

# Islandness in the Pacific and an emerging 'Islandian' sovereignty

– Gerard Prinsen



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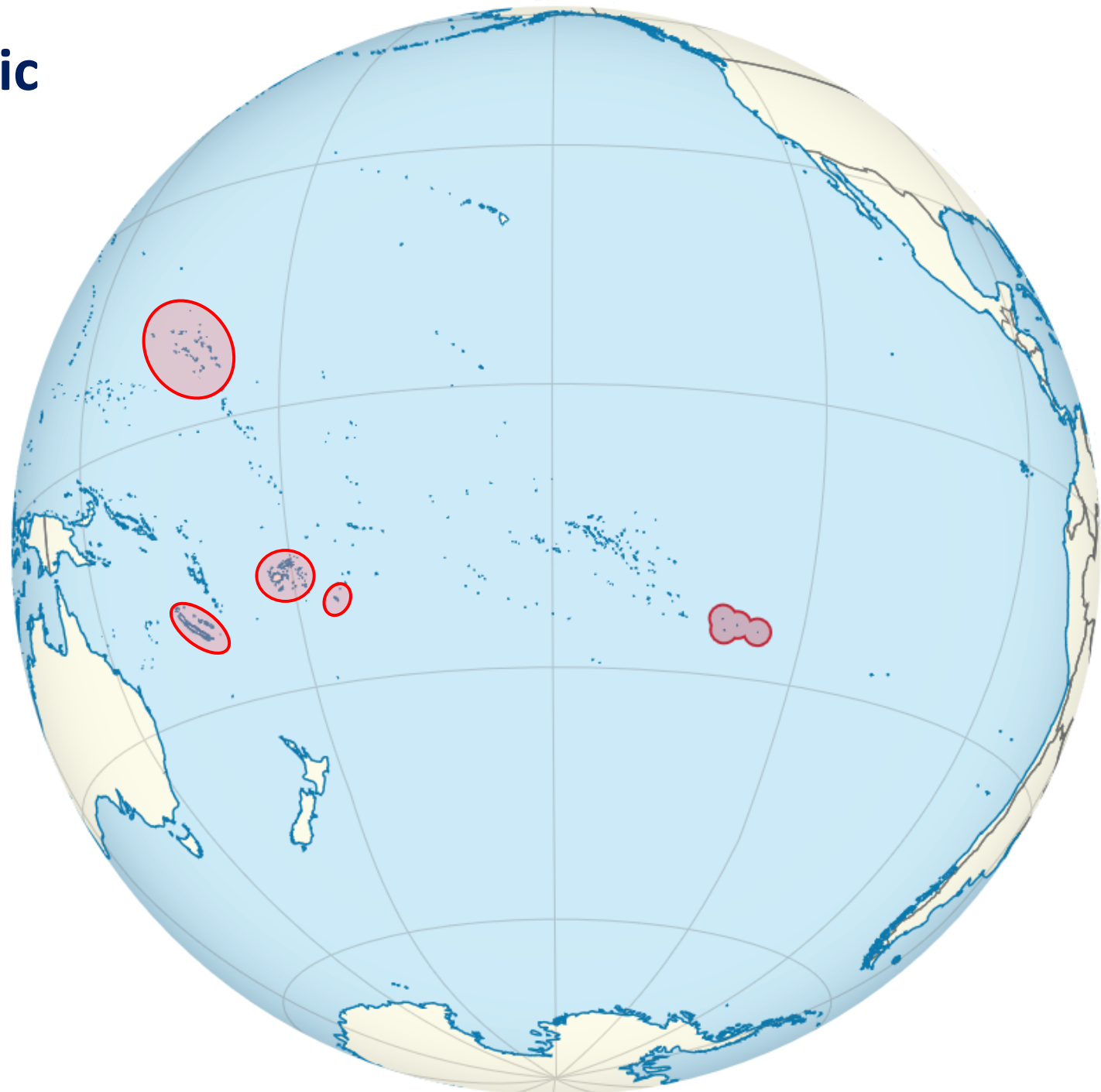
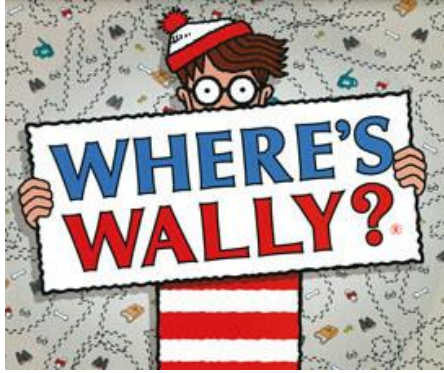
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# Islandness in the Pacific



