Extended Statehood In The Caribbean ~ Definition And Focus

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Introduction

Quite a number of islands in the Caribbean region have not become independent states**[i]**. They still have constitutional relationships with former mother countries on the European or American mainland, which are commonly designated as *dependency* relationships. These relationships allow varying degrees of local autonomy and central control. Foreign affairs, international diplomacy and defense are to a large extent taken care of by the European partners or the USA. The islands' judicial system is in one way or another integrated into the judicial system on the mainland and rules and regulations have to some extent been synchronized. Citizenship rights may have been extended, including metropolitan passports. If so, as USA or European passports holders, the islands' residents often have unrestricted access to the metropolitan countries.

Caribbean territories that have not become independent nation-states are known under various labels: 'dependent', 'non-independent', 'alternative post-colonial', 'nonsovereign', 'colonies', 'protectorates', 'subordinated' or just 'overseas territories'.**[ii]** These islands continue to maintain a constitutional arrangement with former colonial motherlands. This constitutional arrangement is defined in this study as extended statehood, a form of government that is meant to supplement the island government. The questions that are dealt with in this book are related to the operations of different extended statehood systems. What is their mission? How do they vary? How are they organized? How do they operate? What are the downsides and bottlenecks, what are the advantages?

Throughout this book the concept of extended statehood systems is applied. The s*ystem* concept does not imply that extended statehood in the Caribbean is a systematic, well defined, well organized and well coordinated arrangement. It is merely used as a marker to distinguish arrangements between metropolitan countries on the one hand and Caribbean territories on the other: USA – Puerto Rico, the Netherlands – the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba, France – *Départements d'outre mer* (DOM), and the United Kingdom – Caribbean Overseas Territories. Actually, one of the more significant questions to be raised in this book is how systematic extended statehood in the Caribbean is set up and institutionalized over the last decades.

*Alternatives to Independence***[iii]**
The argument developed in this book is based on the assumption that further decolonization is a non-option. Thus, it makes little sense to qualify the ongoing process of statehood development as a matter of *de-colonization* or *re-colonization*.**[iv]** These terms are biased and outdated; they do not confer a better understanding of the options of extended statehood. References to colonial times and mores do not encourage a *new look* at statehood development in the Caribbean. Circumstances have changed and require another format of analysis than that found in the old landscape of colonies and independent states. This is not a startling new approach. Already in 1984, a study on the constitutional relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States (of more than 1500 pages) was titled: 'Breakthrough from Colonialism: an Interdisciplinary study of statehood'.**[v]** In 1997 a collection of essays was published about 'rethinking colonialism and nationalism' with regards to the *Estado Libre Asociado* of Puerto Rico.**[vi]** Another study, 'Islands at the Crossroads' (2001), calls also for rethinking of politics in the nonindependent territories.**[vii]** Hintjens wrote in 1995 about *alternatives to independence,* and in 1997 about *the end* of independence.**[viii]** What may be even more telling is that the independence movements on the islands do not attract large followings; their significance is marginal.**[ix]** For instance, in Puerto Rico.s elections and plebiscites, the percentage for the *independence* option varied between 19.6% in 1952 to 4.4% in 1993 (in 1964 and 1968 it was a mere 2.8%).**[x]** A plebiscite in the Netherlands Antilles recorded in 1993/1994 that less than 1% of the voters on the islands of Curaçao, Bonaire, Saba and Sint-Eustatius opted for *independence*; on Sint-Maarten *independence* attracted 6.3%.**[xi]** In a referendum in 2004 14% of the voters on Sint Maarten opted for independence while just less than 5% did that on

Curaçao (in 2005). For many a Caribbean scholar and for the large majority ofvoters, independence is no option. Thus the questions to be dealt with are not about independence but rather those that relate to extended statehood arrangements currently in place, how do they work and how can they be put to better use in a highly interactive global world where more and more nation-states have become part of supranational arrangements. Extended statehood will be considered in this study as an arrangement that may prevent these islands from becoming isolated.

Focus: How Extended Statehood Works

Much of the scholarly enterprise concerning the alternative post-colonial Caribbean is rooted in its colonial history, giving form to the colonial clouds under which these postcolonies are supposedly still living. This type of scholarship has a retrospective bias.

Caribbean studies often find their anchorage in colonial sediment; in other words, the questions that are being asked follow the shadows of the Caribbean's colonial past.**[xii]** The relations between metropolitan countries and the alternative post-colonial Caribbean island are often predominantly defined in terms of a colonial legacy.**[xiii]** For instance, some scholars assert that the non-independent status of these islands entails serious cultural and ideological difficulties. In this view, nation building under these colonial shadows is not an easy task. Also mentioned is 'the issue of national identity and the frustrations which inevitably come with the continued subordination to the erstwhile colonizer'.**[xiv]**

This may be so. But at the same time this may be *old-speak* as well, a way of thinking in the days when nation-building, independence, sovereignty and nationalism were selfevident categories of a people's statehood. Nowadays many of the old established nationstates face similar questions in view of globalization and the thickening of transnational government networks**[xv]**: how to define the nation, how to teach its history and how to characterize national identity, how to make a multi-cultural society work. Through globalization, immigration, travel, internet and trade, the cohesion of many a modern nation is now being questioned. 'Who are we' is in the 21st Century a complex question, not only for islanders in the Caribbean but also for residents of European nation-states.

