



ISLAND DYNAMICS

Returning from the Horizon: Introducing *Urban Island Studies*

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Abstract: Island studies tends to focus on peripheral, isolated, and marginal aspects of island communities, while urban studies has showed scant awareness of islandness: Although many people research cities on islands, there is little tradition of researching island cities or urban archipelagos *per se*. Island cities (densely populated small islands and population centres of larger islands and archipelagos) nevertheless play import cultural, economic, political, and environmental roles on local, regional, and global scales. Many major cities and ports have developed on small islands, and even villages can fulfil important urban functions on lightly populated islands. Island concepts are also deployed to metaphorically describe developments in urban space. The journal *Urban Island Studies* explores island and urban processes around the world, taking an island approach to urban research and an urban approach to island research.

Keywords: island cities, island studies, urbanisation, urban island studies, urban studies

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Returning from the Horizon: Introducing *Urban Island Studies*

1. The setting

In his 2006 editorial introduction to the inaugural issue of *Island Studies Journal*, Godfrey Baldacchino (2006a: 3-5) set the stage for the field of island studies by presenting a list of facts on island population, government, economics – and research history. Long before island studies had been identified and established as a field, scholars were researching islands, and long before scholars were researching islands, people had assumed that islands were special (Gillis, 2007; Lowenthal, 2007), even if they could not always quite pinpoint why.

The emerging field of urban island studies has no such advantage. People tend not to connect the island with the urban. Island towns and cities *per se* are not generally regarded as special in any way. An island city might be special as a city *or* as an island – but not as an island city.

It might thus be worthwhile to provide a setting for urban island studies:

- Six of the world's ten most populous urban agglomerations (Brinkhoff, 2014) were established on small islands: Tokyo, Guangzhou, Jakarta, Manila, Mumbai, and Mexico City.
- The largest and most densely populated cities in the United States (New York City) and sub-Saharan Africa (Lagos) are based on small islands, and the largest city in South America (São Paulo) is a historical offshoot of the island city of São Vicente.
- European capital cities based or founded on small islands include Amsterdam, Copenhagen, London, Paris, and Stockholm. In addition, Europe's small island states and substantially autonomous subnational island jurisdictions include the capital cities of Douglas, Isle of Man; Mariehamn, Åland; Nicosia, Cyprus; Nuuk, Greenland; Reykjavík, Iceland; Saint Helier, Jersey; St Peter Port, Guernsey; Tórshavn, Faroe; and Valletta, Malta.
- The arc of East Asian, Southeast Asian, and Pacific island states (Japan, Taiwan, Indonesia, Philippines, Singapore, Indonesia, and Papua New Guinea) have a collective population of 515,120,000.
- Fifteen of the world's twenty most densely populated sovereign states and substantially autonomous subnational jurisdictions are wholly or substantially based on small islands: Macau, Singapore, Hong Kong, Bahrain, Malta, Bermuda, Sint Maarten, Maldives, Jersey, Guernsey, Saint Martin, Taiwan, Barbados, Mauritius, and Mayotte.
- In the Middle Ages, small island trading centres played key roles in the movement of products, people, and ideas between East and West, North and South: Bruges, Gotland, Lamu, Lübeck, Mozambique Island, Ormus/Hormuz, Pemba, Venice, Zanzibar, etc.
- Eight of the world's ten busiest ports (by volume) are based on archipelagos: Shanghai, Singapore, Tiajin, Rotterdam, Guangzhou, Ningbo-Zhoushan, Busan, and Hong Kong.

These figures, of course, merely tell us that certain patterns of human settlement and economic activity frequently take place on islands. They do not explain why islands might tend to be densely populated, why they might encourage the formation of major cities, why they might be significant players in the global exchange of goods and ideas, how they might host particular kinds of cultural processes, and why it might be interesting to examine certain cities as island cities *per se*.

The field of urban island studies seeks to answer these and other questions. In so doing, urban island studies will contribute to our knowledge concerning islands and cities more broadly.

2. Island studies

The field of island studies is often defined as the study of islands ‘on their own terms’ (McCall, 1994; Baldacchino, 2004). This definition is so attractive in part due to its implied resistance to the study of islands on *someone else’s* terms. It is a rallying cry, a protest against the injustice of the mainland many taking it upon themselves to define and research the islanded few.

