

ATLAS
of
MICRONATIONS,
ANOMALOUS
STATES and
TERRITORIES



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→ https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lukha_B._Kremo

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The map is not the territory
(Alfred Korzybski)

The map becomes the territory
(Alfred Korzybski)

It is not exactly like that
(Lukha B. Kremo)

Presentation

We can define this **geographical atlas** as alternative, or all-encompassing, depending on your point of view. It is alternative because it focuses on all those geosociopolitical realities that are not or partially recognized, unofficial states, nations without territory, peoples without government, autonomous communities or those aspiring to independence, governments in exile, kings without power, and so on. But, thanks to the addition of a list of all nations officially recognized by the UN and other world governments, we can also consider it a compendium of all state realities on Earth.

So an Atlas that goes beyond the roster of states, nations, ethnic groups, communities, sects and even groups of friends or families, which is intended to gather all groups that identify with a certain statehood.

As noted in the subsequent **Introduction**, the concepts of state, nation and border must first be defined, and then superimposed on the empirical reality of people and territories (or simply “spaces”), thus creating a conventional relationship between place and individual, a belonging (or pertinence) that now seems inevitable. We are human, but we are also citizens of some state or people of a nation. **Statelessness**, that is, the absence of citizenship, is a stigma and a disadvantage (among other things regulated by the 1954 *Stateless Persons Convention*).

In addition to the relationship between person and territory, there is a relationship between these state entities, regulated by treaties and borders: other conventions that come to delineate our space more and more precisely. When we cross a border we become “foreigners” and therefore subject to different legislation (and psychological and social treatment).

Normally these conventions are self-determined by governments (in the broad sense, so any kind of community management or organization) that, in order to be of value to those who live or transit there, must be recognized first by the local population and then by other governments. Here are possible hybrid situations of governments partially recognized by their own citizens (how many people do not recognize themselves in their own governments?) who nonetheless recognize themselves in a nationality; or governments partially recognized by the international community, with all the complexities arising from the mobility or instability of the political situation (so that as I write, for example, the Taliban government in Afghanistan has a seat in the UN even though it is not recognized).

Without bothering with the many theories of statehood, “citizen-government contract,” or bilateral treaties, it is clear that there are oral agreements between people (or simply complicity) that are never formalized. Here we try to collect those entities that assume state characteristics (thus a government, institutions, currency, territory, etc.) in which the citizen recognizes himself, regardless of the recognition of others.

The intent of this Atlas-or perhaps the inner stimulus-grew with the writing itself, with numerous questions about personal identity in relation to society (Do I feel I belong to this nation? To this state? To this government? And if not, to which state group do I feel I belong?).

Taking my own example, since 2004 I no longer felt represented by the Italian government and created the **Nazione Oscura Caotica** [Dark Chaotic Nation]. As you can read in the card, it is an art-like entity, so it is more of a political protest and satirical action than a revolt or secession. It is natural to wonder how many in the world feel the same impatience, which often also involves the whole concept of nationality.

There are dozens of reasons why someone has had the intention or need to secede from his or her state, ranging from motivations that are deeper and related to one’s culture or tradition (the various independencies), to those more purely related to community to those stemming from ideology (on the one hand, those of the libertarian-socialist, communitarian type, on the other hand, those of

the utopian-liberal, individualist type¹), to those made for fun (but a game is always very serious) or for whim, which we could collect in the “psychological” motivations.

This Atlas is divided into parts and sections precisely according to the basic motivations of the various entities, but for the breakdown I refer you to the Introduction; here I would like to emphasize how these entities can never all be collected under the same category (not even the states proper, for example, which number just under 200), because they overlap, can be cross-cutting, aterritorial, include people living in different places, and may belong to more than one entity. While this complexity ignores conventional taxonomy, it also approaches our psychology and sociology, which are always complex. But I would not want to limit myself to a simple, albeit exhaustive, collection of anomalous states. I would like **the reader**, as he or she runs through the pages of this bizarre book, **to mature in the realization that state complexity** (which we already experience as a bureaucracy, for example), **possesses paradigms more in keeping with our true nature**. Indeed, I am convinced that this trend is already underway. Indeed, if we take the golden age of the nation-state (from the 1500s to the 1900s), today we notice new entities: the increasingly concrete development of international, transnational and supranational organizations, and of autonomies and special conditions. The European Union is an example that is perhaps unparalleled in all of History; it is not simply a community of states, but neither is it a federal state. And so, at the local level, particularisms (which because of the demonization of medieval political systems are still considered state anomalies) increasingly seem to be the solution to internal conflicts and wars. **Micronationalism**, understood as feeling, in addition to belonging to a mother nation, to a more local nation (culture), is somewhat the basis for the creation of particularisms. This apparent fragmentation should be read as the more precise, widespread and suitable adaptation of laws and customs to the individuals who chose them. Laws, customs, rituals and whatever else that should not exceed the general laws of the state or nation to which they belong, which in turn respect the general principles (the great Constitutional Charters) of international communities such as the European Union, so that the citizen can still feel close to the state, today that the big decisions are made are at the international level, therefore very far from him. And this also applies to other entities that separate themselves from society, spiritual communities or ecovillages.

