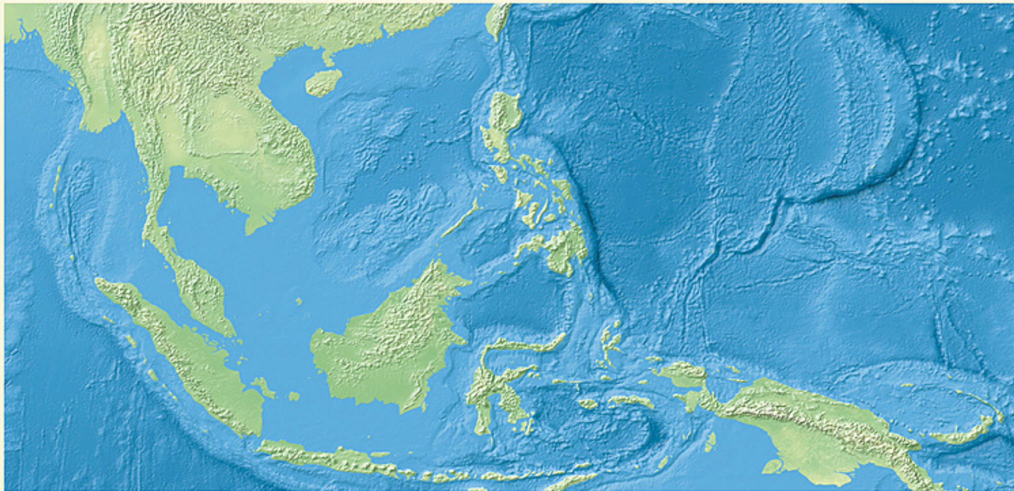
Maike Hausen

Reviewing Britain's Presence East of Suez

Australian, Canadian and New Zealand Foreign Policy Considerations Surrounding Southeast Asia, 1956–1971



Bedrohte Ordnungen 17

Mohr Siebeck

Bedrohte Ordnungen

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Funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG, German Research Foundation) – Project-ID 170320015 – SFB 923

ISBN 978-3-16-161417-0 / eISBN 978-3-16-161418-7
DOI 10.1628/978-3-16-161418-7

ISSN 2197-5477 / eISSN 2568-4035 (Bedrohte Ordnungen)

The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliographie; detailed bibliographic data are available at *http://dnb.dnb.de.*

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The book was typeset by epline in Böblingen using Times typeface. It was printed on non-aging paper and bound by Beltz Grafische Betriebe GmbH in Bad Langensalza. The cover was designed by Uli Gleis in Tübingen. Image: Topographic Map of Southeast Asia, CCO.

Printed in Germany.

Introduction to the series *Threatened Order*

What happens to societies when the options for taking action become uncertain, behavioural expectations and routines are called into question, when actors have the feeling that they will probably not be able to rely on one another either now or in the near future, when threats are spoken of, and reasons for them are sought and mostly found? Time is a scarce commodity. Emotions come increasingly to the fore and change. The boundaries of social groups become questionable. Threatened orders have a high potential for rapid social change, though this does not always have to come into force.

Threatened orders can emerge from catastrophes, they can arise from sudden conflicts within society, can erupt from latent tensions, or be the result of competition between orders. Various research traditions therefore flow into studies that do not begin with classificatory terms such as turmoil, revolution, or natural catastrophe, but instead focus on dynamic social processes that are linked to the perception and assertion of threat and the recourse to order.

Threatened orders exist in all historical periods and all cultures of the world. Do similar mechanisms operate across time and space? Can different typologies be identified? The series *Threatened Order* invites historians, social scientists and cultural researchers to contribute to these questions. While it is linked to the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft-funded Collaborative Research Centre 923 "Threatened Order. Societies under Stress", the series wishes to go beyond this in initiating and documenting research.

The Editors

Preface

The research, writing and publication of this study would not have been possible without the support of many people. Firstly, I am indebted to the resources and opportunities provided by the Collaborative Research Center 923 (CRC) “Threatened Order – Societies under Stress” at the Eberhard Karls University of Tuebingen. This study is based on research in the CRC-project “G04: End of Empire. Re-ordering in Australia, New Zealand and Canada, 1960–1980”. With the generous financial support of the Deutsche Forschungsgesellschaft (DFG, German Research Foundation), the CRC provided the supportive framework to enable such an ambitious research project focussing on the comparative and transnational perspective of three countries. Additionally, I benefitted from the frequent contacts with other researchers and doctoral candidates, a helpful interdisciplinary exchange furthering my understanding of various sociological and cultural theories, which contributed to the theoretical underpinnings of this study. A special thanks goes to the CRC coordination staff of Andrea Kirstein, Cornelia Stoll and Heike Bäder.

I am most grateful for the support of my supervisor, Professor Ewald Frie, who not only offered me this exciting research topic, but also tremendously supported me in the intellectual elaboration and execution of this study. My gratitude also extends to the various researchers ‘in the field’ who improved the approach and outlook of this work, foremost Professor James Curran, who offered advice and support on various occasions, and whose own research contributed a great deal to the perspective of this study. Further essential contacts were Stuart Ward, Phillip Buckner, Ursula Lehmkuhl, and many more whose guidance and advice helped in giving this paper shape. Among contacts from the diplomatic field, I was fortunate to talk to Brian Lynch, Neil Walter, Terence O’Brien, John McCarthy and the late Blair Seaborn who graciously shared their recollections of their time in public service with me. I would also like to thank Graeme Davison for his hospitality during my research visit to Melbourne, and Paul Marsden for his kind guidance and support throughout my research stay in Ottawa. Thanks are also due to the staff of the many archives and libraries I visited in preparation of this study. Lastly, I am grateful for the numerous people I met during my research visits to the different countries under study who were willing to share their perspectives and thoughts on this topic.

During these years of research, I would have been lost in the academic jungle without my two colleagues and friends Clara Seltmann and Sebastian Koch. Our research group developed its own enthusiasm and drive for this topic, and I am happy and excited to see this publication come to fruition as part of a joint effort for a combined study of the End of Empire in Australia, Canada and New Zealand. I am indebted to them, not just for their support in my research and writing but also for their encouragement and endless support beyond academia.

Equally, this study would have not been possible without the support of my friends and family. I would like to thank my sister Nora for her tremendous help in sorting appendixes, corrections and amendments, and for her foresight and strength to bring such a large work to completion. I was also fortunate to have the support of Peter, who took it upon him to guide and improve my English skills from early drafts of the thesis up to the finished paper. To both of them I am indebted for their help, patience, and encouragement, especially on the last legs of this thesis. Further thanks go to Marie and Daniel for regularly checking on the progress of this project and offering support and help along the way.

This study is dedicated to my parents, who always supported and engaged on so many levels with my studies and research interests. The love and support I have received from them throughout the last years helped me tackle the usual frustrations of such a research project, and I am proud to finally share the results of my studies with them.

