



ISISA

Newsletter

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EDITORIAL



ISISA Newsletter is here once again. In this newsletter there is important and updated information about the upcoming ISISA World XIII conference of 2014. One can also find various interesting contributions submitted by ISISA members. This newsletter is what you make it, so please keep the contributions coming. Photos, articles, forthcoming publications, upcoming conferences, book reviews and news on 'research in progress' are more than welcome.

Contributions for the December 2014 issue are to reach me at abaldacchino59@gmail.com by not later than November 15, 2014.

Read and Enjoy. Suggestions for improvement and feedback are always appreciated.

A big Thank You goes to all the contributors of this issue.

Anna Baldacchino
Newsletter Editor

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of their respective authors and are not necessarily endorsed by ISISA.

ISISA Islands of the World XIII *Small is Beautiful: Island Connections and Innovations*

**Penghu Archipelago, Taiwan
22 to 27 September 2014**

This is a special year. The UN announced 2014 as the Year of Small Island Developing States and ISISA is celebrating its 20th anniversary. That's already two good reasons to come to the 13th *Islands of the World* conference on Penghu Archipelago, Taiwan, September 22 to 27 this year.

The topic of the conference was chosen as: *Small is Beautiful: Island Connections and Innovations*. It is 40 years since Fritz Schumacher's epoch-making book was discussing development from a standpoint of smallness and with a perspective of a post-growth society and an ethical approach to economic development. The once posed critique of growth as the single solution to progress, and the return to humanitarian principles, both remain valid. What can small islands learn from, and contribute to, this discussion?

Islands networks through migration have ever since been a contributing factor for island development, and especially so in a more globalised world. Meanwhile, innovations in green technology, alternative development strategies and sustainable development approaches have a special importance for an adapted future on small islands.

The atmosphere so clear
you can see the flashing wing tips
of diving gulls a mile away.

It's as if fresh sunlight sparks
reveal this slice of paradise
for the first day of creation

in high-definition showers
that filter through the air for hours
till I lose total track of time.

No one knows when this heaven ends
except the tiny island land crabs
scrambling sideways to their dugouts

before they're buried quietly
by the crashing six-o'clock tsunami.

Jerome L. McElroy



The UK: An island of the mind?

By Ilan Kelman, UK citizen

Contact through <http://www.ilankelman.org>

"Who here is from an island?" I ask when giving my introductory lecture to island vulnerability and resilience. I give this lecture to students and to the public--with many slides taken from research presentations.

After moving to London from Oslo in November, I have given this talk with that query several times. For those from the UK, the prospects are numerous. From Shetland to the Isle of Wight, from Rathlin to Canvey, and from Anglesey to the Channel Islands, the UK is not short of islanders. I always hope for someone from a UK Overseas Territory.

Inevitably, an audience member pipes up "I am from the island of Britain". What does that mean?

The UK is not itself an island. The full name is "The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland", naming the piece sitting atop Ireland. While some aim to unify the entire island of Ireland, for the moment, the UK remains divided across different land masses.

Putting aside the possibility for Scottish independence, what about Great Britain as an island? Much comes down to definition. More than 60 million people live in Scotland, England, and Wales across a land area of over 200,000 km². That is a big population across a vast expanse, connected not just via a rail tunnel, but also by several airports with regular inter-continental flights to mainland Europe. The country's capital has a larger population than about half the world's countries.

Yet a cultural mentality pervades of the small, lonely British riding their stalwart isle in the waves, protecting their shores of life and liberty and pure Britishness against the devastating sea and tide of...of...something nasty and chaotic and horribly non-British, well you know...maybe... From defeating the imperialist Spanish armada in 1588 to holding up that indomitable spirit as Luftwaffe bombs rained down in 1940, this tiny nation of proud islanders never cowed before superior forces seeking to cross the waters to invade these stalwart shores of life and liberty and pure Britishness, yes, ok, we have been there already, thank you.

Psychologically, many English in particular see themselves as islanders. Perhaps that comes from their maritime history; the relatively recent regular use of rail and air connections outside the country; being the only unilingual English country in the region (Ireland is officially bilingual); and the desire to protect that fine English cuisine of battered fish combined with greasy chips and that fine English culture of civilised football matches combined with warm ale.

Perhaps it is simply the social dimension of wishing to be living on an island, of longing to be an islander. That means seeking separation and distance from those others, even where neither separation nor distance are the reality. In fact, the cities of England have become thriving melting pots for people around the world. London is so integrated and international that those speaking with an English accent are generally the minority.

After all, we're all European now, an island of Europe surrounded by Russian imperialism and burgeoning Asian and African youth populations...



Ah, England! Photo by Ilan Kelman

Europe and the Pacific

**10th conference of the European Society for Oceanists (ESfO),
to be held in Brussels, Belgium, 24-27 June 2015**

Call for Panel Proposals - Deadline: 1 October 2014

The Pacific was long viewed as a remote, isolated region condemned to dependency on larger countries because of a paucity of natural resources and a small, dispersed population. Pacific Islanders themselves, however, view spatial separation also as promoting proximity and connections. The Oceanic perspective of connectedness characterizes social relations across the region, and remains important also to those islanders who now belong to diasporic communities on the Pacific Rim. Such a vision may also suggest that Europe's geographical distance from the Pacific needs not necessarily place it at a relational disadvantage. For European scholarship, the distance from the region might even be a virtue, as shown by the strength of ESFO.