Islands have for so long and so often functioned as research sites and units of artistic currency – as microcosms in which to test macrocosmic hypotheses – that the “the lure of the island” appears almost irresistible (Baldacchino, 2012, 2006a). The field of island studies does not deny the importance of islands to mainlanders, yet it stresses the primacy of islanders’ perspectives. Hau’ofa (1994: 152) calls for a move from “viewing the Pacific as ‘islands in a far sea’” to viewing it as “‘a sea of islands’”: It is necessary to place islands – and their surrounding seas – at the centre instead of marginalising them as “dry surfaces in a vast ocean far from the centers of power.” Although many small island societies with distinctive cultures, politics, and economies may indeed be “empire dust” (Couroucli, 2010), remnants of geopolitics gone by, they are also places in their own right.

It is on these foundations that the field of island studies has been built. Researchers from numerous disciplines have sought to realign island scholarship, to transform ‘the island’ from a mere locus of research to a focus of study (Ronström, 2012):

- Island politics and government: Researchers have emphasised small island societies as centres of power and political innovation as well as enmeshed in global politics (e.g. Anckar, 2007; Baldacchino, 2014, 2010; Baldacchino & Milne, 2000; Baldacchino & Tsai, 2014; Bartmann, 2006; Coddington *et al.*, 2012; Grydehøj, 2013; Grydehøj *et al.*, 2012; Karlsson, 2009; Loyd & Mountz, 2014; Mountz, 2014).
- Island economies: Researchers have explored spatial and political contexts to understand the workings of a specifically insular economics (e.g. Baldacchino, 2006b; Bertram & Watters, 1985; Briguglio *et al.*, 2010; Connell, 2013; Grydehøj & Hayward, 2014; Grydehøj & Nurdin, 2015; Kakazu, 2012; Karides, 2013; McElroy *et al.*, 2014; Tsai & Chiang, 2014).
- Island business (including tourism): Researchers have contributed to a complex picture of how physically isolated communities are drawn into the global market as well as the hidden costs and benefits of this movement (e.g. Baldacchino & Ferreira, 2013; Baum *et al.*, 2000; Cooke *et al.*, 2013; Hampton & Christensen, 2011; Hayward, 2014; Johnson, 2012; Ioannides *et al.*, 2001; Royle, 2009).
- Island heritage, culture, and tradition: Researchers have revealed how island communities accrue influences from and influence the wider world as well as how feelings of culture, ethnicity, and nationality affect island politics and economics (e.g. Grydehøj & Hayward, 2011; Guerrero, 2013; Johnson & Kuwahara, 2013; McCusker & Soares, 2011; Ronström, 2008; Tabucanon, 2014).
- Environment: Researchers have studied human-environment interactions as well as environmental risks, adaptation, resilience, and sustainability (e.g. Christensen & Mertz, 2010; Mertz *et al.*, 2010; Hayward & Mosse, 2012; Kelman *et al.* 2012, 2011; Kelman & West, 2009; Maceda *et al.*, 2009; McIntyre, 2012; Stratford *et al.*, 2013).

Much of the above social sciences research is strongly influenced by disciplinary traditions from geography. Indeed, this geographic orientation has sometimes resulted in the sidelining of approaches from literary studies and related disciplines (Fletcher, 2011). Nevertheless, recent years have seen island studies become more solidly theorised, with writers like Baldacchino (2008; Baldacchino & Kelman, 2014), Clark (2013), Depretaere (2008a, 2008b), Hay (2013, 2006), Hayward (2012a), Pugh (2013a), and Stratford (2013; Stratford *et al.*, 2011) nuancing the field's approach and subject matter as well as problematising the field's focus on island remoteness, isolation, and peripherality.

As island studies has grown in sophistication, so has the field grown in its capacity to communicate research. In terms of peer-reviewed journals, *Island Studies Journal* was founded in 2006, *Shima: The International Journal of Research into Island Cultures* dates from 2007, and *Journal of Marine and Island Cultures* was established in 2012. A number of organisations also run regular series of interdisciplinary, international conferences, including: International Small Islands Studies Association, Small Island Cultures Research Initiative, International Geographical Union's Commission on Islands, and Island Dynamics.