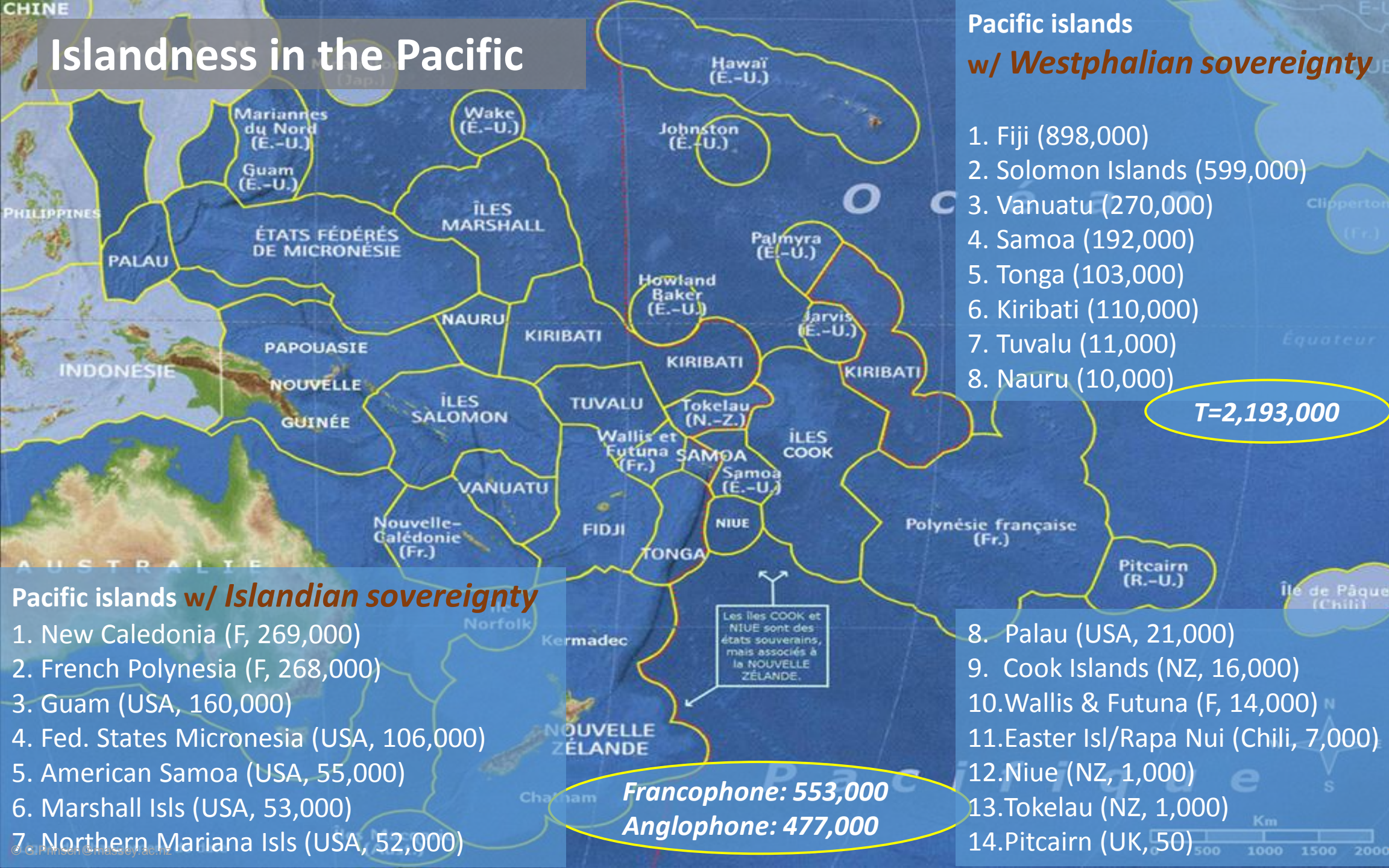
Islandness in  
the Pacific &  
Islandian  
sovereignty

