works was published by Árkus István dealing with such areas, but these works on the one hand bear the ideological imprint of the age, on the other hand, these are primarily considered a political manifesto, to hastening the liquidation of the remaining colonial empires.

The last reason why I believe a Hungarian analysis is justified is that, although most of these territories are remote from Hungary - the nearest British territory, the base areas in Cyprus are nearly 2,000 kilometers away from our boundaries – after all both analyzed country were a founder of that military-security alliance, the NATO, in witch Hungary also has a membership since 1999. It is essential to the domestic policy-makers to have a comprehensive study that shows the possible threats of the territories (be it remote or small) of our allies. This study may also be found useful to reveal the signs of any future conflict, its participants, intensity and location.

Goals of the research and hypotheses

From a Central European point of view the state and its territory, is often considered as a homogeneous land, but it is not necessarily so. Sovereignty, of course, is not related to a continuous land cover, as we see this on the examples of states, which has also nautical territories and islands; in fact these territories may fall a considerable distance from each other. The historical example to this is the age of colonialism, when the great colonial empires conquered vast lands under their rule, which not only did not have geographical connection with the mother country, but also suppressed the prevailing state both in the extent of territory and in their number of inhabitants.²

The ideas of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, however, evoked great response not only in European countries, but in the colonies – so the spread the ideals of sovereignty of people and independence became the catalyst of the independence movements unfolding in the nineteenth century. Following decolonization process after World War II, most of the colonial empires - some easier, some harder – let go its former colonies, providing them the terms of a separate and independent state.

The decolonization was undisputedly one of the most visible and important phenomenon of the international relations after the Second World War, which transformed the political map of the Earth. However it is important to draw attention to a parallel phenomenon as well. The majority of the former colonizer states still hold some territories under their rule, and furthermore number of areas can be found the process of independence has still not started, witch means they still belong to the former colonial states.

The Hungarian literature has paid little attention to this issue. The focus of this work is change these tendencies, and highlight the issue from historical, security-political and legal perspective.

Therefore in my work, I would like to introduce the dependent territories of two countries:

- On the one hand the British Overseas Territories of the United Kingdom, which are made up of the following areas: Akrotiri and Dhekelia (The Sovereign Base Areas of Cyprus), Anguilla, Bermuda, British Antarctic Territory, British Indian Ocean Territory, British Virgin Islands, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, Cayman Islands, Falkland Islands,

² In 1914, only a few thousand British soldiers and officers controlled roughly 11 million square miles and almost 400 million non-British subject – Brzezinski, Zbigniew: *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives*. Basic Books. 1997. - A nagy sakktabla, Budapest, Európa Kiadó, 1999. 32.

Gibraltar, Montserrat, Pitcairn Islands, Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha, and the Turks and Caicos Islands

- On the other hand the Insular Areas of the United States: American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, United States Virgin Islands, Baker Island, Howland Island, Jarvis Island, Johnston Atoll, Kingman Reef, Midway Atoll, Navassa Island, Palmyra Atoll, Wake Island.

I examine the history of these areas, how they came under the rule of the dominating states, and the reasons why they dropped out from the decolonization process, and why they are still attached to an another country.

My research goal is to sum up and evaluate the small number existing Hungarian literature, and to review and to process the greater number of relevant international literature. Based on the processed available foreign language literature the subject of the investigation is the present and potential future threats of the dependent territories, and also to overview and forecast any tensions or risks, they have caused.

I present the constitutional relationship of these areas to the motherlands, what legal categories exists in certain national jurisdictions, and weather it can still be called as a colonial relationship.

My aim is also to investigate what characterizes the society in these areas, what sort of difficulties these societies have to cope with, what kind of internal conflicts have stretched them, and whether they share similar features or can be compared to similar areas of another countries.

I aim to present the significance of these territories from strategic-geopolitical point of view, and what international conflict or internal political tensions have been generated by their existence as well as how it is possible to solve them.

I wish to offer a review on military installations located on the dependent territories and the military units those serving on it. I also wish to examine the roles and functions of the military organizations in society of the small remote islands.

Hypotheses:

There is a widespread view that the dissolution of the colonial system is an irreversible process, and that all the former dependent territories sooner or later gains their independence. My work draws this claim under critical study, and through the example of the British Overseas Territories and the Insular Areas of the United States I intend to demonstrate that change is not expected in the status of the these areas, in a medium term.

My **first hypothesis** is that the position of the inhabited dependent territories can not be characterized as a one-sided dependency, or as colonial status. Today the relationship between the mother country and the territories is more a relationship based on mutual benefits where both parties have their rights and obligations.