Island studies thus seems to be on the cusp of transitioning from an emerging field into an established field – if this transition has not already occurred. Until recently, however, the scope of island studies, as it has developed over the past decades, has arguably not fully accounted for or acknowledged one key category of island places: island cities. Island cities are the focus of the new journal *Urban Island Studies*.

Many island studies researchers do, of course, study cities and densely populated islands. It is just that the field has tended not to cast such places as urban or as cities (exceptions include Hayward, 2012b; Phua, 2014). As illustrated above, there are in fact a great number of people packed onto a great number of often-densely populated islands. As a result, island studies' emphasis on 'the islanded few' does not merely protest against how peripheral island communities are denied centrality; it also denies island cities true island status. Ironically, island studies has failed precisely in presenting island communities as centres: Island cities are regarded as not truly insular, and peripherality becomes a defining feature of islands. The terms of the debate are skewed against understanding islands on their own terms. In such a discourse, we cannot hope to place island communities at the centre; we can at best succeed in presenting islands as self-centred.

The *Urban Island Studies* ethos represents a return from the island studies horizon. It seeks to fulfil island studies' promise of understanding islands on their own terms precisely by combatting the futile provincialisations of an island rhetoric that tacitly accepts the dominance of the centre in its championing of the periphery. Only by permitting ourselves to regard islands as centres within complex networks of centrality and peripherality – rather than simply as peripheries or as mystical centres unto themselves – can we transcend the savage inequalities of how we speak about and act upon both islands and mainlands. Only then can we place islands in context and place context on islands.

3. Types of island cities

We can break geographical island cities down into two primary categories: 1) major population centres of large islands or archipelagos and 2) densely urbanised small islands or archipelagos. We recognise that this categorisation is not absolute and that other categories and subcategories are feasible, but we put forward this bifurcation as a starting point for discussion and development.

For major population centres of large islands or archipelagos, it is not the city's absolute size (in terms of population, economy, coastline length, land area, or water area/volume under its jurisdiction) that is important but instead its relative size (compared with the surrounding area) and/or its fulfilment of urban functions. It is thus that, while Taipei and Manila are very large cities on very large and highly populous islands and archipelagos, small places like Longyearbyen, Svalbard (population 2000) and Hugh Town, Isles of Scilly (population 1100) are likewise island cities inasmuch as they perform urban functions and are population centres for small and lightly populated archipelagos. Some extremely remote island communities – such as the UK territories of Pitcairn and Tristan da Cunha – are only accessible by boat following a journey of several days since they tend to be out of float plane and helicopter range. Even some islands that are not quite so distant – such as peripheral islands in some of the vast Pacific archipelagos – may in practice be accessible solely by infrequent and/or lengthy transport. Such remote islands can possess a great degree of self-dependency and either formal or informal administrative autonomy so that even the smallest of settlements can take on the functions of much larger territories (Amoamo, 2013; Royle, 2010). Furthermore, elements of urban design, architecture, and planning apply even to tiny and rural island communities.

Although some island communities remain truly remote, improved transport technologies and infrastructures (high-speed boats, bridges, airplanes, tunnels, causeways, cars, motorways, railways, etc.) have made many formerly difficult-to-reach small island communities relatively easily accessible. One might imagine that globalisation would decrease the significance of the island cities on which these remote communities depend, but it has in fact reinforced the centrality of the old island cities: The more complex and resource-heavy the transport technology, the more important the island city's hub and gateway functions relative to its periphery. It is thus, for example, that even though (or perhaps because) the Penghu archipelago is now just a short flight from Taipei on mainland Taiwan, Penghu's main town of Magong has continued accruing significance as the islands' transport hub and business centre. Similarly, the tyranny of rising expectations means that the remote settlements of East Greenland are now dependent on West Greenland's transport hub (Kangerlussuaq) and administrative, industrial, and business centre (Nuuk) – which are themselves dependent on the distant island city of Copenhagen. Understanding the interconnected urban functions of island cities as diverse as Paris and Saint-Denis de la Réunion, as Reykjavík and Akureyri, as Jakarta and Ambon is vital for understanding life in general on large islands and archipelagos. There is furthermore substantial opportunity to explore the causes and effects of employment, economic, cultural, and other differences between those living within these island cities and those in rural and/or remote locations.