And finally, this study is dedicated to the memory of my brother Jonas.

Maike Hausen

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Abbreviations

ADC	Australian Defence Committee
ADEA	Australian Department of External Affairs
AEmb	Australian Embassy
AHC	Australian High Commission
AHoR	Australian House of Representatives
AIIA	Australian Institute for International Affairs
AJSS	Australian Joint Service Staff
ALP	Australian Labor Party
AMDA	Anglo-Malayan Defence Agreement
AMEA	Australian Minister for External Affairs
AMD	Australian Minister for Defence
ANU	Australian National University
ANZ	Archives New Zealand
ANZAAS	Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science
ANZAC	Australian and New Zealand Army Corps
ANZAM	Defence arrangement formed by Australia, New Zealand and Malaya
ANZUK	Tripartite force formed by Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom
ANZUS	Australia, New Zealand, United States Security Treaty
APMD	Australian Prime Minister's Department
ASEA	Australian Secretary of the Department of External Affairs
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
ASPAC	Asian Pacific Council
AUD	Australian Dollar
BDCC (FE)	British Defence Coordination Committee (Far East)
BCDS	British Chief of the Defence Staff
BEmb	British Embassy
BLP	British Labour Party
BHC	British High Commission
BJSLS	British Joint Services Liaison Staff
CBS	Canadian Broadcasting Cooperation
CDEA	Canadian Department of External Affairs
CEmb	Canadian Embassy
CENTO	Central Treaty Organisation
CHC	Canadian High Commission
CHOGM	Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting
CIIA	Canadian Institute for International Affairs
CINCFE	Commander in Chief Far East
CLARET	British Secret Operation in Borneo from about July 1964 until July 1966
CO	Commonwealth Office

COS	Chief of Staff
CRO	Commonwealth Relations Office
CSR	Commonwealth Strategic Reserve
CSSEA	Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs
CUSSEA	Canadian Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs
DAFP	Documents on Australian Foreign Policy
DC	Defence Committee
DEA	Department of External Affairs
EA	External Affairs
EEC	European Economic Community
FADC	Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee
FO	Foreign Office
FPDA	Five Power Defence Arrangements
FPC	*Foreign Policy for Canadians*
ICCS	International Commission for Control and Supervision
ICSC	International Commission for Supervision and Control
LAC	Library and Archives Canada
LBJ	Lyndon B. Johnson
MP	Member of Parliament
NAA	National Archives Australia
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NCDS	New Zealand Chief of the Defence Staff
NDEA	New Zealand Department of External Affairs
NDLS	New Zealand Defence Liaison Staff
NEmb	New Zealand Embassy
NHC	New Zealand High Commission
NIIA	New Zealand Institute for International Affairs
NLA	National Library of Australia
NLNZ	National Library of New Zealand
NLP	New Zealand Labour Party
NMD	New Zealand Minister of Defence
NMEA	New Zealand Minister of External Affairs
NNP	New Zealand National Party
NORAD	North American Air Defence Agreement
NSEA	New Zealand Secretary of the Department of External Affairs
PKI	Partai Komunis Indonesia
PMD	Prime Minister's Department
PRC	People's Republic of China
RAAF	Royal Australian Air Force
SEA	Secretary of External Affairs
SEATO	Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation
SSEA	Secretary of State of External Affairs
TNA	National Archives Kew
UN	United Nations
UNEF	United Nations Emergency Force
US/USA	United States of America

Part 1

Introduction – The Former Dominions at the End of Empire

It must have been a truly unpleasant meeting. On the 21 April 1967, the British High Commissioner to Australia, Charles Johnston, met with a visibly upset Australian Prime Minister, Harold Holt, to discuss the latest British indications for a military withdrawal from its position 'East of Suez' in Southeast Asia. Holt had told him that the Australian government was shocked by the British plans to withdraw its military partially by 1971 and entirely by the mid-1970s. After the meeting, Johnston conveyed to his superiors that "for the first time in my experience of him, Mr. Holt looked badly shaken and grey in the face".[1] Holt had demanded him to convey his mood back to London; Australia was prepared for some reductions, but a complete withdrawal would undermine the Western security effort in the region.[2]

Almost a year later, the British military planning created another unpleasant gathering. This time, British Secretary for Commonwealth Affairs George Thomson was sent to Canberra to discuss the British plans of accelerating the entire withdrawal up to 1971. At the meeting, he was not only facing outraged Australian politicians, but also New Zealand representatives. Reporting back from his meeting, Thomson described the mood in New Zealand as one of great shock, and one that presented itself as regret over the end of a security partnership: "There was a sense of sadness rather than anger at what they clearly regarded as the ending of an era."[3] On the other side of the Pacific, in Canada, officials were observing the discussions closely. Even here, where British co-operation had played only a minor role in security concerns for Southeast Asia, officials considered the British decision as having "far reaching implications"[4] for all its allies and showed themselves sympathetic to the feelings in Australia and New Zealand.

As the reactions underline, the British presence 'East of Suez' had formed the cornerstone of a security relationship with all three countries that exceed-

[1] TNA FCO 46/54, BHC Canberra (Johnston) to CO 635, 21.4.1967, and BHC Canberra (Johnston) to CO 636, 21.4.1967.

[2] TNA FCO 46/54, BHC Canberra (Johnston) to CO 635, 21.4.1967; see also NAA A1838 TS691/1/1, Part 1, ADEA to AEmb. Washington 1246, 21.4.1967.

[3] TNA FCO 24/92, BHC Wellington 78, 12.1.1968.

[4] LAC RG25 A-3-c, Vol. 8903, 20-BRIT-1-3-E.Suez, BHC London, 22.1.1968.

ed the functional framework of strategic arrangements. The outrage and regret suggest that the British plans also undermined shared outlooks and cooperation originating from imperial times. However, as strong and charged as the Australasian reactions to the British decision were, they were dismissed only a few years later by statements of independent defence and national self-reliance in both Tasman countries. Realists could claim in the early 1970s that Britain's withdrawal from Southeast Asia was only a logical and necessary consequence to ease Britain's financial burdens and to respond to an altered strategic environment. In all three countries, voices would be heard that imperial defence had been already dismantled since the Second World War and that every following strategic concept had been solely determined by national interests and the American alliance. These contemporary assessments of the British strategic value are matched by current historical studies that suggest a Canadian disengagement from strategic interests shared with Britain since the late 1940s, followed by the Australian and New Zealand departure in the mid-1950s.[5]

While there is some ground to support the thesis of a predominant American alliance for all three countries after the Second World War, riddles about the British relationship remain. None of the assumptions of a strategic switch could explain why the British decision to leave Southeast Asia in the late 1960s was so strongly repudiated in Australia and New Zealand and was watched with mixed feelings in Canada. The contemporary rhetoric of crisis, anxiety and uncertainty seems to reveal a certain unease about the British course of action. The debate on the consequences of the withdrawal East of Suez was charged with emotions ranging from perplexity to anger and regret. Aside from expressed emotions, the narratives used during the debate show that officials felt forced to review their relationship with Britain as well as their self-perception. Not only were they fundamentally affected in their strategic framework, but it was also the conduct and context of Britain's decision that led to a highly charged atmosphere in Australia and New Zealand. While not being as affected in its security framework as the other two countries, Canada still worried about the long-term implications of the retreat. Britain's 'turn to Europe' challenged the relationship with their former 'mother country' as well as concepts of regional and international order in the age of Cold War and decolonisation.