# Islandness in the Pacific



- Pitcairn Islands
- Fiji
- Tonga
- New Caledonia
- Marshall Islands

# Islandness in the Pacific



## Pacific islands w/ Westphalian sovereignty

1. Fiji (898,000)
2. Solomon Islands (599,000)
3. Vanuatu (270,000)
4. Samoa (192,000)
5. Tonga (103,000)
6. Kiribati (110,000)
7. Tuvalu (11,000)
8. Nauru (10,000)

**T=2,193,000**

## Pacific islands w/ Islandian sovereignty

1. New Caledonia (F, 269,000)
2. French Polynesia (F, 268,000)
3. Guam (USA, 160,000)
4. Fed. States Micronesia (USA, 106,000)
5. American Samoa (USA, 55,000)
6. Marshall Isls (USA, 53,000)
7. Northern Mariana Isls (USA, 52,000)

8. Palau (USA, 21,000)
9. Cook Islands (NZ, 16,000)
10. Wallis & Futuna (F, 14,000)
11. Easter Isl/Rapa Nui (Chili, 7,000)
12. Niue (NZ, 1,000)
13. Tokelau (NZ, 1,000)
14. Pitcairn (UK, 50)



# Westphalian sovereignty: Origins



17<sup>th</sup> century, Westphalian Peace, European negotiations agree all state representatives are equals – irrespective of state's size

Islandness:

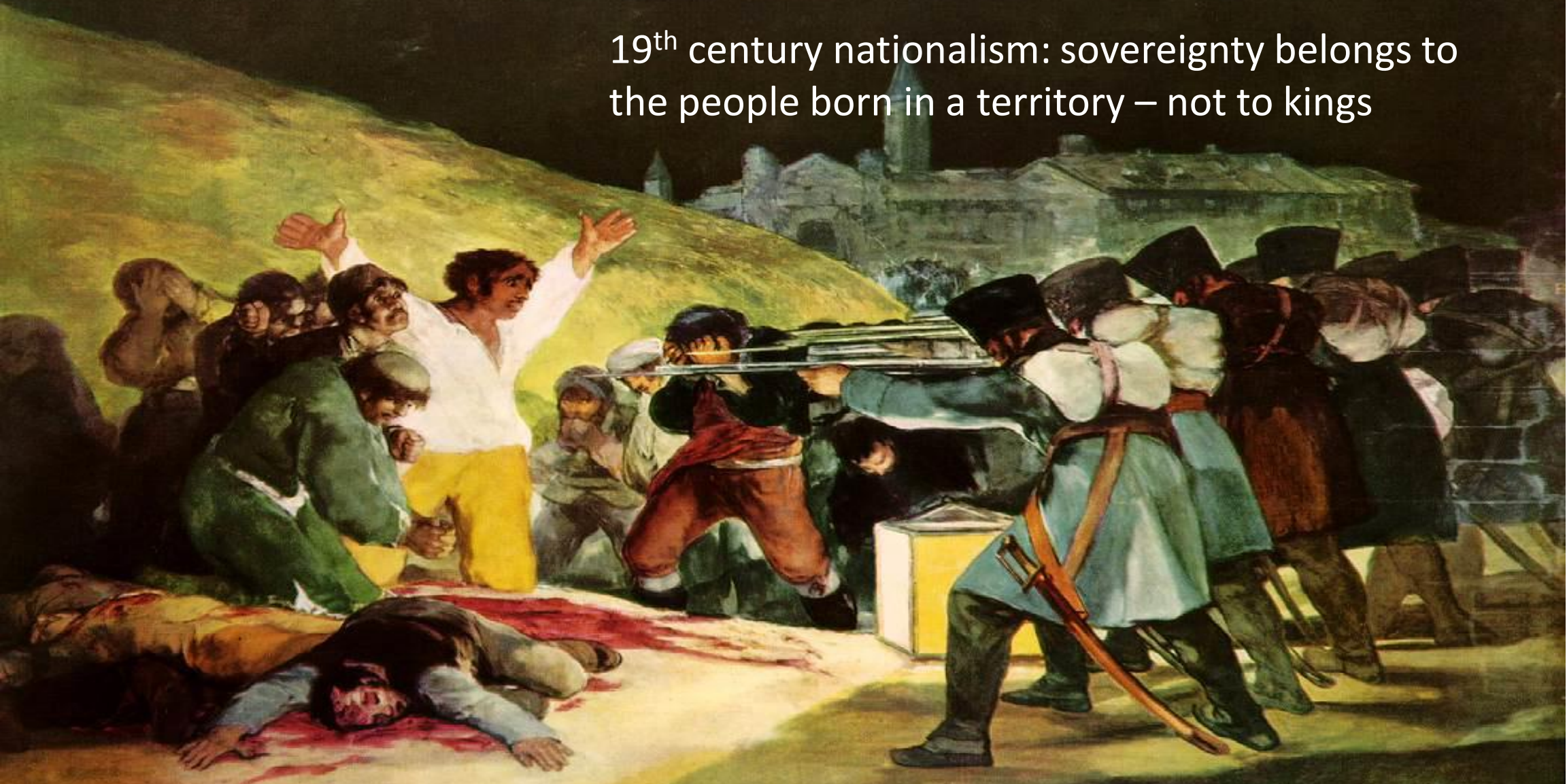


Culture, Change & Identity on Small Islands



# Westphalian sovereignty: Origins

19<sup>th</sup> century nationalism: sovereignty belongs to the people born in a territory – not to kings



# Westphalian sovereignty: Origins



After 1960, UN declares all peoples have a right to sovereignty – whether they claim it or not

# Westphalian sovereignty... critiqued

- Westphalian concept of sovereignty is 'Eurocentric'
- ... 'just organised hypocrisy'; e.g. the 'war on terror', or R2P principle
- ... being eliminated by globalisation, moving of people, goods, capital
- ... being displaced by 'sovereignty *without a territory*', i.e. international bodies and regulations (UN, WTO, ICC)
- Latest critique on Westphalian sovereignty: Indigenous concepts of '*sovereignty without a state*'



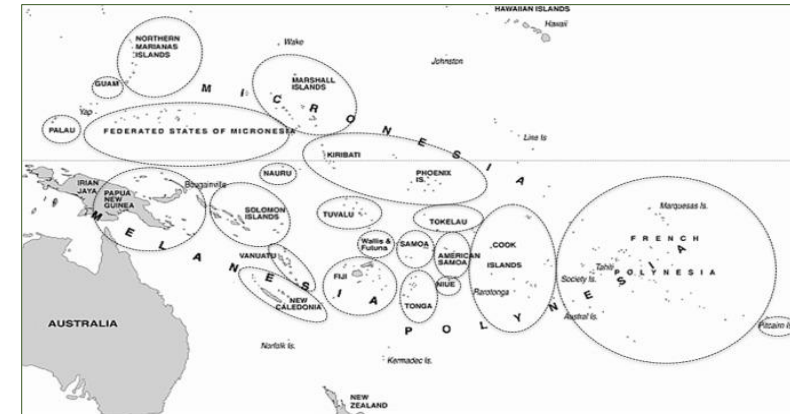
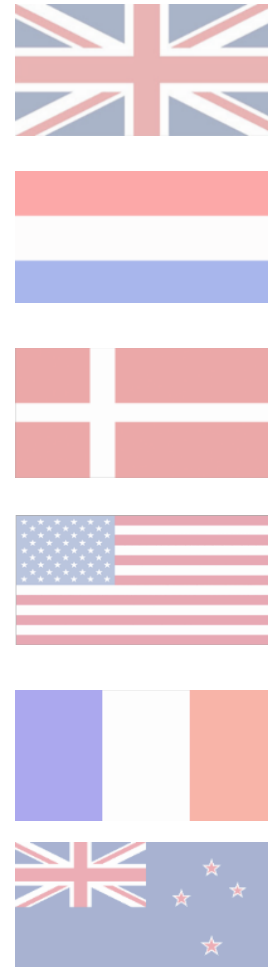


# Islands without Westphalian sovereignty: 45 or up to 100?



The United Nations and Decolonization

On “UN list of 17 territories to be decolonised” ... 15 are islands.



- US has ‘constitutional’ bonds with 7 Pacific territories (Hawaii, Guam, NMI, Am. Samoa, Palau, FSM, Marshall Isls)
- ... New Zealand with 4 Pacific territories (Cook Isls, Niue, Tokelau, Samoa)
- (And France with 3 territories) (New Caledonia, French Polynesia, Wallis & Futuna)



# Islands without Westphalian sovereignty: Rejecting it?

In 1983, St Kitts & Nevis were the *last* island state acquiring full, Westphalian, sovereignty.