While mainstream island studies has often considered urban centres of large archipelagos (though rarely from an explicitly urban perspective), the second category of island city (densely urbanised small islands or archipelagos) has received less attention. This category can be further divided into four (overlapping) subcategories:

- (a) Cities that are contiguous (or nearly contiguous) with one or more small islands (Abu Dhabi, Malé, Miami Beach, Mumbai, Singapore, etc.),
- (b) Cities that are substantially or significantly located on one or more densely urbanised small islands (Florianópolis, Guangzhou, Lagos, Montreal, Stockholm, etc.),
- (c) Small islands within cities that are largely located on the mainland (the islands of Cairo, Ho Chi Min City, Shanghai, Tokyo, Toronto, etc.),
- (d) Small islands or archipelagos that cannot be regarded as a single urban zone but that are nonetheless densely urbanised as a whole and/or fulfil urban functions (Bahrain, Barbados, Malta, Penang, Zanzibar, etc.).

Many cities in subcategory (b) began as settlements based on small islands or archipelagos but have since expanded outwards onto the mainland (Hong Kong, Mombasa, São Vicente, St Petersburg, etc.). In other cases, land reclamation processes have led to islands physically joining the mainland (London, Macau, Manhattan, Mumbai, etc.). This is not to mention the presence of bridges, causeways, and tunnels (fixed links), which connect many densely urbanised small islands to adjacent landmasses. Although it might appear odd to regard cities that are no longer limited to islands as ‘island cities’, the historical topography and island spatiality of these cities has often strongly conditioned their future development. ‘Dry’ and linked islands must be included in our definition of islands if we are to avoid artificially isolating and peripheralising island society from mainland society (Barrowclough, 2010).

Just as mainlands are swallowing up islands through land reclamation, they are also producing new islands and expanding old ones. The Palm Islands and World archipelago of Dubai might be the most famous examples of artificial islands at present, but island spaces of cities around the globe – from Manhattan to Bahrain, from Singapore to St Petersburg, from Amsterdam to Osaka – have been created and altered through human engineering.

Besides the two above categories of island cities, we can also note the frequent metaphorical uses of islands and archipelagos within urban studies, architecture, and planning. That is to say, certain strands of urban research and thought find it useful to deploy island terminology as a means of understanding how urban areas, settlements, buildings, infrastructure, and so on function or ought to function. Such metaphorical approaches (considered below) must also fall within the scope of urban island studies as instances of the intersection of social and geographical understandings of island spatiality within an urban context.

4. Urban studies

Urban studies is a well-established research field, with a range of top-quality journals and a history of making an impact on other fields. Prestigious periodicals include *Cities*; *City & Community*; *City, Culture and Society*; *Environment and Urbanization*; *Environment and Planning B: Planning and Design*; *European Urban and Regional Studies*; *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*; *Journal of Urban Affairs*; *Journal of Urban Design*; *Journal of Urban Economics*; *Landscape and Urban Planning*; *Regional Science and Urban Economics*; *Regional Studies*; *Territory, Politics, Governance*; *Urban Affairs Review*; *Urban Geography*; and *Urban Studies*.

Island studies has perhaps given island cities less attention than they deserve in part because the dominant discourse within the field – laudably seeking to de-marginalise remote communities – might seem initially to make little sense when applied to the metropolis, even though many locations within cities are marginalised, peripheralised, islanded, and separated from the core or the power. It is more difficult to explain why urban studies has similarly shown little awareness of islands, for as demonstrated above, cities on islands play disproportionately prominent roles on the global stage, and many island aspects and traits emerge in urban environments. The lack of awareness of islands within urban studies may partially come down to the landscape changes prompted by urbanisation processes. Small island status has been made invisible by centuries of land reclamation in Manila, Mexico City, and Tokyo as well as by the outward spread of urbanisation from historical small island urban centres like Lagos, Paris, and Rio de Janeiro. By the same token, the ease of present-day mobility makes us forget past limits to mobility: Transport technologies and infrastructure close the gaps between the multitudes of islands and peninsulas in urban archipelagos like Busan, Hong Kong, and Stockholm – not to mention between island and mainland states.