To understand this impact of Britain's withdrawal on the former dominions' outlook, their special status within the British Empire has to be acknowledged. Here, all three countries represented a group of colonies that soon gained sub-

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[5] *Jack L. Granatstein*, How Britain's Weakness Forced Canada Into the Arms of the United States, Toronto 1989; *Jack L. Granatstein*, From Mother Country to Far Away Relative: The Canadian-British Military Relationship From 1945, in: Canadian Military History 18/1, 2009, 55–60; *David McLean*, From British Colony to American Satellite? Australia and the USA During the Cold War, in: Australian Journal of Politics & History 52/1, 2006, 64–79; *Coral Bell*, Dependent Ally. A Study in Australian Foreign Policy, St. Leonards 1984.

stantial freedom and self-government, the so-called dominions.[6] Together with the fourth dominion, South Africa[7], they received special recognition within the Empire and felt attached to Britain by loyalty, shared values and common heritage rather than by colonial rule. Their origins as white settler colonies and the predominantly white Anglo-Saxon immigration throughout the nineteenth up to the mid-twentieth century established in all three countries a population that looked to Britain as a cultural, social and political model. Britain supported this positive relationship with a gradual concession of independence and self-government that culminated in the Balfour Report in 1926. This report, leading eventually to the constitutional act of the Statute of Westminster in 1931, defined the dominions as "autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate to one another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations".[8]

With dominion status, independence of all three countries emerged in gradual steps and was "granted rather than wrested".[9] As a result, the transition from a colony to an independent nation is highly contested in all three countries. As New Zealand historian James Belich provokingly noted, "The histories of Australia, New Zealand, and Canada as independent nations share a curious characteristic: nobody knows when they began."[10] In contrast to processes of decolonisation elsewhere in the British Empire, the dominions did not engage in profound anticolonial conflicts to establish a cohesive and sovereign national state. Apart from the subjugation and repression of indigenous people within

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[6] *John Darwin*, A Third British Empire? The Dominion Idea in Imperial Politics, in: Judith Brown/Wm R. Louis (Ed.), The Oxford History of the British Empire, Volume IV, Oxford 1999, 64–87. The following study takes some freedom of writing when it comes to the declaration of the three countries involved. In some cases, for the sake of a better reading, Australia, Canada and New Zealand are referred to as "dominions" or "nations" even though the status as either dominion or nation at the time under study can be argued. The term dominion was well used after the mid-decade, although all three countries did officially abolish the title after the Second World War. *Lorna Lloyd*, Us and Them? The Changing Nature of the Commonwealth Diplomacy, in: Journal of Commonwealth & Comparative Politics 39/3, 2001, 9–30, 13.

[7] The case of South Africa is not part of the presented study for a variety of reasons: Its composition as a settler colony with a white elite ruling over a marginalised black majority does not correspond with the political, ethnic and cultural issues Canada, Australia and New Zealand faced in the twentieth century. For a study of Commonwealth relations, South Africa also presented another case after its introduction of apartheid in 1948 and its departure from the Commonwealth in 1961; *Lorna Lloyd*, Diplomacy With a Difference. The Commonwealth Office of High Commissioner 1880–2006, Leiden/Boston 2010, 192.

[8] Quoted in: *Ronald Hyam*, Britain's Declining Empire. The Road to Decolonisation 1918–1968, Cambridge 2008, 70.

[9] As stated by *Malcolm McKinnon*, Independence and Foreign Policy. New Zealand in the World Since 1935, Auckland 1993, 149.

[10] *James Belich*, Replenishing the Earth. The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo-World 1783–1939, Oxford 2009, 461.

their territories[11], all three countries had no fundamental experience of claiming sovereignty in a violent struggle. Similarly, a radical departure from British institutions to profile indigenous or local elements did not take place. Since Britain was part of a preferential system of cooperation, including various areas of foreign policy, the close association of institutions and interests was not questioned.

Nevertheless, in the field of foreign policy and defence, all three countries consider themselves today as sovereign, self-reliant entities that perceive little of their imperial heritage as binding to a joint defence strategy. Most of this national self-confidence and assertion was created over discussions in the 1960s. Recent research related to this nation-building argues to consider this decade as a phase of disentanglement from the British 'mother country', and called to integrate it into a larger study on the 'End of Empire'. While earlier events or transformations have been proposed as decisive moments of transition from colony to nationhood, an analytical focus on the 1960s is likely to reveal a decade of departure from "imperial imagination".[12] During this decade, several events and developments seemed to underline the necessity for all three countries to divert their foreign policy from the former heavy focus on Britain. These events were interpreted under the impression of Britain's general decline. Following the Suez Crisis in 1956, the British applications to join the European Economic Community (EEC) and its plans to withdraw from Southeast Asia would cause further conflictual debates with the former dominions in the 1960s.

The intensity with which the dominions reacted to the British actions indicated that they were not only interested in keeping preferential foreign policy or trade links. Aside from the EEC and East of Suez debates, other steps enforcing the perception of a decline in Anglo-Dominion relations were unfolding in the spheres of the constitution, civic culture, and migration. During that time, Australia, Canada and New Zealand introduced steps of disentanglement themselves, e. g. by replacing national symbols such as flags, orders or an-

[11] The suppression and marginalisation of the indigenous people took place in a context that spans over the phase of the dominions' decolonisation and leaves deficits of equality even today. As Caroline Elkins and Susan Pedersen have pointed out, settler colonialism established an aggressive agenda towards indigenous people in either extinguishing them or assimilating them, *Caroline Elkins/Susan Pedersen*, Introduction: Settler Colonialism: A Concept and Its Uses, in: Caroline Elkins/Susan Pedersen (Ed.), Settler Colonialism in the Twentieth Century: Projects, Practices, Legacies, New York 2005, 1–20, 2 f. Within the period under study, it developed a dynamic that was important for the domestic issues at hand, but remained in the field of strategic and foreign policy mostly marginal and related to specific issues (e. g. the treatment of Pacific territories). While this is far from suggesting that the indigenous emancipation and civil right movements did not contribute in a crucial way to the question of national identity, it cannot be covered in this study in a way treating the complexities and the severity of the issue appropriately.