Why? When comparing non-self-governing islands with sovereign island states since 1980s: (Baldacchino & Milne, 2006; Dunn, 2011; McElroy & Parry, 2012: 417; Oostindie, 2014)

*“... The former consistently remained more affluent ... citizens were healthier with longer life expectancy...”*



Is that all!?

Arguably, amidst all debates about “sovereignty” ... non-self-governing islands are *actively* developing a new form of sovereignty.

We see five patterns...

# Five patterns of Islandian sovereignty vis-à-vis their metropolises

1. Islanders voting 'no' in seventeen referenda on independence since 1980s.

E.g., FSM (1983); Bermuda (1995); Dutch Antilles (2000-2005); Tokelau (2006, 2007); Mayotte (2009).

New Caledonia independence referendum in 2018



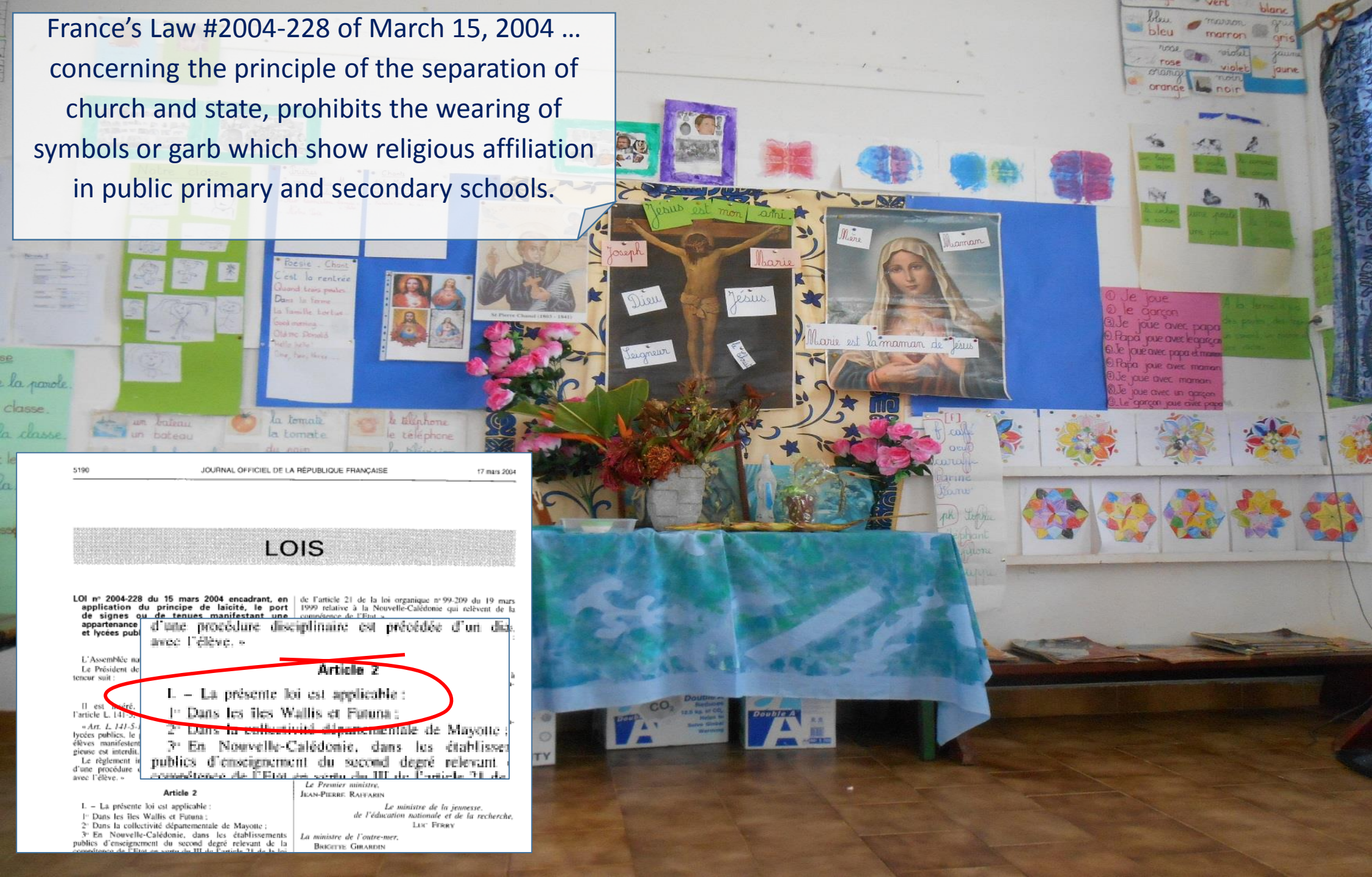
2. Islanders negotiating *continuously* over series of exceptional and ever-evolving constitutional statuses.