Urban studies is largely informed by structural approaches that reductively imagine the city and its urban spaces – its numerous urbanisms so to speak – as sociocultural, economic, and political specificities of place rather than as historiographies of processes with material and physical foundations. In this sense, the city itself becomes problematic. One issue is the manner in which the dominant theoretical frameworks of study (modernity, urbanity, colonialism, postcolonial cityscapes, technosocial global cities, etc.) are used as modular structural scaffolding. This creates unintentional hierarchy – and a widening gap – between urban theory and the organically produced multivocal and intersected narratives of the city. By default, the conventional approaches first position the theoretical rubric and then seek to fit the city's experiences within it as one would the pieces of a puzzle.

Another issue involves the marginalisation of the city's roots in the creation of its stories, the manner in which the organic narratives of local and indigenous communities have been subsumed by dominant storylines (Swaminathan, 2015). There is also a near-complete absence of serious scholarship even acknowledging – let alone studying and analysing – the archipelagic, coastal, and littoral nature of the island city as valid material and non-material foundations for the city's territorial, spatial, and cultural construction.

The field of urban studies is, however, undergoing change. Recent decades have seen several fruitful attempts to introduce more qualitative socio-anthropological and sociocultural approaches to the field (e.g. Appadurai, 2006, 2001, 1986; Mayaram, 2012). Such studies have introduced a certain 'human quality' to the city, regarding urban spaces as organic entities. This has expanded the landscape of urban studies, producing new methodological tools and lines of inquiry that can be usefully applied to island cases. Island studies has thus far been slow to interact with and take on board urban-inspired theories of governance and territory (e.g. Brenner, 2004; Pierre, 2011; Sassen, 2013, 2006; Uitermark, 2015). Island studies could likewise benefit from nuanced urban explorations of the interactions between urban design, infrastructure, resources, space, and society (e.g. Elewa & El-Garhy, 2013; Graham & Hewitt, 2013; Graham & Marvin, 2001; Kaika & Swyngedouw, 2000; Kong & Yeoh, 2003; Pasaogullari & Doratli, 2004; Tonkiss, 2013), which may prove applicable to island contexts of all sorts.

More challenging for island studies are the arguments that the world has already been completely urbanised and that the ‘traditional’ city has been replaced by global urban processes (e.g. Brenner, 2014, 2013; Wachsmuth, 2014; Amin & Thrift, 2002), with the result that ‘the urban’ now encompasses not just the usual suspects (like New York City and Mumbai) but also remote and sparsely inhabited islands (like Greenland and Kiribati). Indeed, small island spatiality may encourage exceptionally comprehensive urbanisation even in communities typically regarded as extremely peripheral, highlighting the need for improved urban governance and understanding of the drivers and impacts of urban development (Barnett & Margetts, 2013; Bautista, 2011; Bryant-Tokalau, 2014; Jones, 2012; Reis & Hayward, 2013).

This is not to say that the urban has been completely forgotten when it comes to the study of islands, especially in regions such as the Caribbean, where scholars have for many years researched densely populated urban coastal corridors (Pugh & Potter, 2003; Clark & Howard, 2006). Yet as Hay (2013) points out concerning Caribbean studies more generally, there has been a tendency to downplay the *islandness* of the region and the role of the sea in particular. Such concerns bring to the fore questions about the appropriateness of ‘imported’ research techniques, models of island urban planning, island/sea boundaries, and the recurrent theme of what it means to expand and develop the power of island voices as well as what it means to discover their terms (Pugh, 2013, 2005; Sletto, 2002).

As noted above, urban research has also used islands metaphorically. Islands have served as models and metaphors for cities since ancient times (Pigou-Dennis & Grydehøj, 2014), but it was the manifesto on *The City in the City – Berlin: The Green Archipelago* by the architects Ungers and Koolhaas (2013 [1977]) that helped revive the popularity of islands within modern urban design. For Ungers, Koolhaas, and their collaborators, the depopulating European city could ideally evolve into an ‘archipelago city’ (*Stadtarchipel*) consisting of islands of urban density within a sea of forest (Neumayer, 1990). This politico-architectural vision of positive urban polycentricity has continued to attract interest (e.g. Aureli, 2011; Schrijver, 2006). It has also contributed to a distinct strand of island terminology emphasising the negatively fragmented and militarised nature of the postmodern city. Drawing upon Foucault’s nightmare of the ‘carceral archipelago’ (Foucault, 1999 [1975]), island metaphors are deployed to examine processes of urban social and economic exclusion: “islands of enclosure and anticipated protection against the real and imagined dangers of daily life” (Soja, 2000: 299); “the rise of residential archipelagos that are driven by aspects of security and exclusiveness” (Borsdorf *et al.*, 2007: 367); “security strategies turn open city districts into temporary, mobile ‘security islands’ replete with paramilitary forces, militarized cordons, and even surface-to-air missiles” (Graham, 2010: 121).