[12] Introduced as a concept by Christopher Waters for Australia, this is nevertheless applicable to all three dominions, *Christopher Waters*, Conflicts with Britain in the 1940s, in: David Lowe (Ed.), Australia and the End of Empires: The Impact of Decolonisation in Australia's Near North, 1945–65, Geelong 1996, 69–86, 73.

thems.[13] Yet, the character of their special relationship[14] with Britain only led them to reconsider parts of their national status, and these reconsiderations did not take place without considerable opposition from within the political establishment and public. Therefore, when Britain decided to withdraw its military from Southeast Asia in the late 1960s, especially for Australians and New Zealanders, but also for Canadians, the step was "yet another in the series of blows" that caused them to "look on Britain in an essentially demystified manner".[15]

Assessing the East of Suez discussions, Britain's withdrawal was linked to questions of continued imperial relationship, the role of Britain in Southeast Asia, and its position as a global power. Two sets of arguments came to the forefront of discussions: How would the British withdrawal impact its relationship with the dominions and its presence in the region? And how would all three countries (re-)locate themselves in relation to Britain, the region, and the ensuing international order? The East of Suez debate did not solely contribute to the disentanglement in those relations, but correlated to other events and processes undermining the imperial relationship. East of Suez became one moment of crisis in the process of declining British outlooks in the three countries that spanned from the post-war period up to the early 1970s when all three countries introduced new regimes of self-reliance and 'new nationalism'.

To study this crisis means to understand the intricate, sometimes paradox relationship the former dominions held with Britain after their formal independence. The strong emotions expressed during the East of Suez debate cannot be explained by merely focusing on strategic or political rationales held in all three countries. They have to be examined by taking a closer look at the constitution of all three countries as recently independent, yet strongly British-affiliated nations. Historians like John Darwin have emphasised the inconsistencies and contrary developments in British decolonisation up to the 1960s, pointing to underlying imperial interests that still saw Britain as a global influence and power.[16] In a similar vein, the developments of Australia, Canada and New Zea-

[13] Canada adopted "Oh Canada" as national anthem in 1967. New Zealand used "God save New Zealand" for the first time as national anthem at the Munich Olympics 1972 and eventually made it the nation's second national anthem (besides "God Save the Queen") in 1977. Australia introduced its national anthem "Advance Australia Fair" under the Whitlam government, which had to be reintroduced in 1984 after it was abandoned in 1976; *Stuart Ward*, The New Nationalism in Australia, Canada and New Zealand: Civic Culture in the Wake of the British World, in: Joan Beaumont/Neville Meaney (Ed.), Australia and the World. A Festschrift for Neville Meaney, Sydney 2013, 191–214.

[14] Not to be confused with the 'special relationship' between Britain and the USA which will be marked as such in the following.

[15] *David Goldsworthy*, Losing the Blanket. Australia and the End of Britain's Empire, Carlton South 2002, 158.

[16] *John Darwin*, British Decolonization Since 1945: A Pattern or a Puzzle?, in: The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History 12/2, 1984, 187–209.

land did not follow a compelling logic of inner decolonisation before or after their independence through the Statute of Westminster. Rather, their relationship with Britain remained close and was based on a common set of shared knowledge and culture, norms and values, assumptions and outlooks that could be explained as 'Britishness'. Britishness can be defined as "a commitment to certain institutions (most notably the monarchy and their parliamentary system) and a sense of values (including the rule of law, the freedom of the individual, the sanctity of private property, and some vague and rather ill-defined notions about duty and fair-play)".[17]

Britishness is understood here as an integral part of the national identity[18] of the dominions at the time under consideration. Ideas of shared history, myths[19] and traditions[20] sustain a collective identity and indicate how much such self-perceptions are shaped through subjective experiences and collective outlooks, emotional responses and factual markers. In the case of the dominions, a predominantly Anglo-Saxon population guaranteed adherence to Britishness as much as cultural and social practice. Civic symbols of all three countries were strongly embedded in a British orbit, with respective flags, constitutions, anthems and monarchy upholding bonds to the 'mother country'. As a result, Britishness lead to the perception of a shared family or community of British origin, and consequently allowed a close coherence among the dominions and Britain on international interests.[21]

Britishness itself related to the larger framework of the Empire. Since the nineteenth century, *Empire* developed into a "suggestive metaphor"[22], legitimising global rule with ideas of 'British exceptionalism' or a certain British

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[17] *Phillip Buckner*, Introduction: Canada and the British Empire, in: Phillip Buckner (Ed.), Canada and the British Empire, Oxford 2010, 1–21, 6.

[18] As a concept of analysis, identity has always been contested, and critics such as Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper called for replacing it with 'identification' or 'self-understanding', *Rogers Brubaker/Frederick Cooper*, Beyond "Identity" in: Theory and Society 29/1, 2000, 1–47. Yet, the term still offers the best vehicle to describe a deliberately elusive set of (self-)description and belonging. It is understood here, to follow Geoffrey Stokes, as "a dynamic, interactive, social process" where "an individual's personal identity is inextricably bound up with its relationship to a collectivity", *Geoffrey Stokes*, Introduction, in: Geoffrey Stokes (Ed.), The Politics of Identity in Australia, Cambridge 1997, 1–20.

[19] Myths are understood as narratives who gain their dynamic and significance largely from the alternation of history and current demands of sensemaking and identity formation. *Rebecca Collins*, Concealing the Poverty of Traditional Historiography: Myth as Mystification in Historical Discourse, in: Rethinking History 7/3, 2003, 341–365, 342.

[20] Eric Hobsbawm defined traditions as "a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past", *Eric Hobsbawm*, Introduction: Inventing Traditions, in: Eric Hobsbawm/Terence Ranger (Ed.), The Invention of Tradition, Cambridge 1993, 1–14, 1.

[21] *Stephen Howe*, Empire and Ideology, in: Sarah Stockwell (Ed.), The British Empire: Themes and Perspectives. 2. publ, Malden 2010, 162 f.

[22] *Jörn Leonhard*, Introduction: The "Longue Durée of Empire": Toward a Comparative

mission in the world.[23] Within the dominions, this idea of exceptionalism was translated into concepts of cultural and ethnic superiority. In parts, this loyalty or allegiance to an imperial mission was created by the concept of 'Greater Britain' introduced in the early twentieth century.[24] By granting dominion status, Britain could include the white settler colonies into the legitimising framework of an Anglo-Saxon particularity that referred to notions of supremacy and the distribution and adaption of British institutions throughout the Empire.[25]

Still, other factors narrowed what concept of Britishness the dominion societies felt attached to. One defining element was social and ethnic distinction. For one, the process of 'Othering'[26] created symbolic boundaries between different groups in and outside the Empire. One of the boundaries was defined by racialised practices.[27] Outside the Empire, Non-Western groups were equally excluded as Non-British groups. Within the Empire frame, the dominions could refer to other colonies to distinguish their own, superior role vis-à-vis Britain.[28] Among themselves, all three dominions followed the idea of being 'better Britons', based on socio-economic measures they introduced at the turn of the twentieth century. Curiously, all three countries also followed in parts an egalitarian myth that set themselves apart from Britain's class-oriented society.