According to my **second hypothesis** neither the British Overseas Territories nor on the Insular Areas of the United States can be expected to gain independence in a medium or long term. In some cases it is possible to change the nature of the constitutional relationship, but in every case, it can only be a solution, in which the territory will remain under the rule of the mother country.

My **third hypothesis** is that most of these dependent territories have a strategic importance for the central power. However, this strategic importance may vary according to the challenges of the era; including substantial military transfers as well.

In my view, the geopolitical significance of the Pacific territories will maintain or will increase, but the importance of the territories in the Caribbean will decrease, or where it remains, have to face a different kind of threat than in the past.

According to my **fourth hypothesis**, although the administration initially was maintained by military leaders in many territories, with time the military administration has been replaced by civilian governance. This shows that the military administration did not proved to be final. In other words, these dependent territories can prove the thesis: according to with a solely military solution is never the final resolution to a conflict.

Scientific Methods

The dissertation was basically prepared by document analyzing research method that is typical in the social sciences research. The collection of material, the material assessment and the conclusions are based on the analysis of selected foreign literature, evaluation of American and British background government documents, and legal materials.

Thus, the nature of my research is interdisciplinary, my goal is use the same time the *international legal, political, geographical, historical and political-security* approach in my work. As far as I know and according to my research a Hungarian study hasn't yet been made which could have offered an overview of the Anglo-Saxon dependent territories, or have reviewed their status in a complex way. During my work I aspire to review and summarize all Hungarian studies, which dealt with these matters from the aspect of historical, geopolitical or international law.

However, due to the geographical distance from Hungary, researcher of the topic has to face several challenges. I received a lot of help and constructive criticism in relation of the British territories from Professor Gergely Egedy, the head of the department and researcher of the Anglo-Saxon area. A significant number of foreign literature is not available in Hungarian libraries, thus one part of these was bought during my travels abroad, and I acquired remarkable part of these through international interlibrary loan, in which got a great help from the University Library of the Faculty of Public Administration. In this regard, I would like to express my special thanks to the library staff.

During my work the proper use of internet services was essential, so I gained access to many government documents, which do exist in printed form - but only available in libraries and archives that collect government documents papers and prints from Washington and London. Through the internet I also obtained articles of journals which are only available in printed form in the remote locations, which are in the center of the study.

It made it possible to form a picture about the main public policy issues that the residents of the areas are concerned with.

These examples show why the internet usage was inevitable for the study. Naturally, in relation to information from the World Wide Web, I particularly emphasize the source critical approach, and I used only relevant, reliable and verifiable sources: such as government documents and papers, websites of military facilities, sites and databases of public and international institutions, online collections of legal materials and public laws, materials of off-line existing research institutes and research groups.

Beyond the document analyzing, I use the scientific methods of induction and deduction as well. In the deductive method, I conclude from the previously known general knowledge, - such as the characteristics of international relations – while I also provide an explanation of the individual cases. I use the inductive conclusion, when I start from the local political or social phenomenon experienced in the territories and I advance to the direction of general laws, which will thus also explain the individual cases. To archive the final conclusions I start from of the individual cases and continue to explore the general regularities of the islands.

Description of the study by chapter:

I divided my dissertation four major structural units, witch also have their subdivision.

1: The first major chapter is the introductory part of the thesis. It justifies the choice of topic and formulates the scientific problem, sets the goals for research and the hypotheses and describes the research methods.

2: In the second major section I study the characteristics of the British Overseas Territories, along the research objectives and hypotheses, divided the analysis into five subdivision.

First I present the international background of the decolonization and the impact on the British colonial policy, providing a historical background to the dissertation.

The following section covers the common features of the British Overseas Territories, paying special attention to the conceptual framework of English law referring the issue, and then I come to the presentation of the governmental activities of the British governments of the past decades. In the third section the constitutional relations between the mainland and the Overseas Territories are analyzed, covering general characteristics and local peculiarities. In the fourth section, which is the most spacious of the four, following my own classification system, I present each of the fourteen British Overseas Territories. First I analyze the status of Bermuda and the five British islands located in the Caribbean, (Anguilla, Bermuda, Cayman Islands, Montserrat, Turks and Caicos Islands, British Virgin Islands), on the one hand along the political and economic relations maintained with the motherland, and their aspirations for independence, on the other hand I turn to the examination of the security aspects of the area. This is followed by the analysis of the South Atlantic Territories (British Antarctic Territory, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, Falkland Islands, St. Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha), including a special study on the conflict of the Falkland Islands in 1982, and the forming international competition for the strategic resources of Antarctica.