Problematically, both these positive and negative deployments of the island as an urban metaphor make isolation the essence of islandness. This evokes the stereotype of islands as places essentially disconnected, cut-off, and apart. Unlike the stereotype, however, island communities tend overwhelmingly to be integrated into complex networks of exchange for goods, people, and ideas. An important task for future research within urban island studies must be to nuance island metaphors and assist in bringing knowledge of real-world island dynamics to bear upon analysis of island-like processes in urban space. The island has been so attractive as a metaphor over the

course of history that it would be futile to deny its metaphorical value; we should instead engage with the metaphorical uses of islands to ensure that they reflect their desired content and do not feed into a broader peripheralising discourse. There is a valid and strong case for the archipelagic lens to become not only an organic frame of reference but also a theoretical structure for analysing the city. The lens is robust enough to integrate into dominant theoretical frameworks, potentially bringing much-needed sociocultural context and organic flexibility into the existing approaches to urban research.

5. Urban island studies: the field of study

The field of urban island studies had its breakthrough in 2014 due to activities coordinated by the Island Dynamics organisation. Island Dynamics produced a special thematic section of *Island Studies Journal* (Vol. 9, No. 2, pp. 183-292) on the theme of island cities. This special section included an editorial introduction by Adam Grydehøj (2014b), plus six papers on a range of urban island studies topics with geographic focus on Greenland, the Balearic Islands, Belize City, Mumbai, and Isle of Man (Grydehøj, 2014a; Picornell, 2014; Pigou-Dennis & Grydehøj, 2014; Pons *et al.*, 2014; Swaminathan, 2014; Tutt, 2014). Although these papers discussed disparate topics, they together made a case for an urban island studies that can both take in the big picture of big places and be sensitive to the shifting livelihoods, lifestyles, and landscapes that see communities transition from urban to rural and back again. The papers also, however, highlighted just how little research has thus far been performed on how islandness affects urban development and how urban development affects islands, thereby emphasising the need for additional study.

The *Island Studies Journal* special section was published in October 2014 to coincide with the inaugural Island Cities and Urban Archipelagos (ICUA) conference, held in Copenhagen. The conference featured representation from a wide range of academic fields and disciplines, including human geography, urban planning and design, architecture, literature, heritage studies, business studies, transport, disaster resilience (including climate change), tourism studies, history, and archaeology. The ICUA conference also hosted the launching of the Island Cities and Urban Archipelagos research network (<http://www.islandcities.org>) under the Island Dynamics umbrella. The research network will organise future ICUA conferences, publications, and research projects. The ICUA 2016 conference will be held in Hong Kong, further establishing and strengthening urban island studies as well as providing a platform for communicating research from the field.

Urban island studies offers the potential to improve our understanding of both urban and island development processes. The fact, for instance, that strategically located small islands are so disproportionately likely to host major urban centres suggests that research into the islandness of such island cities could tell us something about cities in a broader sense. Because cities on small islands tend to be exceptionally densely urbanised relative to other spaces, the extreme cityness of island cities may make urban processes more distinct, thereby aiding in their study. Similarly, knowledge of centre-periphery relationships within larger islands and archipelagos may clarify the dynamics of such relationships more generally for the precise reasons why islands are often otherwise selected as laboratories and research sites.

