

## The Falklands War

Why did Britain and Argentina go to war over a wintry archipelago that was home to an unprofitable colony? Could the Falklands War, in fact, have been a last-ditch revival of Britain's imperial past? Despite widespread conjecture about the imperial dimensions of the Falklands War, this is the first history of the conflict from the transnational perspective of the British world. Taking Britain's painful process of decolonisation as his starting point, Ezequiel Mercau shows how the Falklands lobby helped revive the idea of a 'British world', transforming a minor squabble into a full-blown war. Boasting original perspectives on the Falklanders, the Four Nations and the Anglo-Argentines, and based on a wealth of unseen material, he sheds new light on the British world, Thatcher's Britain, devolution, immigration and political culture. His findings show that neither the dispute, the war, nor its aftermath can be divorced from the ongoing legacies of empire.

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# The Falklands War

*An Imperial History*

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*To my parents*



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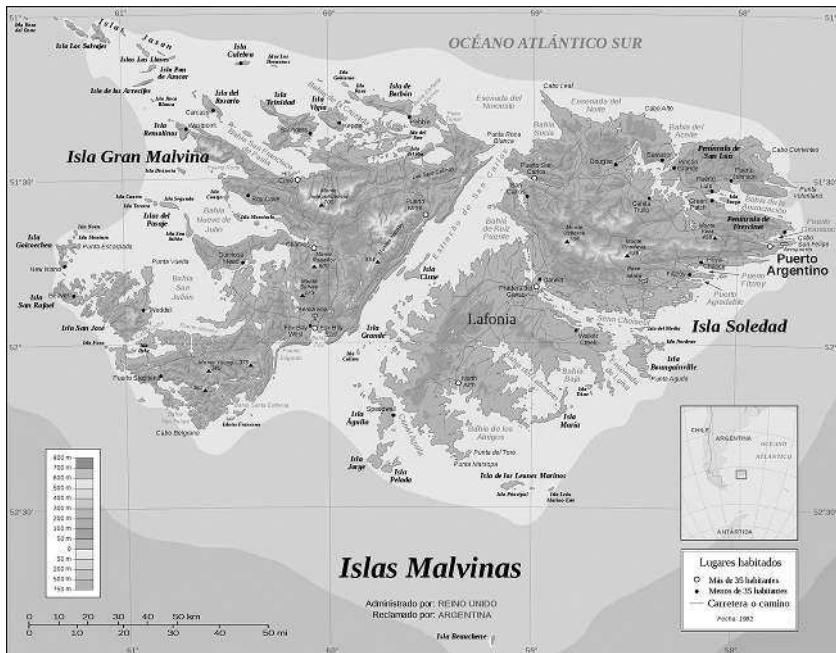


Maps



Falkland Islands (British place names).  
 © Eric Gaba.

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Islas Malvinas (Argentine place names).

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## Note on Terminology

The South Atlantic archipelago commonly known as the ‘Falkland Islands’ in the English language and ‘Islas Malvinas’ in Spanish is still disputed territory, and the wounds of war have not fully healed. The use of these terms in their respective languages does not necessarily imply taking a stance on the sovereignty dispute between Britain and Argentina; yet the converse is likely to come across as politically loaded. Thus, except where usage would be entirely inappropriate, I employ them interchangeably, according to context and local emphasis. I also alternate between full governmental departments’ names and official government titles, and shortened versions of them (such as ‘Foreign Office’, to refer to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office). Moreover, I employ local terms, as appropriate. Thus, for instance, I refer to ‘Camp’ to designate areas outside Stanley.

## Abbreviations

ABCC	Argentine–British Community Council
ARA	<i>Armada de la República Argentina</i>
ASLEF	Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BCC	British Community Council
BCCA	British Chamber of Commerce in the Argentine Republic
BISBA	British Interests Section (Buenos Aires)
BR	British Rail
CINCFLEET	Commander-in-Chief, Fleet
CND	Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament
CPGB	Communist Party of Great Britain
ECM	European Common Market
EEC	European Economic Community
ExCo	Falkland Islands Executive Council
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
FIA	Falkland Islands Association
FIC	Falkland Islands Company
FIC-LB	Falkland Islands Committee (Local Branch)
FID	Falkland Islands Department (FCO)
FIEC	Falkland Islands Emergency Committee
FIG	Falkland Islands Government
FIO	Falkland Islands Office
FO	Foreign Office
HMG	Her Majesty's Government
HMS	Her Majesty's Ship
LAD	Latin American Department (FCO)
LADE	<i>Líneas Aéreas del Estado</i>
LegCo	Falkland Islands Legislative Council
MLA	Member of the Legislative Assembly of the Falkland Islands

## List of Abbreviations

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MP	Member of Parliament
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NEC	National Executive Committee
NUR	National Railway Union
OD (SA)	Defence and Oversea Policy Committee, South Atlantic and Falkland Islands Sub-Committee
PM	Prime Minister
SAC	South Atlantic Council
SAmD	South America Department (FCO)
SDP	Social Democratic Party
SNP	Scottish National Party
TEZ	Total Exclusion Zone
UDI	Unilateral Declaration of Independence
UKE BA	United Kingdom Embassy in Argentina (Buenos Aires)
UKFIC	United Kingdom Falkland Islands Committee
UN	United Nations
US	United States of America
UUP	Ulster Unionist Party
YPF	<i>Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales</i>