As a result, people of the dominions perceived themselves as a pinnacle of civilisation, both because they endured the local conditions as because of their British heritage.[29] Much of this perception of superiority relied on colonial dis-

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Semantics of a Key Concept in Modern European History, in: Contributions to the History of Concepts 8/1, 2013, 1–25, 10.

[23] *Sarah Stockwell*, Britain and Decolonization in an Era of Global Change, in: Martin Thomas/Andrew S. Thompson (Ed.), The Oxford Handbook of the Ends of Empire, Oxford 2018, 65–101, 65.

[24] *Martin Thomas/Andrew Thompson*, Empire and Globalisation. From 'High Imperialism' to Decolonisation, in: The International History Review 36/1, 2013, 142–170, 144.

[25] *Leonhard*, Longue Durée of Empire, 19–22.

[26] *Edward Said*, Orientalism, London 1978, 54.

[27] In its historical meaning, the term 'race' referred to a certain identity determined by fixed biological factors such as blood or phenotype that defined an individual or collective identity. Today, this biological validity is repudiated and 'race' deconstructed as a social construction that is designed to justify the discrimination of other 'races'. In discussing the historical concept of 'race', this study does in no way give credibility to its content. Rather, it follows Srdjan Vucetic in referring to race as a marker of distinction and categorization, "a social kind that exists because people believe it exists. From this perspective, race is not real in the biological sense, but it is real in the sense that the social and political world is constituted by groups who have been, or were, treated as if they were races." *Srdjan Vucetic*, The Anglosphere. A Genealogy of a Racialized Identity in International Relations, Stanford 2011, 7. Moreover, as Paul Spickard points out, it is the act of essentialising the difference of the other in bodily attributes that defines racialising as a practice of power, *Paul R. Spickard*, Race and Nation, Identity and Power: Thinking Comparatively about Ethnic Systems, in: Paul R. Spickard (Ed.), Race and Nation: Ethnic Systems in the Modern World, New York 2004, 1–29, 13 f.

[28] *Leonhard*, Longue Durée of Empire, 11.

[29] *Belich*, Replenishing the Earth, 4–7; *Buckner*, Introduction, 6.

courses of 'race' and 'whiteness'[30] that were adopted throughout the Empire to create a hierarchy among different societies and people. All three dominions went to some length to safeguard their distinction within the Empire by introducing discriminatory immigration regimes.[31] The fact that transnational concepts of whiteness resulted in nationalist policies may seem like a paradox[32], just like the inclusion of Britishness in the dominions' identity seems contradictory to the idea of a dominion nationalism. Similar to the question of dominion independence, many scholars have tried to pinpoint the origins of a certain nationalism against the demise of the British connection. In this teleological interpretation, old British ties would necessarily and inevitably be replaced by a sense of 'true' nationhood, represented by own national myths and symbols. Consequently, they followed that a 'thwarted' nationalism must have existed in all three countries, which at some point replaced the British identity.[33]

However, being Canadian/Australian/New Zealand meant equally being British; both markers of identity were not exclusive or separate, but overlapped and were in many cases interdependent, such as when Australian historian W. D. Hancock described his fellow countrymen as 'Independent Australian Britons'[34] in the 1930s. Even after the end of colonial rule, all three countries considered themselves part of a larger British world community. The analogy of a British family of nations occurred in various forms throughout the time under study, mainly because it was an easy vehicle to describe how the former dominions perceived their relationship with Britain.[35] As within a family, this community set standards and rules of interaction that partly fused into the Commonwealth organisation and sustained it; with shared norms de-

30 Similar to 'race', 'whiteness' refers here to the historical deterministic construction of a distinct white 'race'. However, even more than the analysis of other racialised practices, the study of 'whiteness' deconstructs the superior and privileged position as opposed to other, non-white 'races' or groups. Therefore, the study of 'whiteness' largely emerging from American research had been criticised by postcolonial studies as rewriting racism and continued discrimination and reintroducing privilege back into studies that should be freed of racialised markers of distinction. For a summary on this criticism and a proposal for postcolonial whiteness studies see *Alfred J. López*, Introduction: Whiteness after Empire, in: Alfred J. López (Ed.), Postcolonial Whiteness: A Critical Reader on Race and Empire, Albany 2005, 1–30.

31 *Thomas/Thompson*, Empire and Globalisation, 151 f.

32 *Marilyn Lake/Henry Reynolds*, Drawing the Global Colour Line. White Men's Countries and the International Challenge of Racial Equality, Cambridge 2008, 4.

33 *Neville Meaney*, Britishness and Australian Identity. The Problem of Nationalism in Australian History and Historiography, in: Australian Historical Studies 32/116, 2001, 76–90; *McKinnon*, Independence and Foreign Policy, 180.

34 *James Curran*, The Power of Speech. Australian Prime Ministers Defining the National Image, Carlton 2006, 8.

35 *Stuart Ward*, Transcending the Nation: A Global Imperial History?, in: Antoinette M. Burton (Ed.), After the Imperial Turn: Thinking With and Through the Nation, Durham 2003, 44–56, 46.

fining the community's identity: "For the self-governing dominions, the organic, intangible bonds of the British Commonwealth were an independent community of values with a common rationality, to which responsibility was felt to be owed."[36]

Moreover, perceptions of an Anglo-Saxon community partly integrated the USA. As Winston Churchill described it in his 'Iron Curtain Speech' in 1946, Britain felt close to the USA because of a shared heritage resulting in "the great principles of freedom and the rights of man"[37] that fused equally into the Magna Carta and the American Declaration of Independence. What Churchill described as 'English-Speaking people' also included Australia, Canada and New Zealand.[38] Shared bonds constituted "a 'core' of a distinct international, transnational, civilizational and imperial entity within the global society, currently known as the 'Anglosphere'".[39] Definitions and identity of this Anglosphere also responded to changes of ideological outlook in and outside of the community: As they were initially shaped by ideas of an Anglo-Saxon race, these ideas were translated into moral particularity in the mid-twentieth century.

Based on this shared identity, Australians, Canadians and New Zealanders equally expected to share interests and rationales on a transnational and even global level. Despite the official abolition of imperial dependence, the perception of belonging to a British world community remained. Moreover, affiliation was transferred to the Commonwealth, which now represented two phenomena: On the one hand, it transformed the former Empire into a global organisation containing the former colonies as sovereign states. At the same time, the organisation was not limited to ideas of institutional cooperation, but also sustained ideas and values of a British world community. To describe these shared values, the Commonwealth also meant a rhetoric and symbolic form partly detached from the organisation, which referred more loosely to the former imperial space. When Britain decided to withdraw its forces, related discussions corresponded to other debates on decolonisation and British leadership in the Commonwealth.