Even in the United States of America with its strong sense of .the American people., the 'who are we' question is raised and answered very differently at

different times.**[xvi]** The non-independent Caribbean is occasionally perceived as a half-way-house, in between a colonial status and *en route* to an independent nation-state. Within such a frame of analysis, problems of identity, culture, sovereignty, autonomy, self-respect and nation building are dominant and spring to the fore. The construct of a half-way-house status tends to highlight the colonial aspects of the constitutional relationship.

In which areas and to what extent are these territories still colonized and subordinated? How much autonomy has been granted to local politics, how much power is centralized in metropolitan offices? The constitutional relationship is being nitpicked from the point of view of its colonial make-up. From the point of view of a transitional status, questions pertaining to how the present relations are organized and can be improved do not naturally follow. In contrast, scholarly attention is focused on how to move forward to 'more sovereignty', or how to advance constitutional development, meaning more autonomy, or how to arrive as close as possible to an almost independent nation-state status.**[xvii]** Except for their colonial composition, questions as to how these relationships are actually organized and regulated, and how they operate are generally bypassed. Why bother about something that is temporary and will sooner or later changeover into an essentially different form?

The half-way-house notion may also be a reason that comparing different extended statehood relations in the Caribbean is rather exceptional.**[xviii]** Bureaucrats, administrators, politicians and academics rarely take lessons of how these differences work out for people's social and economic life on the islands. Some point out that a comparative analysis is complicated by the very different colonial origin of the Caribbean extended statehood systems. More recently, the similarity of the political, social-economic and law enforcement issues have encouraged a comparing of notes between former mother countries. Exchange of experience and best practice may increase the effectiveness of the policies pursued.**[xix]**

Essentially distinct from the half-way-house notion is the concept of constitutional in-betweenity. For instance, is the Kingdom of the Netherlands a confederation or some form of entirely voluntary cooperation between the Netherlands and two semi-independent Caribbean island states? Or is it a fully-fledged state with its own powers and responsibilities? According to Hillebrink, both views have their merits, because the Kingdom of the Netherlands is an example of constitutional

in-betweenity that defies classification in any of the traditional models of statehood.**[xx]** Another question is to what extent the constitutional in-betweenity of the Kingdom of the Netherlands is in compliance with the standards of de-colonization adopted by the UN. Hillebrink concludes that the international law is sufficiently flexible to accommodate several statehood options for territories that have not yet been fully de-colonized, but the law does insist on unequivocal support from the population.**[xxi]** Constitutional *in-betweenity* corresponds with our approach that the variety of extended statehood in the Caribbean merits specific scholarly attention.

In this study we argue that the constitutional relationship between Caribbean islands with their former motherlands and the specific form of statehood this entails, requires a distinctive focus of scholarship other than post-colonial history and policy. In addition to research and analysis from a colonial retrospect, attempts must be made to unravel the actual characteristics of this form of statehood. What makes it tick? What does it have to put up with? What is needed to consolidate these constitutional relationships for future improvement, not only for the benefit of the island populations but also from the point of view of combating international crime and strengthening law enforcement and security. In sum, extended statehood in the Caribbean should not be dealt with as an essentially unique category that will eventually give way to independent nation-statehood but rather as a form of statehood that operates in an ever more global world where longstanding established nation-states are losing the nation-statehood securities that have been counted on for centuries, such as sovereignty, solid borders, protected territory, national identity, shared history. In that perspective Caribbean extended statehood and its further development does not stand on its own but shares many features and dilemmas with transnational statehood development elsewhere. In fact, it may somehow serve as an exemplary form of modern statehood that has real life experience with all kinds of limitations of the nation-state.

Extended Statehood Elsewhere

In the post-colonial Caribbean extended statehood development is an alternative to independent nation-statehood. But elsewhere, independent nation-states participate in a process of extended statehood as recognition of their inter-dependence.

A world of separate national societies divided by heavily guarded borders in

*which independence was cherished as the highest ideal has given way to an acknowledged interdependence among states, from the largest to the smallest.***[xxii]**

Especially in Europe, a growing number of independent nation-states have agreed to power sharing with the offices of the European Union, with *Brussels*. Here the growth of extended statehood ensued as a next step for long established independent nation-states while in the Caribbean this form of statehood bypasses the independent nation-state status. For a long time Caribbean extended statehood was settled upon more by tacit default rather than by a well thought out choice. However, in the last decades, referenda on 'status' have made it abundantly clear that the majority of the population of the overseas territories does not prefer to ascend to independence. Despite this difference, extended statehood is these days not as particular as many a Caribbean scholar, or politician would have us believe. Pulling the alternative post-colonial Caribbean away from under its colonial shadows opens a new mindset to research and analysis of the nuts and bolts of extended statehood development in modern times.