Finally, I come to all the territories that due to geographical reasons do not belong to the former two groups. Presenting the specific situation of Cyprus Sovereign Base Areas, witch successfully controls the Middle East, Gibraltar, and the centuries-old struggle of Spain to regain it, then the almost unknown British Indian Ocean Territory which plays a strategic role in the security of the Indian Ocean at the same time, and finally the tiny Pitcairn Islands.

Finally, the fifth section I sum up the preceding and conclude the consequences, along the research objectives and hypotheses.

3: In the third major section the Insular Areas of the United States are presented, the study is divided into five subdivisions, which are thematically the same as the sections of the British Overseas Territories.

In the first subdivisions, I begin with the historical background in which I review the procession of the territorial expansion of the United States. This is followed by analysis of territorial policy of the U.S. Insular Areas. The third subdivision describes the legal status of the Insular Areas and their constitutional relationship with the motherland. The fourth subdivision deals with the detailed examination of the Insular Areas according to my classification system. First, I examine the Caribbean territories: Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and elaborate on the Guantanamo Bay naval base as well, presenting the current status of these areas, with special emphasis on their role in the U.S. national security. This is followed by the analysis of the Pacific territories such as American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands. Finally, I mention the importance of the remote small islands under United States jurisdiction, including the Midway and Wake Atoll. The fifth subdivision includes the summary and the conclusions of the preceding subdivisions.

4: In the fourth major chapter I carry out the comparison of the dependent territories of the United Kingdom and the United States according to the following five aspects.

First, I present the past, the direction, and the nature of the policies of expansionism pursued by the two states from a historical point of view. This is followed by the examination of their current legal status, and their relationship with the mother country, mentioning the political rights of the inhabitants of the territories, and the issue of citizenship. The third aspect of examination, is the analysis of the economic situation in dependent territories. This includes the importance of the access to raw materials due to their geographic location; and also the comparison of development indicators with the motherland and the neighboring independent states. In the fourth aspect I study and compare the aspirations for independence of the dependent territories and the responses and reactions of the domain state. Finally, as a fifth aspect I present the factors of threats to the security of the territories, grouped according to the source, from the natural to the manmade factors.

The comparison is followed by the evaluation of the geopolitical situation in the dependent territories. After this in my conclusions I summarize the mutually beneficial relations between territories and mother countries. From all of these I summarize my previous conclusions and establish the new research results of my dissertation.

Summary of conclusions:

I. Reviewed the British Overseas Territories I draw the following conclusions:

The British Overseas Territories are made of the territories, which once belonged to the British colonial empire, but were left out from the decolonization wave after the Second World War. As they did not start the independence movements and processes, or there is no permanent population, as a result of which there is subject of self-determination. It is important to note that, the United Kingdom did not prevent the aspirations for independence of the population of the British Overseas Territories.

A single uniform government policy, relating to Territories, was only formed relatively late, in the second half of the 1990s, but since then an intensive legislative process took place reinventing the relations.

London provided broad autonomy for the territories, only keeping the foreign and military affairs and final legislative prerogative in her hand, although the latter was rarely used. The citizenship, the most important question for the territories have also been solved from the perspective of the territories.

In some cases (Bermuda, Cayman Islands, Gibraltar, the Falkland Islands), the local economies achieved better performance in GDP than the mother country. It is not only favorable in the perspective of the inhabitants of the islands, but it may provide essential services to the mainland's economy.

The British Overseas Territories provide significant raw material reserves, strategic resources to the United Kingdom, which in turn supplies considerable financial aid and technical assistance to the disadvantaged (Saint Helena) or damaged (Montserrat) islands. The assistance of the mainland is crucial in policies in which the low-population areas wouldn't solve it themselves, like the fight against organized crime and drug trafficking (Caribbean Islands).

Possessing other territories (Gibraltar, The Sovereign Base Areas of Cyprus, British Indian Ocean Territory, Falkland Islands) is not only important because of valuable minerals, but as a result of their geographical location, geopolitically important regions can be controlled from there.

London strongly protects the British sovereignty and the right to self-determination of the residents: by diplomatic means (for example Gibraltar) or with armed forces (Falkland Islands).

As a summary, it can be stated that the former colonial unilateral dependence and vulnerability has been replaced by a bilateral, rights and obligations regulated relationship, based on mutual benefits.

This is the reason why the British Overseas Territories their endeavors of independence did not even start or if it started was not successful - as we can see it in most areas. The great majority of the population of the areas is satisfied with the situation and moving on the path of independence is not appealing – this cannot be expected to change.

II. Reviewed the Insular Areas of the United States I draw the following conclusions:

Although the United States, itself was born as a result of a rebellion against a colonial system, at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries it obtained a number of islands, witch ones definitely did not want to insert their national statehood structure. Why we cannot consider the United States as traditional colonial empire, is that the main reason for all expansionism was the interests of the U.S. national security. The Supreme Court in Washington has made it clear that the Congress has the sole right to determine what rights are given to the new territories. Thus the “Constitution does not follow the flag” principle was born in the so-called insular cases.