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[36] *Dan Halvorson*, From Commonwealth Responsibility to the National Interest. Australia and Post-War Decolonisation in South-East Asia, in: The International History Review 40/4, 2018, 870–892, 874; see also *Frank Bongiorno*, Comment: Australia, Nationalism and Transnationalism, in: History Australia 10/3, 2013, 77–84, 79.

[37] The Sinews of Peace ('Iron Curtain Speech'), Speech given by Right. Hon. Winston Churchill at Westminster College Fulton, Missouri, 5.3.1946. URL: https://winstonchurchill.org/resources/speeches/1946-1963-elder-statesman/the-sinews-of-peace/. Accessed August 22, 2019.

[38] *David Lowe*, Australia's Cold War: Britishness and English-Speaking Worlds Challenged Anew, in: Phillip Buckner/R. D. Francis (Ed.), Rediscovering the British World, Calgary 2005, 361–380, 369 f.

[39] *Vucetic*, Anglosphere, 2.

With a focus on security discussions, the following study will argue that the British decision represented a larger process of withdrawal from the Empire, which left the dominions without a sufficient interpretation for their (post-)imperial self. As such, this study supplements two existing bodies of research: For one, it complements studies on the British withdrawal East of Suez[40] with a profound transnational analysis of long-term considerations and narratives flowing back and forth between Britain and the dominions. As other studies focus on the British economic and political reasoning for withdrawal, most of them tend to disregard the discourses within the dominions. Although most studies acknowledge the dominions' protest, few have attempted to analyse underlying dispositions and outlooks. However, a closer look at negotiations filled with references to a lost or needed collective or national framework suggests that both British officials and their dominion counterparts perceived the period as one of crisis. Secondly, this study is pinned against a series of existing studies on the transformation within the former dominions at the 'End of Empire'. From the metropolitan perspective, publications of Carl Bridge, Kent Fedorowich[41] and Sarah Stockwell[42] have emphasised the important transnational link of Britishness that reflected back on Britain. In Australia, the first proposals were made by historian Neville Meaney who advocated to reintroduce the British connection into a historiography which previously saw the British connection solely as antagonistic to nationalist aspirations.[43] Meaney's approach paralleled the studies of Douglas Cole, who underlined the outspoken British character of dominion identities.[44] These arguments were further advanced through publications of Phillip Buckner, José Igartua and Charles Champion in Canada[45], Stuart Ward,

[40] *Phillip Darby*, British Defence Policy East of Suez, 1947–1968, London 1973; *Jeffrey Pickering*, Britain's Withdrawal from East of Suez. The Politics of Retrenchment, Houndmills 1998; *Saki Dockrill*, Britain's Retreat from East of Suez. The Choice Between Europe and the World?, Houndmills/New York 2002.

[41] *Carl Bridge/Kent Fedorowich*, Mapping the British World, in: Carl Bridge/Kent Fedorowich (Ed.), The British World: Diaspora, Culture, and Identity, London/Portland 2003, 1–15.

[42] *Sarah Stockwell*, Ends of Empire, in: Sarah Stockwell (Ed.), The British Empire: Themes and Perspectives. 2. publ., Malden 2010, 269–293.

[43] *Meaney*, Britishness and Australian Identity; *Neville Meaney*, Britishness and Australia: Some Reflections, in: Carl Bridge/Kent Fedorowich (Ed.), The British World: Diaspora, Culture, and Identity, London/Portland 2003, 121–135. For a review of Britishness within Australian historiography see also *Deborah Gare*, Britishness in Recent Australian Historiography, in: The Historical Journal 43/4, 2000, 1145–1155; for a larger discussion of all three countries' historiography see *Ward*, New Nationalism, 192–194.

[44] *Douglas Cole*, The Problem of 'Nationalism' and 'Imperialism' in British Settlement Colonies, in: The Journal of British Studies 10/2, 1971, 160–182.

[45] *Phillip Buckner/R. D. Francis* (Ed.), Rediscovering the British World, Calgary 2005; *Phillip Buckner* (Ed.), Canada and the End of Empire, Vancouver 2005; *Phillip Buckner* (Ed.), Canada and the British Empire, Oxford 2010; *José Eduardo Igartua*, The Other Quiet Revolution. National Identities in English Canada, 1945–71, Vancouver 2006; *C. P. Champion*, The Strange Demise of British Canada. The Liberals and Canadian Nationalism 1964–1968, Montreal/Ithaca 2010.

James Curran and Deryck Schreuder in Australia[46], and James Belich in New Zealand.[47]

This is not the first study to aim at a three-national analysis on the End of Empire[48], yet it is the first to look at security relations following imperial cooperation.[49] With the exception of the Canadian case, other studies have already addressed the East of Suez decision as part of a larger process at the End of Empire. In various degrees, Andrea Benvenuti[50], David Goldsworthy[51], and Stuart Ward[52] have all included the East of Suez debate into larger descriptions of demise in Anglo-Australian relations. Further studies have been produced

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[46] *Stuart Ward*, Australia and the British Embrace. The Demise of the Imperial Ideal, Carlton South 2001; *James Curran/Stuart Ward*, The Unknown Nation. Australia After Empire, Melbourne 2010; *Deryck M. Schreuder/Stuart Ward* (Ed.), Australia's Empire, Oxford 2008.

[47] *James Belich*, Paradise Reforged. A History of the New Zealanders from the 1880s to the Year 2000, Honolulu 2001; *James Belich*, Making Peoples. A History of the New Zealanders from Polynesian Settlement to the End of the Nineteenth Century, Auckland 2001.

[48] Aside from Stuart Ward, Jatinder Mann has presented a couple of publications comparing the concept of citizenship and multiculturalism; *Jatinder Mann* (Ed.), Citizenship in Transnational Perspective. Australia, Canada, and New Zealand, Cham 2017; *Jatinder Mann*, Redefining Citizenship in Australia, Canada, and Aotearoa New Zealand, New York 2019.