The European integration is a process of extended statehood, which includes some former mother countries of Caribbean islands. This process started essentially as an attempt to control nationalism so that a 'no more war' maxim became part of Europe's political security safeguards. Later, economic development was added to energize the European integration by de-regulating the borders between the countries of the European Union. In 2003, years after the first European institutions had been established, national currencies were abandoned for the Euro. National decisions and policy making now have to comply with European policies and regulation. Moreover, globalization has made national borders lose significance. In Paris Chinese run businesses now own a quarter of the typical French 'bar-tabac' and restaurants.**[xxiii]**

Chinese textile imports have since 2005 flooded the European markets. With the expansion of *'Old Europe'* to include 15 new member countries, strong migration of vocational labour within the European Union to *'Old Europe'* has become part and parcel of national economies. Polish plumbers, and bricklayers from the United Kingdom are now free to establish business in France and elsewhere in the European Union. In the early morning airport train from Schiphol Airport to Amsterdam many British accents can be heard assuring their hosts that they will

be on time for the business meeting of that day.

Because of its rather incremental changes at first, the impact of extended statehood in Europe did not initially affect national politics and the national public so much. However, with the referendum on the Constitution for Europe (2005), French politics and public demonstrated that it had not yet digested the new reality that European and rules and regulation as well as the WTO's regimen, had become significant factors in essential sectors of the French economy. The influx of foreign labour and the impact of transnational controls over the national arena created a backlash. When the polls indicated a possible 'no' vote, the French government counteracted by demanding repeal of some of the deregulation in the European common markets, which, by the way, had nothing to do with the ratification of the Constitution for Europe. Long before the vote on the Constitution came into play, this deregulation had been agreed upon in various treaties and agreements.

The referenda on the Constitution for Europe in 2005 made it unmistakably clear how emotional extended statehood development can turn out, not only for the public but at the highest political levels as well. In France and the Netherlands a majority of the voters in the constitutional referendum decided 'no'. France's prime-minister resigned and his successor, de Villepin, suggested that the 'no' vote was rooted in fears that the French would lose their welfare system and job protection to European Union-wide mandates based on free-market rules.**[xxiv]** The Netherlands Prime Minister, Balkenende, suggested that for many people born after the Second World War, the desire for peace and stability was no longer an ironclad argument for further European integration. In the younger generation's view, the Union must first demonstrate its value.**[xxv]** In its aftermath, the European leaders tried to continue to do business as usual, in this case on a summit about the budget of the European Union. The summit derailed completely. An editorial in The New York Times commented that the European leaders, 'instead of focusing on the big picture, France's Jacques Chirac and Britain's Tony Blair chose to revive a perennial dispute over budget rebates to Britain'.**[xxvi]** The Dutch minister of Foreign Affairs, Bot, a diplomat with a long and distinguished career, had never heard such rough language as was used on this summit. Prime-minister Schröder of Germany accused the Netherlands of being egoistic, and France's president Chirac talked about '*fat, overfed countries*', which won't do anything for poor countries. Mr. Bot added: 'and he looked at

us'.**[xxvii]** Emotions may run high, very high in the process of institutionalizing and expanding extended statehood, not only in the Caribbean but also in the established nation-states of the European Union.

Pros and Cons of Extended Statehood in the Caribbean
So-called *dependent* Caribbean microstates are among the most subsidized territories on the globe.**[xxviii]** Compared to the islands that surfed on the wave of independence in the 1960s and 1970s, the *extended statehood* islands are better off. This is generally well acknowledged these days. Study after study has enumerated the differences.

*Today the relative prosperity of the non-sovereign territories is becoming more marked as independent Caribbean states slip into economic recession and growing poverty, so that their political systems and leaders face an endemic crisis of political legitimacy.***[xxix]**

The non-sovereign territories being referred to here are the French, Dutch and British Caribbean. Another study pointed to the same phenomenon.

*Most colonies have reached a development level that distances them from the neighbouring independent societies. They possess urban economies that are closely tied to the metropolitan government through subsidies or commerce; and have benefited from the extension of developmental upsurge experienced by their respective metropolis during the last forty years. In addition, (these) territories have social and economic indicators that reveal high life expectancy, high income and educational levels, and low levels of disease.***[xxx]**

With regards to Guadeloupe and Martinique, another scholar concluded that compared to both their material welfare in the 1940s and that of neighbouring independent states in the 1990s, the DOM are well off.**[xxxi]** And a study reviewing Puerto Rico's economic history also highlights positive differences.