As I have already mentioned, micronations can be of any kind, so communitarian, socialist, utopian or individualist; in fact, the moment the citizen chooses his or her own government (even if it were a dictatorship, assuming it does not go against the international rights of the person and can exercise it on his or her own territory), the problem of which political form is best goes away. Certain territories could be assigned by the state to micronations for their experiment, and this would translate society to a system of “political bubbles,” somewhat like the social network system of the Internet, which dampens internal conflicts. This is certainly a proposal that is utopian in nature and very difficult to achieve, but it is a trend that I think is already in place, an awareness that is reached by reading this Atlas.

Let us micronationalize and internationalize the world.

In a word: let us implement **glocal** (*global + local*).

Lukha B. Kremo

Writer, editor, president of the *Nazione Oscura Caotica*
and *Chaotic Ambassador of Spain and African Lands*.

1. For a theoretical discussion of this issue, see the bibliography in the *Appendix*.

Introduction

Before delving into this diverse and sometimes bizarre world, it is good to try to define it starting with the basic terms.

A political atlas such as this one presupposes the existence of political entities that take the form of legislation related to a people, a culture and a territory. The first term to be defined is certainly that of **State** (and its synonym country, strictly speaking).

For the Treccani Encyclopedia, the state “can be defined as an organization of a community, capable of making decisions, ultimately sovereign, on behalf of the community, both with respect to its members or groups within it and to other communities.” A clear and to the point definition that gives room for different conceptions and has been rooted since the 16th century in Europe. Although forms of state have existed since antiquity, it was in this century that an awareness developed, first political and then social, of an organization making decisions for the entire cultural, linguistic and historical unity of the nation. Even in the most monocratic regimes, people and institutions develop that begin to manage the community according to economic, political and social data. The outcome of course is that of democracy, which at the moment seems to be the best method of managing large political entities, although of course it must always be declined with the type of local cultural tradition.

But in History the conception of the state has changed many times, even radically. Recall the words attributed to King Louis XIV of France, “The State is me,” which, while they underscore the desire to centralize all powers in himself, also point out to us that by then the concept of the State was inevitable, albeit hysterilited.

Prior to the 16th century, what we call the state was often a possession of a king or noble family, which makes itself the guarantor of the discipline of its subjects (and not citizens), thanks to an authority that can be held together by religion, as a direct divine investiture or, in Egypt and many parts of the Orient and pre-Columbian America, thanks to the divine or semi-divine essence of the sovereign. Or with a series of institutions that act as guarantors of a supranational civilization, such as empires.

Even in the Greek *polis*, the state (like democracy) is not the modern one: the Greek city-state is meant to educate the community, and it possesses justice in itself because it is the bearer of high and immutable values, so it is not possible to live in the *polis* without sharing the ethics of the community.

The Roman *res publica* is also understood as legal legal with society, and the *civitas* that transcends the city and expands into the provinces is founded on the consensus of law, on the “political” pact between citizen and empire.

Christianity only strengthens the ethical and theocratic aspect. With the end of the Empire in the West, Christianity leads to considering only two true world sovereignties: the Pope and the Empire, each with its own powers, under which particularisms are organized according to local laws or customs.

It is because of this universal aspect of power, which, however, lacks political ubiquity, that political organization becomes a pyramid of vassalage alliances, which by tying to territory forms the feudal system. In this sphere of political plurality interesting experiments have a way of expressing themselves, such as the communes, entities still linked to feudalism, but with communal self-government sometimes fully autonomous, as in the case of northern Italy.