E.g., France has “as many statuses as overseas territories” (Mrgudovic, 2014: 85). New Caledonia has had ten different statuses since 1946 (Mohamed-Gaillard, 2003). Same goes for overseas territories of UK, Netherlands, USA, New Zealand.

3. ‘Get away with’ bending metropolitan rules to local interests.

E.g., New Caledonia ignores French labour laws since 2009; Aruba acknowledges but does not register same-sex marriages since 2001; and of course there are the schools of Wallis & Futuna...

France's Law #2004-228 of March 15, 2004 ... concerning the principle of the separation of church and state, prohibits the wearing of symbols or garb which show religious affiliation in public primary and secondary schools.



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**LOIS**

LOI n° 2004-228 du 15 mars 2004 encadrant, en application du principe de laïcité, le port de signes ou de tenues manifestant une appartenance religieuse dans les écoles, collèges et lycées publics

de l'article 21 de la loi organique n° 99-209 du 19 mars 1999 relative à la Nouvelle-Calédonie qui relève de la compétence de l'Etat.

L'Assemblée nationale et le Président de la République ont tenu séance le 15 mars 2004.

Il est arrêté, en application de l'article L. 141-5 de la loi n° 141-5 du 14 mai 1981 relative à l'enseignement public, que le port de signes ou de tenues manifestant une appartenance religieuse est interdit dans les établissements publics d'enseignement du second degré relevant de la compétence de l'Etat en vertu de l'article 21 de la loi n° 99-209 du 19 mars 1999 relative à la Nouvelle-Calédonie.

**Article 2**

**I. - La présente loi est applicable :**

1° Dans les îles Wallis et Futuna ;

2° Dans la collectivité départementale de Mayotte ;

3° En Nouvelle-Calédonie, dans les établissements publics d'enseignement du second degré relevant de la compétence de l'Etat en vertu de l'article 21 de la loi n° 99-209 du 19 mars 1999 relative à la Nouvelle-Calédonie.

Le Premier ministre, **JEAN-PIERRE RAUFARIN**

Le ministre de la jeunesse, de l'éducation nationale et de la recherche, **LUC FIRRY**

La ministre de l'outre-mer, **BRIEGITTE GIRARDIN**

# Five patterns of Islandian sovereignty vis-à-vis their metropolises

## 4. Islanders securing metropolitan transfers to compensate poor domestic revenues.

**Table 2. Metropolitan budget support for non-self-governing islands**

| Non-self-governing islands     | metropole | Metropolitan budget support (USD) | Year | Budget support per capita (USD/cap) |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------------------------------|------|-------------------------------------|
| New Caledonia                  | F         | 1,500m                            | 2015 | 5,600                               |
| Wallis & Futuna                | F         | 123m                              | 2016 | 10,300                              |
| Dutch Caribbean Municipalities | NL        | 294m                              | 2015 | 11,800                              |
| Cook Islands                   | NZ        | 13.2m                             | 2016 | 800                                 |
| Saint Helena                   | UK        | 27.6m                             | 2015 | 6,100                               |
| Montserrat                     | UK        | 27.6m                             | 2016 | 5,500                               |
| Palau (CoFA)                   | USA       | 38.3m                             | 2009 | 1,800                               |
| Northern Mariana Islands       | USA       | 72.0m                             | 2015 | 1,400                               |

## 5. Islanders signing agreements beneficial to islands, but awkward to metropolises.

E.g., the Faroe Islands signed a Free Trade Agreement with Russia; New Caledonian local bodies sign billion dollar “non-French” nickel deals with China.

And there is off-shore banking. E.g., Niue was in Top-3 of the Mossack Fonseca business (Panama papers, 2015)





Debating...

**Do you think an 'Islandian' sovereignty is emerging among non-self-governing islands as opposed to the classic continental Westphalian sovereignty?**

**Why?**

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