*Since the 1940s, the Puerto Rican economy has exhibited dramatic growth in total output and income. Puerto Rico has left underdevelopment behind and has entered the ranks of the developing and industrialized nations, at least as measured by the level of per capita income and the size of the manufacturing sector in comparison to the rest of the world (…) There can be no question, then, that the Puerto Rican model of development has provided real material gains to the great majority of Puerto Ricans since the 1940's.***[xxxii]**

In contrast, the potential miseries of an *independent* Puerto Rican nation-state have been painted in stark colors: '(it) would have to pauperize its population in order to compete in the capitalist world economy by reducing the minimum wage and government transfers to individuals, by submitting to neo-liberal policies of the International Monetary Fund to subsidize the trade and balance of payments deficits, and by reducing environmental controls'.**[xxxiii]** Another valuable asset of *extended statehood* relative to formal independence is freedom of movement in a post 9/11 world where travel has become increasingly restrictive.**[xxxiv]** USA and European passports provide unrestricted access where others do not. Lastly, from the point of economics, 'a dependent constitutional status is assiduously preserved, partly because of its attractiveness to international investors'.**[xxxv]** McElroy and De Albuquerque, in their comparison of specific economic and social indicators between sovereign states and dependent territories, have provided the groundwork for these betteroff statements.**[xxxvi]**

At the same time, quite a few commentaries cannot help but expressing their concern about the (quasi) colonial status of these island communities: they did not aim to stand on their own; they have not severed colonial ties; they have sacrificed their cultural and political identities for a well-being that -by definition- cannot be true; they suffer from racial discrimination, not only on the metropolitan mainland but also at home. Instead of exhausting every possibility to achieve sustainable development, a welfare mentality predominates the dynamics of the islands. local economies. Better off, yes, but at what price?**[xxxvii]** The cost and dangers inherent in the Puerto Rican development program, based upon capital-intensive, foreign-owned, vertically integrated, and export-oriented corporate expansion, are being presented as an example: '(…) the Island's experience should serve as a lesson for other nations in what *not* to do'.**[xxxviii]** Some refer to 'the scars of economic dependency' of Puerto Rico.**[xxxix]** Guadeloupe's and Martinique's prosperity may only be superficial 'since development (…) owes far more to massive transfers of public money (by France), granted for the sake of 'catching up' with the mainland, than the growth of their own internal economies'. About 30% of the active population of these 'prosperous' territories is affected by unemployment.**[xl]** The prevalence of social subsidies directed to improving the conditions of individuals and families rather than to the stimulation of economic production, growth and development, raises a basic question about theconsequences of some forms of extended statehood.**[xli]** The Caribbean islands may have reached a dead end as far as 'dependent

development' is concerned.**[xlii]**

The nomenclature used to describe the status quo of these islands, speaks volumes. Not long ago one spoke in Britain of 'dependencies', nowadays the more correct term is 'overseas territories'.**[xliii]** In the language of the European Union, the OCT acronym stands for 'overseas countries and territories'. The former Dutch possessions in the Caribbean are characterized as being in a state of 'unfinished de-colonization'; the process of de-colonization has been halted, suggesting that there is still some colonial hangover to be dealt with.**[xliv]** In the French Caribbean, the concepts of *integration* and *assimilation* makes one wonder what was the true character of the islands before they were integrated and assimilated?**[xlv]** The concept of *assimilation* has been called a 'terrible word, a very difficult word'.**[xlvi]** In a recent book on the non-independent Caribbean, the titles of various contributions point to dark clouds which hang over these islands destinies: 'Fifty years of Assimilation', 'The Construction of Dependency', 'The Recolonisation of Aruba', 'Eternal Empire: Britain's Caribbean Colonies in the Global Arena'**[xlvii]** 'Trapped in Luxury' is a somewhat surprising designation of the dire plight of the populations of Martinique, Guadeloupe and French Guiana.**[xlviii]** With regards to Puerto Rico's political status, an 'historical impasse' is being proclaimed.**[xlix]** All in all, it is generally believed that the positive assets of extended statehood in the Caribbean regionhave come at a questionable price.

Exemplary of the prevalent post-colonial bias of this subject is the description of Britain's disengagement from the Caribbean. 'Decolonization' and 'Europeanization' are designated as 'First and Second Step Forward' while Britain's return to the Caribbean in the mid 1980s and the late 1990s is termed a 'First Half-Step-Back' and Second Half-Step Back'.**[l]** What is forward, what is back? Equally biased is the assumption that generous transfers of public monies from the metropolitan to overseas territories induce by definition a crippling aid-dependency. The oil and natural gas revenues of some of the European countries do not qualify in such terms; those are categorized as positive windfalls in government income instead.**[li]**