[49] Exceptions for a three-national approach on defence and foreign policy are *Richard A. Preston/Ian Wards*, Military and Defence Developments in Canada, Australia and New Zealand: A Three Way Comparison, in: War & Society 5/1, 1987, 1–21; *Ramesh Thakur*, Defence Reviews in Australia, Canada, and New Zealand, in: International Journal: Canada's Journal of Global Policy Analysis 42/4, 1987, 890–897. The comparisons or nexus between two of the three countries in this period is more often represented by research. Noteworthy among those are *David McCraw*, Change and Continuity in Strategic Culture. The Cases of Australia and New Zealand, in: Australian Journal of International Affairs 65/2, 2011, 167–184; *Ian McGibbon*, Australian-New Zealand Relations and Commitments to Asian Conflicts 1950–1972, in: Journal of Military History 81/4, 2017, 1059–1074; *Robert Ayson*, When Cooperation Trumps Convergence. Emerging Trends in Australia-New Zealand Defence Relations, in: Security Challenges 2/3, 2006, 25–39; *John Charles Blaxland*, Strategic Cousins. Australian and Canadian Expeditionary Forces and the British and American Empires, Montreal 2006; *Greg Donaghy*, Parallel Paths. Canadian-Australian Relations Since the 1890s, Ottawa 1995; *Andrew F. Cooper*, Keeping in Touch: Patterns of Networking in the Canadian-Australian Diplomatic Relationship, in: Margaret MacMillan/Francine McKenzie (Ed.), Parties Long Estranged: Canada and Australia in the Twentieth Century, Vancouver 2003, 249–266.

[50] *Andrea Benvenuti*, The British Military Withdrawal from Southeast Asia and its Impact on Australia's Cold War Strategic Interests, in: Cold War History 5/2, 2006, 189–210; *Andrea Benvenuti*, A Parting of the Ways. The British Military Withdrawal from Southeast Asia and its Critical Impact on Anglo-Australian Relations, 1965–68, in: Contemporary British History 20, 2006, 575–605; *Andrea Benvenuti*, Anglo-Australian Relations and the 'Turn to Europe', 1961–1972, London 2008; *Andrea Benvenuti*, Cold War and Decolonisation. Australia's Policy towards Britain's End of Empire in Southeast Asia, Singapore 2017.

[51] *Goldsworthy*, Losing the Blanket.

[52] *Ward*, British Embrace.

by Derek McDougall[53], Jeppe Kristensen[54] and Jack Doig[55], who contributed research on Australia and New Zealand. Given the exclusion of Canada from nearly all of these studies, no thorough attempt has been made to review all three dominions' foreign policy with a focus on security discussions on Britain's role in Southeast Asia at Empire's end.

The study of transnational security perceptions offers a multitude of perspectives on the dominions' outlook on national security and their relative position within regional and international orders in the 1960s. Here, this study benefits from a range of new impulses provided by the 'new' imperial history[56] and the academic fields of global history[57] and transnational history.[58] Latter replaced the classic concept of international history[59], which itself had emerged from the traditional diplomatic history reaching back to the nineteenth century.[60] All of these perspectives seek to overcome national perspectives by highlighting intrastate or supra-state phenomena and connections, flows and developments.

To study the manifold impact of Britain's retreat, an article by David Reynolds on different dimensions of Australian foreign policy[61] offers an analytical

[53] *Derek McDougall*, Australia and the British Military Withdrawal From East of Suez, in: Australian Journal of International Affairs 51/2, 1997, 183–194.

[54] *Jeppe Kristensen*, "In Essence Still a British Country". Britain's Withdrawal From East of Suez, in: Australian Journal of Politics & History 51/1, 2005, 40–52.

[55] *Jack Doig*, The Australian and New Zealand Governments' Responses to Britain's Decline in the 1960s. Identity, Geopolitics and the End of Empire, in: Journal of New Zealand & Pacific Studies 1/1, 2013, 41–54; *Jack Doig*, New Nationalism in Australia and New Zealand. The Construction of National Identities by Two Labo(u)r Governments in the Early 1970s, in: Australian Journal of Politics & History 59/4, 2013, 559–575.

[56] *Tony Ballantyne*, The Changing Shape of the Modern British Empire and its Historiography, in: The Historical Journal 53/2, 2010, 429–452; *Jane Burbank/Frederick Cooper*, Empires in World History. Power and the Politics of Difference, Princeton 2010; *John Darwin*, After Tamerlane. The Rise and Fall of Global Empires, 1400–2000, New York 2008; *Timothy H. Parsons*, The Rule of Empires. Those Who Built Them, Those Who Endured Them, and Why They Always Fall, Oxford/New York 2010; *Stephen Howe* (Ed.), The New Imperial Histories Reader, London 2010.

[57] For further introduction to the field of global history see *Dominic Sachsenmaier*, Global Perspectives on Global History. Theories and Approaches in a Connected World, Cambridge 2011; *Sebastian Conrad*, What Is Global History?, Princeton 2016. As examples for global history research see the cross-epochal and cross-imperial approach presented in *James Belich/John Darwin/Margret Frenz/Chris Wickham* (Ed.), The Prospect of Global History, Oxford/New York 2016.

[58] For an approach to the various fields of transnational history see *Akira Iriye/Pierre-Yves Saunier* (Ed.), The Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History, Basingstoke 2009.

[59] International history focuses on the sum of all relations held between and among independent nations, *Akira Iriye*, Global and Transnational History. The Past, Present, and Future, Basingstoke 2013, 15 f.

[60] *Iriye*, Global and Transnational History, 5 f.

[61] *David Reynolds*, Empire, Region, World: The International Context of Australian Foreign Policy since 1939, in: Australian Journal of Politics & History 51/3, 2005, 346–358.

blueprint. During the East of Suez discussions, security and defence considerations revealed how the former dominions conceived security in interlocking spaces of (post-)imperial, regional, and world or 'global' order. This study argues that British resources were an important factor in retaining these specific concepts of order. British outlooks and attitudes served as a signpost on and within these orders as they resonated with the strong remnants of Britishness in the dominions. At the same time, Britain's role as a larger power or global player made the dominions rely on its resources and networks.

The focus on spatial orders allows a deeper understanding of the changing self-perception of all three former dominions in the wake of the British plans. The application of 'self' to different frameworks of foreign policy can be described as an act of localisation both in relation to others as well as in categories of time and space, following ideas that "identity is relationally constituted and always involves the construction of boundaries and thereby the delineation of space".[62]

Focusing briefly on the identity framework provided by spatial outlooks, the conceptions and experiences among all three dominions vary. In Australia, the tension between the national space as a scarcely populated yet vast island in an unsettling, potentially threatening neighbourhood created a specific agenda of survival in Australian foreign policy.[63] In comparison, Canada seemed appeased by the closeness to the USA and the implication that any threat to its national security would equally be a threat to its Southern neighbour. However, Canada also referred to its settler identity and adopted spatial perceptions – "an Atlantic nation, or a Pacific nation, or an Arctic nation"[64] – to counterbalance the dominance of the USA. It also resembled Australia in early narratives of an indefensibility of its large territory.[65] New Zealand lay somewhere between the spatial experiences of the other two dominions, being remote and isolated while still feeling exposed to certain conflicts in Southeast Asia.[66]

[62] *Lene Hansen*, Security as Practice. Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War, London 2006, 47.