Following the international decolonization process most of the populated islands received constitutions, organic acts from the Congress, but in these their subordinate role was frozen in. Although the United States in statements supported the right to self-determination, in practice the USA sometimes made the various parties of the territories fight each other, to slow the independence movements, and sometimes deliberately obstructed the independence aspirations (Puerto Rico). In the United States there is no such a single and unified governmental policy than in the UK, related to the Insular Areas. The regional constitutions and organic acts define the statuses of the Insular Areas, making clear the limitations of the local authority, and the limited political rights of citizens in any case. The Congress in Washington, decides in the issues of the federal powers (the military and foreign affairs, finance, sometimes the taxes), and can veto any local legislation.

Despite all this, the United States can not be considered as an exploitive, politically repressive power, since after the Second World War, the previous military administration was replaced by a civil administration, in all islands, and for the inhabitants the U.S. provides citizenship everywhere, (although in American Samoa it is limited), and with that wide range of civil rights.

The United States also provides substantial direct economic aid to the Insular Areas, and promotes the investments from the mainland through a very favorable investment stimulating tax policy. As the result of these steps, the economic and other social indicators of the Insular Areas – even if it can not reach the mainland – are much better than those of the independent countries in their region.

The United States, as a superpower, also became attractive to certain areas, by its economic power. Thus the residents of the Northern Mariana Islands volunteered to be the subject to U.S. sovereignty, refusing the independence.

To the United States the possession of these islands – just like when they were acquired – is primarily a question of security, and secondly an economic issue. From Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands the superpower can successfully control the Caribbean, particularly the hostile Cuba, and from the Mariana Islands the east east pool of the Pacific Ocean.

Although its territory is not significant, but the Johnston Atoll, Midway Atoll, and Wake Atoll were also used for military purposes, from where its region could be controlled by the “unsinkable aircraft carriers” but worked as part as the supply route to the Northern Mariana Islands as well.

With the benefits of American citizenship, and the substantial economic and financial assistance, the United States has made the inhabitants of the islands interested in maintaining the current status and to reject the independence.

New scientific results

My dissertation contains the following new scientific results:

I. I have revealed a subject that was previously unexamined in Hungary: the position of the dependent territories of the United Kingdom and the United States of America. I studied the historical processes establishing these areas, reviewed their current status and the relevant issues concerning and the local societies, and placed them into a systematic structure.

II. I presented the role of the territories in geopolitics and I pointed out that more of the territories lie at strategically important geographical location. Therefore they may play an important role in a possible future conflict as a source of conflict or for example as a major stop of a supply route.

The strategic importance of the following areas is likely increasing in the future: South Atlantic areas (Antarctica, Falkland Islands, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands), and the American dominions Islands in the Western Pacific (Guam, Northern Mariana Islands) as well as the islands leading from the mother countries to these locations (St. Helena, Ascension, Wake Island, Midway atoll).

However, the significance of the Caribbean islands seems to decrease, since in the post-bipolar world the United States has a decisive influence in this region – the influence of Cuba has decreased.

III. I proved that the status of the territories can not be shown as one-sided dependency and can not be described as colonial, because today the relationship based on mutual benefits and either party has the rights and well as its obligations.

IV. I revealed that the independent statehood is not expected to be achieved neither in the case of American Insular Areas nor in the case of the British Overseas Territories in the medium or long term. In my view, the Anglo-Saxon states pursued the population of the territories making them interested in rejection the independence.

Recommendations to the practical use of the research results and further research directions on the topic

On the basis of the arguments described above it can be agreed that this research topic is a valuable field for numerous reasons. I see two major directions for further research: on the one hand the position and legal status of other (French, Dutch, Danish, Norwegian) dependent territories deserves further study. On the other hand, the relationship between the European Union and the dependent territories, and the implementation of EU law could also be an area for analysis.

The research results can be utilized primarily in university education the author plans to start an optional seminar for domestic university students based on the findings, and also an English language course for visiting students Erasmus from abroad.

This lecture series may serve as the basis of further research, to examine the practices of other European countries, worked up the status of French, Dutch, Danish dependent territories as well. The interested members of scientific student groups may be involved in further research.

In connection with the subject, the author plans to publish a course book that on the one hand effectively helps the students to prepare for the examination, on the other hand contains information to the general public about a relatively undiscovered topic.

To these plans, author has the support of the director of the National University of Public Service, Institute of State and Social Theory, and support of the head of the Department of Social Theory.

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