A Different Perspective

A *new speak* must be developed; new concepts should be applied to legitimize and to further the phenomenon of extended statehood in the Caribbean region.**[lii]** The role of the former colonizers must be examined from the point of view of

being a European or USA partner to the respective island territories.**[liii]** Instead of referring to a process of stagnated de-colonization, the aim should be to look for possible improvements of the status quo structures; the *dependency* structures do not constitute the format of analysis, rather the islands' *extended statehood* structures will be explored. Their connections with American or European metropolitan centers are considered lifelines which, as such, should be strengthened. For instance, 'the ultimate wisdom of de-colonization by integration'**[liv]** is not questioned from the point of view of an adverse process of increased dependency but rather scrutinized in terms of practical results, positive relationships and effective procedures of the islands. *extended statehood.* This approach is very much in line with Grosfuegel's analysis of Puerto Rico's *status.* Grosfuegel suggests that this issue should not be understood 'in essentialist terms or as a question of principle but as pragmatic question as to which status alternative will do better (or the least evil) in protecting and improving the island's ecology, quality of life, and democracy'.**[lv]**

Not having achieved – nor aimed for – formal independence may be more significant as a state of mind than to actual day-to-day reality. But it will always be an issue.**[lvi]** However, in the category of independent states, many groups of people do live under cultural and social conditions that are rather similar to people who populate islands that have extended statehood relations with the mainland. Miles summarizes a key question of these islands' statehood affairs: 'Can cultural dignity be preserved in the absence of political sovereignty?'**[lvii]** This it is not the core of this study; as stated before, *independence* is considered a non-option. Even Cintrón, in his rather biased survey of Puerto Rico's struggle for independence, arrives at the conclusion that in the 1990s the *independentistas* must learn that '(…) it is not independence per se that the masses are after, but a political status that will clearly fulfil their aspirations to a better life. These aspects must be addressed before the island can make a commitment to break away with US hegemony'.**[lviii]**

In this book we have chosen the largely unexplored field of how the islands. statehood extensions work and how they might be improved for the benefit of a fuller participation in the world at large. One chapter deals explicitly with anti-national pragmatism in the Caribbean as working capital when confronting the absence of political sovereignty. Moreover, how do the large Caribbean populations on mainland Europe (including Britain) and the USA cope with their

status?**[lix]** How do these migrant populations experience such matters as political sovereignty, cultural identity, integration and assimilation?**[lx]** Does the crossing of borders between cultures inevitably result in a loss of identity and to self-destruction? For instance, are being black and English/British mutually exclusive identities?**[lxi]** Rodríguez, a Puerto Rican novelist, exclaims: 'I am Puerto Rican. I am American. I am both (…) I claim Puerto Rico though I don't live there. I claim America though I'm not white'.**[lxii]** Duany documents that Puerto Ricans identify themselves primarily as Puerto Rican, not American, Hispanic or Latino and argues, 'that Puerto Ricans on the Island and in the mainland assert a strong national (…) identity, even though most of them do not support independence'.**[lxiii]** From the political, cultural and social characteristics of the Caribbean populations on the mainland, lessons can be learned for the Caribbean islands with regards to cultural dignity, political sovereignty and extended statehood.

The immigrants on the mainland may have something to teach the people on the islands as to how they deal with these questions.**[lxiv]** It may very well be that the islands. trade-offs for maintaining extended statehood are not as dramatic as is often proclaimed. The political costs of *extended statehood* may have been distorted and magnified as a consequence of an islands. inclination to be preoccupied with island affairs. And in their own way, the world wide academy of island researchers may also have been somehow myopic and by definition (and profession) preoccupied with island affairs. In other words, these costs have been perceived through the eyes of the beholder and thus by and large overestimated. 'An island is an island is an island' however successfully extended its statehood may have developed since colonial times.

Scope and International Scene

The scope of the subject of extended statehood in the Caribbean region in terms of number of territories and people is remarkably modest: two territories with USA extensions (Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands), three with French extensions (Guadeloupe, Martinique and French Guiana), two with Dutch (Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles) and five with British extensions (Anguilla, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Montserrat, Turks & Caicos); in total 12 territories. Together they have a population of slightly more than 5 million. Puerto Rico alone accounts for almost 4 million people (with 3 million more Puerto Ricans living in the continental United States of America) while Anguilla has only

8,000.**[lxv]** Although Puerto Rico dominates the scene in terms of size and number of people, it is often left out of European studies and conferences on extended statehood in the Caribbean. One of the participants of a conference on 'Comparing Colonialisms in the Caribbean in the 21st Century' remarked on the absence of scholars representing the USA/Puerto Rico interests as 'a very large empty chair'. She was not only referring to Puerto Rico's numbers but even more to the towering presence of the USA in the region.**[lxvi]**