[63] See introductory remarks in the following studies: *Gareth J. Evans/Bruce Grant*, Australia's Foreign Relations in the World of the 1990s. 2. Ed., Carlton 1995; *Anthony Burke*, Fear of Security. Australia's Invasion Anxiety, Cambridge 2008; *Mathew Radcliffe*, Malaya Bound: Australia's Colonial Perceptions of Asia, 1955–1965, in: History Australia 12/3, 2015, 76–96; *Jeffrey Grey*, Coming of Age: Australian Defence and Strategic Policy in the Cold War, in: Ian McGibbon/John Crawford (Ed.), Seeing Red: New Zealand, the Commonwealth and the Cold War 1945–91, Wellington 2012, 127–134.

[64] *Kim R. Nossal*, A European Nation? The Life and Times of Atlanticism in Canada, in: John English/Norman Hillmer (Ed.), Making a Difference? Canada's Foreign Policy in a Changing World Order, Toronto 1992, 79–102, 79.

[65] *Roger Sarty*, The Interplay of Defence and Foreign Policy, in: Robert Bothwell (Ed.), Canada Among Nations, 2008: 100 Years of Canadian Foreign Policy, Montreal 2014, 111–141, 112; *Michael Tucker*, Canadian Foreign Policy. Contemporary Issues and Themes, Toronto 1980, 3.

[66] *David Capie/Gerald McGhie*, Representing New Zealand: Identity, Diplomacy and the

Equally, the imperial connection strongly influenced the dominions' location. Empires essentially created 'space' as a framing category over issues such as distance to the metropole or the frontiers or borders within the colonial territory. The importance of space for imperial imagination is widely accepted; Hancock's "to be in love with two soils"[67] or Blainey's *Tyranny of Distance*[68] are only two examples of the variety of references to describe the settlers' relationship to both the land and the distant 'mother country'. In addition to a persistent Britishness, all three former dominions still contained a strong mental map[69] of a British world, a space created by imperial expansion and perpetuated after the end of colonial rule by transitory institutions such as the Commonwealth.

Their Anglocentric map was extended under the impression of the Cold War into a map divided along the ideological lines of the superpowers and their allies, the Western bloc and the Communist bloc.[70] These narratives were also created in institutions such as security alliances or the United Nations (UN). Here, these maps were equally challenged under the impact of decolonisation. Not only did new independent countries 'emerge' on the map that were previously unknown or of little interest, but the question of Cold War (non-)alignment also rearranged these countries' geopolitical position as part of specific blocs or formations that did not necessarily correspond to geographical realities. Instead, they were linked to ideological demarcation lines between 'North' and 'South'; 'developed', 'developing' or 'underdeveloped' countries; 'Have's' and 'Have-not's'. The powerful concept of a 'Third World'[71] underlines the influence of spatial Cold War categorisation.

Making of Foreign Policy, in: James H. Liu (Ed.), New Zealand Identities: Departures and Destinations, Wellington 2005, 230–241.

[67] W. K. Hancock: Australia. Melbourne 1961, 51; quoted in: *Ann Curthoys*, We've Just Started Making National Histories, and You Want us to Stop Already?, in: Antoinette M. Burton (Ed.), After the Imperial Turn: Thinking With and Through the Nation, Durham 2003, 70–90, 72.

[68] *Geoffrey Blainey*, The Tyranny of Distance. How Distance Shaped Australia's History, Melbourne 1966.

[69] According to historian Alan K. Henrikson, mental maps are "an ordered but continually adapting structure of the mind – alternatively conceivable as a process – by reference to which a person acquires, codes, stores, reorganises, and applies, in thought or in action, information about his or her large-scale geographical environment, in part or in its entirety. Still more briefly, such a map is the cognitive frame on the basis of which historians of international relations, like diplomats and others who think internationally, orient themselves in the world", *Alan K. Henrikson*, Mental Maps, in: Michael J. Hogan/Thomas G. Paterson (Ed.), Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations, Cambridge 1991, 177–193, 177.

[70] *Frank A. Ninkovich*, Modernity and Power. A History of the Domino Theory in the Twentieth Century, Chicago 1994.

[71] *Marcin Wojciech Solarz*, 'Third World'. The 60th Anniversary of a Concept That Changed History, in: Third World Quarterly 33/9, 2012, 1561–1573; *Tom Tomlinson*, What was the Third World?, in: Journal of Contemporary History 38, 2003, 307–321.

The discussions on a continued British presence in Southeast Asia can be reviewed from the perspective of these mental maps that resonate with the three intertwined spaces proposed by David Reynolds. For one, the British decision to review its position East of Suez was linked to its role as a former imperial power that provided a rationale for cooperation, but also for a British world community. As some perceived the withdrawal as a confirmation of Britain's determination to retreat from this role as a former imperial power, they feared the repercussions both in their bilateral relations with their former 'mother country' as within the Commonwealth. The question of British leadership was also related to the second framework, the question of regional order. Australia, Canada and New Zealand all perceived the British presence as an essential part of stabilising structures in the region.

On a third level, the British presence was related to perceptions of a desired world or 'global' order. While this order was hardly 'global' as it included little considerations for regions such as South America or Africa, nevertheless, it envisaged a set of universal parameters that should frame international politics.[72] The global Cold War[73] and decolonisation crucially influenced these parameters, dividing the world in the 'Free World' and the 'Communist World', or into the 'West', the 'East' and, later, the non-aligned states. Most of all, the Commonwealth came to represent the various challenges posed to a post-imperial organisation by the Cold War and decolonisation.[74] Policymakers tried to assess if their actions not only would have consequences for the (post-)imperial or regional framework, but could also develop a global impact. Such global impact was often linked to discussions in the UN as well as to regional security frameworks that nevertheless worked on supra-regional premises, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) or the Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO).

Related to the argument of universal applicability was the question of how all three countries positioned themselves in a global sphere. Although this study focuses on three members of the Western world, their perception of decolonisation processes and their relations with countries of the non-aligned areas reveals more on the local dynamics of the Cold War. Focusing on the moment of crisis, the processes of framing and coping with conflicts might shed light on the variety of attitudes within the Western bloc. With Canada often taking a different attitude to regional and supra-regional conflicts, this comparison emphasises

[72] *Glenda Sluga/Patricia M. Clavin*, Rethinking the History of Internationalism, in: Glenda Sluga/Patricia M. Clavin (Ed.), Internationalisms: A Twentieth-Century History, Cambridge 2017, 3–14.

[73] *Odd Arne Westad*, The Global Cold War. Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times. 3. Ed., Cambridge 2018; *Melvyn P. Leffler/Odd Arne Westad* (Ed.), The Cambridge History of the Cold War. Volume I: Beginnings, Cambridge 2010.

[74] *Sue Onslow*, The Commonwealth and the Cold War, Neutralism, and Non-Alignment, in: The International History Review 37/5, 2015, 1059–1082.