Taking an urban approach is also important for island studies. As a field, island studies has been unable to convincingly identify what, if any, effects islandness has on societal development. This is no surprise given that cities have been largely lacking from island studies analyses, rendering the field's understanding of the nature of islandness incomplete. However, by researching how island geographies influence urban areas, the field could more easily differentiate between effects of islandness and effects of small population and/or economic size (Grydehøj, 2014b: 187). Perhaps more significantly, an urban perspective is necessary to add nuance to reigning island studies understandings of island societies. An island studies that truly studied islands on their own terms would not persist, for example, in analysing towns like Papeete, French Polynesia (population 25,800) and Kirkwall, Orkney (population 9300) solely as remote communities when these are, in fact, the major population, industrial, and transport centres of their respective archipelagos. It is important to seek to understand the urban functions filled by such island cities, regardless of their size relative to mainland cities. This should furthermore extend to studies of 'second cities', 'third cities', and beyond in order to analyse the full complexity of urban-rural and inter-urban relationships within an island jurisdiction or physical delineation. In the words of Baldacchino (2006a: 10):

'Island studies' need/should not be focused only on islands themselves, but also on relations between islands and mainlands. [...] Seeing islands as part of complex and cross-cutting systems of regional and global interaction should be one of the strengths of island studies as well as of an island studies journal.

This should also be a strength of an urban island studies journal.

6. Urban Island Studies: the journal

It is in this context that the *Urban Island Studies* journal has been created. *Urban Island Studies* is an online, open access journal, harnessing the internet to bypass traditional publishing industry business models, which frequently serve to further entrench existing power structures. All research papers published in this journal are subject to double-blind peer review by two or more reviewers. Papers are published on a rolling basis and assembled into annual volumes.

Urban Island Studies publishes in-depth case studies and internationally comparative papers, which can add to the empirical basis of the field, as well as theoretical contributions. Papers will consider historical or present-day cases, including islands that are now part of the mainland. The journal's scope includes but is not limited to research articles concerning:

- Densely urbanised small islands,
- Urban centres of larger islands or archipelagos,
- Islands within mainland cities,
- Urbanisation and urban processes in island communities,
- Relationships between urban centres and peripheral island communities,
- Metaphorical uses of islands and archipelagos in urban research,
- Papers contributing to urban island studies' theoretical foundations.

Research is welcome that is theoretical, empirical, policy orientated, or combines these approaches. With this in mind, the journal will engage with such questions as:

- How does island spatiality affect urbanisation processes?

- Are island cities subject to certain kinds of cultural dynamics as a consequence of urban density and hub functions?
- How can island residents and governments adapt to environmental risks prompted by urbanisation?
- What roles do island cities play in global networks (cultural, political, and economic)?
- Do islands host particular problems with regard to urban poverty and wealth disparity?
- How does land scarcity influence patterns of land use, land change, and land ownership?
- Does island spatiality encourage the development of certain architectural and urban design solutions?
- How does island urbanisation affect employment and human migration processes?
- What special challenges does islandness present for urban sustainability?
- How can the island metaphor help us understand urban life in general?
- How can island cities exploit their status to compete in the global economy?
- How does urbanisation affect island transport infrastructures and island spatiality itself?
- How do rural island communities interact with their (island and mainland) urban centres?
- How does island city urban governance differ from that of mainland cities?

These are just a few of the many topics that will be discussed in *Urban Island Studies*. These various inquiries are tied together by an interest in how the island and the urban interact. In order to avoid excluding those from policy and practitioner backgrounds, authors who might be unaccustomed to the format of academic publishing are welcome to work with an Editorial Board member to learn expectations of academic writing. In order to maximise research accessibility, *Urban Island Studies* will also publish multilingual articles when requested, presenting versions of papers in non-English language(s) alongside the English-language version of record. Finally, non-traditional forms of presenting research (such as photo essays, videos with original choreography, or musical compositions) for peer-review might be considered.

Reflecting the fields of urban studies and island studies themselves, *Urban Island Studies* is comprehensively interdisciplinary. The journal's founding editorial board includes researchers with backgrounds in architecture; business and employment; disaster, resilience, and sustainability (including climate change); engineering; folklore; literature and language; participatory planning and development; political economy and urban affairs; sustainable cities, art, and science and technology studies (STS); and urban design.

7. Conclusion

Urban Island Studies will make valuable contributions to urban studies and island studies, especially by bringing the fields together. In time, urban island studies will become an accepted subfield of both these parent fields. *Urban Island Studies* is neither an island studies journal nor an urban studies journal but is instead an equal meeting of two vibrant scholarly traditions, both of which, however, have traditionally possessed certain limitations – as is true of all fields and as will certainly become true for urban island studies as well. By seeking to overcome these limitations – to bolster the urban within the island and the island within the urban – *Urban Island Studies* will help advance understandings of islands, cities, and everything in between.

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