Considering the small number and scale of these entities, it is fair to ask the question: what makes this subject interesting? The answer is of course that, however insignificant the numbers, the meanderings of statehood history and future development are of utmost importance for the citizens concerned. Besides, 'little places (...) can and do throw up big principles, especially where the evolution of post-colonial relationships is concerned'.**[lxvii]** Moreover, in a larger context the significance of extended statehood in the Caribbean region exceeds the interests of the island communities alone. The demands of the international order, both in terms of law and order, security, as well as economics, have become significant factors in determining the perspective, direction and outcome of statehood development in the Caribbean.**[lxviii] [lxix]**

Criminal activity, such as international money laundering through fiscal loop holes and the drug trade have been gaining footholds in places outside the dominant formal international powers. Terrorism can now be added to this list. In 1997, Grosfoguel argued that the symbolic and military importance of Puerto Rico for the United States had become a secondary concern.**[lxx]** A few years later, now that terrorism has become a phenomenon on American soil, the importance of Puerto Rico for US homeland security will certainly be reconsidered. For example, the Organization of American States recently discussed how to prevent terrorists from using the Caribbean as a way station. The officials at this meeting were concerned that the chains of remote islands, which are notoriously difficult to police, could become stop-off points for terrorists.**[lxxi]** Left on their own, the Caribbean islands are considered defenseless mini-territories, which could easily fall prey to international lawlessness. A shift from the ideological Cold War interests to concerns about the control of drug trade and illegal immigration has become manifest.

Ramos and Rivera suggest, '(...) there are indications of a process of reconsolidating Dutch control, in alliance with United States power in the

region'.**[lxxii]** How affairs are run on these islands has become an international concern as well.

Technical assistance from the Netherlands to the Caribbean islands jumped from a mere 10 million Dutch guilders in 1986 to fivefold that amount in 1995. Many officials and advisors from the Netherlands were, literally, flown into prominent advisory or executive positions on the islands, especially those with expertise in the fields of public finance, government administration and justice.**[lxxiii]** One former prime minister of the Netherlands Antilles referred to this influx of European Dutch as 'the re-whitening' of the Antillean government. The share of technical assistance in the total Netherlands aid budget to the Antilles increased from 9% in 1990 to almost 30% in 1995. This influx of Dutch technical assistants with their overseas allowances jacked up the rent on the islands. housing market to levels never seen before. In the United Kingdom the *Overseas Territories* bureaucracy expanded as well; the number of officials responsible for British Dependent Territories, located in the territories and in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in London, has been doubled since 1991.**[lxxiv]**

Also, from an economical point of view, the statehood development scene has been changing as the world has become more competitive, less protected and nonpreferential. Throughout the last century, *status* politics in Puerto Rico were ideologically motivated and wavered between incorporation as a USA state, various models of autonomy and full independence. At present, economic questions have come to the fore: 'Economics, rather than traditional status politics, might come to be the trigger of the new quest for a different, more convenient political arrangement with the United States'.**[lxxv]**

Puerto Rico is challenged to transform the ideological modality of status politics into a discussion of political adequacy for dealing with the new (economic) order and for the achievement of greater economic prosperity. Accordingly, Puerto Rico will be forced to create a competitive economy from the ruins of the dependency structure that prevailed throughout the last half of the 20th Century.**[lxxvi]**

Most of the Caribbean islands have very modest economies that are too vulnerable to compete with the world's economic superpowers. Moreover they are losing their preferential status; nowadays their special relationships with their metropolitan mainland are held sway by *globalization* and the *free market* forces of the international arena.**[lxxvii]** Many of these Caribbean islands, independent

or within the extended statehood category, are at present perceived as not poor enough to be granted preferential treatment; while on the other hand, they are not strong enough to compete successfully in a free world market economy.

Small island states are different. The size of their population, their small domestic market, their limited natural resources, their vulnerability to natural disasters, their absolute reliance on efficient communications and their ability to project and defend their interest internationally, all suggest that they require special treatment.**[lxxviii]**

Not poor enough to receive aid and protection nor strong enough to compete, the Caribbean region constitutes a thorny problem in the on-going economic remodeling of the modern international world.

NOTES

i. Statehood refers to the conditions of a particular state. So it is used in this book as a wider concept that normally understood as the 'statehood' option with regard to the status of Puerto Rico in relation to the US. This option implies Puerto Rico becoming one of the states of the US and is to be distinguished from the status quo 'commonwealth' status.

ii. Francio Guadeloupe uses the term 'alternative post-colonial Caribbean' in his chapter in this book while Paul Sutton applies the concept of .nonsovereign. Caribbean. In: Leiden: KITLV, NWIG. New West Indian Guide/Nieuwe West-Indische Gids, vol. 79, no. 1&2, Book Reviews, 2005, p. 126. Aruba was called a 'Dutch protectorate' by US News and Associated Press during the missing Natalee Holloway mystery. MSN, 20 July 2005.

iii. Helen M. Hintjens 1995.

iv. Gert Oostindie 1992: pp. 103 –119. Oostindie dismisses the concept of recolonization: 'Clearly, in this paper the term has been used provocatively. In the context of the Dutch Caribbean, it will not pass any test of scrutiny'.

v. Groupo de Investigadores Puertorriqueños, Breakthrough from Colonialism: An Interdisciplinary Study of Statehood 1984.

vi. Frances Negrón-Mantener and Ramón Grosfuegel 1997.

vii. Ramos & Rivera 2001: p. 160.

viii. Helen M. Hintjens 1997: p. 533.

ix. McElroy and De Albuquerque (1995) conclude on their survey of the electoral record: 'Over de the past decade and a half, the insular Caribbean dependent territories (…) have voted consistently in favour of the political status quo', p.

168.

x. José O. Díaz 1995: p. 203. And: Breakthrough from Colonialism (1984), Appendix C: Puerto Rican Election Results Since 1952.

xi. An opinion poll in 1997/1998 showed higher independence. figures: Curacao (6.6%), Bonaire (1.8%), Saba (0.0%), St. Eustatius (1.5%) and St. Maarten (15.3%). On Aruba, 'independence. received a backing of 5.2% of the sample'. Source: Gert Oostindie & Peter Verton 1998: p. 51.

xii. In Dutch: 'onder de koloniale rook'. Gert Oostindie 2004: pp. 32-33.

xiii. Paul Sutton still refers to: 'the present colonial' powers in the Caribbean. Paul Sutton 2005.

xiv. Bookreview of Islands at the Crossroads. In: Leiden: KITLV, NWIG. New West IndianGuide/Nieuwe West-Indische Gids, vol. 78, no. 1&2, Book Reviews, 2004: p. 171.

xv. Amitai Etzioni 2004: p. 161.

xvi. Samuel P. Huntington 2004. Barry Gewen 2005.

xvii. See for an almost pathetic attempt to 'rethink politics' in terms of a trajectory to more sovereignty: The Sovereign Free Association Solution. Angel Israel Rivera 2001: pp. 160-179.

xviii. Exceptions are: Islands at the Crossroads (2001) And: Decolonising the Caribbean. Dutch Policies in a Comparative Perspective (2003)

xix. Gijs de Vries, State Secretary for the Interior and Kingdom (of the Netherlands) Relations, 'Opening speech'. In: Conference report 2001.

xx. Steven Hillebrink 2005: p. 102.

xxi. Steven Hillebrink 2005: p. 111.

xxii. Ernst M.H. Hirsch Ballin, 'Introduction'. In: Lammert de Jong & Douwe Boersema (eds.) 2005: p. 10.

xxiii. Face behind Paris 'istro. counter becomes Asian' International Herald Tribune, 10 May 2005.

xxiv. De Villepin's speedy plan for France is savaged at the start. The New York Times, 9 June 2005.

xxv. The Dutch position in the EU. Article by the Prime Minister of The Netherlands, dr. J.P. Balkenende, as sent to the international media, 8 July 2005.

xxvi. Missing the Big Picture in Brussels. The New York Times, 20 June 2005.

xxvii. Chirac sprak over volgevreten landen. de Volkskrant, 29 June 2005.

xxviii. Jerome McElroy and Klaus De Albuquerque 1995: pp 167-193.

xxix. Helen M. Hintjens 2001: p. 23.

xxx. Aarón Gamaliel Ramos, 'Caribbean Territories at Crossroads 2001'. In:

Ramos & Rivera 2001: p. xiv/xv.

xxxi. William S. Miles, 'Fifty Years of 'Assimilation': Assessing France's Experience of Caribbean Decolonisation Through Administrative Reform'. In: Ramos and Rivera 2001, p. 55.

xxxii. James L. Dietz 1986: pp. 307-308.

xxxiii. Ramón Grosfuegel 1997: p. 70.

xxxiv. Helen M. Hintjens 1995: p. 18.

xxxv. Helen M. Hintjes 1977: p. 540.

xxxvi. Mc Elroy and Klaus 1995: p. 173

xxxvii. William S. Miles 2001: p. 57.

xxxviii. Dietz 1986: p. 309.

xxxix. Jose O. Diaz 1995: p. 204.

lx. Justin Daniel 2002: p. 102.

lxi. Ramos & Rivera 2001: p. 164.

lxii. Ramos & Rivera 2001: p. xx.

lxiii. Partnership for Progress and Prosperity. Britain and the Overseas Territories. Foreign and Commonwealth Office. London 1999.

lxiv. Gert Oostindie 1994. Oostindie does not agree with the connotation of these terms that de-colonization is completed only when a former colony has become independent. See also Oostindie's discourse: Four models of 'unfinished' Caribbean decolonisation: any lessons to learn? Conference 'Comparing Colonialisms in the Caribbean in the 21st Century', London, 6th April 2000.

lxv. See Helen M. Hintjens (1995) about the concepts of assimilation and integration, pp. 1-7.

lxvi. Helen M. Hintjens (1995) p. 159, quoting Memmi.

lxvii. Aarón Gamaliel Ramos and Angel Israel Rivera (eds.), Islands at the Crossroads. Politics in the Non-Independent Caribbean. Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers & Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001.

lxviii. Helen M. Hintjens 2001: p. 35.

lxix. Ramos & Rivera 2001: p. 21.

l. Paul Sutton 2001: pp. 42-58.

li. At a seminar for law students of the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba in January 2003 reference was made to the royal transfers of metropolitan France to the Caribbean DOMs in comparison with the financial transfers in the Kingdom of the Netherlands. An immediate reaction from the audience followed that such transfers create an adverse 'aid dependency'.

lii. At a conference in London 'Comparing colonialisms in the Caribbean in the

21st Century', some speakers expressed to need for new concepts in order to distinguish the old colonial settings from the present statehood extensions in the Caribbean. University of London, the Institute of Commonwealth Studies. London, 6th April 2000.

liii. Conference Report 2001.

liv. William F.S. Miles 2001: p. 59.

lv. Ramón Grosfuegel 1997: p. 71.

lvi. Edward Heerenveen (translated from Dutch), 'Independence should always remain an option, irrespective of any circumstance, as it is the most essential goal and deeply rooted aim of a (former) colony'. In: Lammert de Jong 2002: p. 229.

lvii. William F.S.Miles 2001: pp. 50-57.

lviii. Wilfredo Mattos Cintrón 1993: p. 214.

lix. See Ramón Grosfuegel: 'Caribbean colonial migrations to the European metropolesduring the postwar era experienced processes similar to the Puerto Rican migration to the US. We have a lot in common and much to learn from this comparison'. In: CENTRO, Bulletin Volume VIII, number 1. 1995: p. 93.

lx. For instance Fred Réno (ed.) 1995.

lxi. Raimund Schäffner 2002: p. 26.

lxii. Abraham Rodríguez, Jr. 2000: pp. 99-100. Rodríguez begins his article with the notion that in December 1998, Puerto Rico accepted the gift of 600-ton bronze head of Christopher Columbus. This statue, by a Russian sculptor, had been offered as gift to theUSA in the early 1990s. Numerous American cities turned down the honor of putting up the 30-story bronze head. Eventually Puerto Rico offered it a home (in Catano, a city of 36.000 people). According to Rodríguez, the huge head of Columbus once again approaching Puerto Rican shores, had to be a bad dream. The gesture shows how separate the Puerto Rican entities have become: '….some island Puerto Rican might put up a head of Columbus on a sandy beach, the first thing a 'Puerto Rican American' might do, is to take it down'.

lxiii. Jorge Duany 2002: p. 282.

lxiv. Van Doorn (1995) attempts to draw lessons from the former colonial pluralistic society in the Dutch East Indies for the increasingly multi-cultural characteristics of the Dutch society in the last quarter of the 20th Century.

lxv. Bermuda (over 60.000 inhabitants), also one of the British Overseas Territories, is not part of the Caribbean region; Bermuda is classified as Overseas Territory of the UK.

lxvi. Conference of the Institute of Commonwealth Studies of the University of

London, ‘Comparing Colonialisms in the Caribbean in the 21st Century’, 6 April 2001.

lxvii. Helen M. Hintjens 1995: p. 26.

lxviii. In the Indian Ocean the tiny island Diego Garcia is an example of the significance of an Overseas British Territory for military purposes: ‘There are times (…) when the U.S. military considers this 17-square-mile atoll of coral and sand in the middle of the Indian Ocean – with no indigenous inhabitants or natural resources to speak of – one of the most valuable places on Earth’. In: Where in the World is Diego Garcia? Website, 3 January 2003.

lxix. Preparing for the war against Iraq, the Pentagon sought permission from Britain to base Air Force B-2 stealth bombers on the island. In: The New York Times, 18 September 2002.

lxx. Ramón Grosfuegel 1997: p. 66.

lxxi. The New York Times, 9 January 2003.

lxxii. Ramos & Rivera (ed.s) 2001, p. xix.

lxxiii. World Bank December 5-20, 2001: ‘Technical assistance has been provided on a large scale, from both public and private sources in the Netherlands, over many years. This assistance has contributed to a relatively high level of development of key institutions, the legal system, social services and education. The assistance has inevitably also contributed to a strong European (Dutch) orientation in the development systems and programs in the Netherlands Antilles’. p. 10.

lxxiv. Helen M.Hintjens 1995: p. 45.

lxxv. Aarón Gamaliel Ramos & Angel Israel Rivera 2001: pp. 2-3.

lxxvi. Aarón Gamaliel Ramos & Angel Israel Rivera 2001: pp. 1-21.

lxxvii. Lammert de Jong 2004.

lxxviii. David Jessop, The Week in Europe, 28 June 2001.

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