It is interesting to cite the *Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States*, signed on December 26, 1933 at the 7th International Conference of American States, in which the need to

define a state was evidently served because of the different ambiguous state realities. In the 1st article, states are considered as international legal personalities if they possess:

- A permanent population;
- A defined territory;
- An exclusive power of government;
- The ability to maintain relations with other states.

Note, as far as we are concerned, that the 4th Article explicitly states that the political existence of a state is independent of the recognition of other states. This, bringing it back to today's situation, suggests to us that states recognized by the U.N. and all its members are not the only states definable as such, because there can be (and are) states recognized by one or a few states.

Another peculiarity of states is "having a defined territory" and thus **borders**.

In the past where there was no major river, walls or palisades, borders were mostly placed in sparsely inhabited places (mountaintops, deserts, swamps, forests, etc.). In this case, the concept of a border was not a line through a place, but the place itself was considered "borderline," and often those very rare people who lived here were not considered subjects or members of the community as long as they or the place where they lived did not represent economic or other (e.g., religious) value.

This was true all over the world, until, first in Europe, the need to demarcate boundaries more precisely increased, a process that is still ongoing today.

Boundary stones are planted even in the most inaccessible places, but this does not guarantee the introduction of new populations into their communities.

Large countries build ever more extensive walls such as the Chinese wall or the Roman valleys in northern Britain. City defensive walls (which humans have been using to defend their homes for 10,000 years), extend throughout the state's territory.

With modernity, the need for increasingly precise boundaries increases, partly because of the possibilities of underground exploitation.

In recent years, between the 20th and 21st centuries, both border treaties and the construction of border walls in even inaccessible or desert locations have multiplied.

In addition to the need to put a margin on migratory flows, technology has increased the possibilities of exploiting the subsoil whether land, sea, river or lake. As a result, the precision acceptable until a couple of centuries ago is no longer sufficient. For example, if the course of a large river was once acceptable as a boundary, today it is necessary to demarcate its exact trajectory (the navigable, deeper part) and to define the membership of each river island. In addition, rivers periodically overflow and often vary their navigability or in some cases their trajectory, so the boundary must be defined as the course of the river at a precise time.

As for the sea, the rules have evolved over time. The customary but generally accepted rule dates back to the 17th century that national rights are limited to a strip of sea extending three nautical miles (on average 5,556 meters¹, roughly the maximum range of the "cannon shot"), beyond which the sea is considered "international waters," i.e., owned by no state and therefore freely accessible to all.

In the 20th century, some states want to extend their jurisdiction in order to increase the possibility of exclusive exploitation of marine resources, both mining and fishing. Between 1946 and 1950 a number of countries declared in the international arena the extension of their territorial waters to 12 or even 200 nautical miles, while others left the limit unchanged.

The issue of differing claims to territorial waters was presented to the UN in 1967 by Arvid Pardo of Malta, and this gave rise to a long path of negotiation through a series of Conferences since 1973 that led to the *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea*, signed in Montego Bay, Jamaica, on December 10, 1982. UNCLOS entered into force on November 16, 1994, one year after the 60th state signed. It has currently been signed by 168 states and provides for:

1. The international nautical mile is equal to the length of the meridian arc subtended by a 1' angle on the mean parallel of 44° 20'. But since curvature of the earth's surface differs slightly at each latitude, the nautical mile is 1,843 meters at the Poles, by 1,862 at the equator. The average is about 1,852 meters.

- Inland Waters and Archipelagos: the sea area from the coast to the baseline, such as gulfs, bays and inlets. Here the laws of the coastal state apply in a binding manner;
- Territorial Waters: the area of sea from the baseline to 12 nautical miles. Here the laws of the coastal state still apply, but there is the right of every vessel to so-called "harmless passage." Fishing, garbage dumping, armed activities and espionage are not considered harmless actions; submarines and submarines must sail surfacing while showing the flag.
- The Contiguous Zone: the area of sea extending beyond territorial waters up to 24 nautical miles from the baseline. Here the coastal state can both punish violations committed and prevent violations of its customs, tax, health and immigration laws or regulations.
- The Exclusive Economic Zone (also known by the acronym EEZ): the area of sea extending 200 nautical miles from the baseline (of course to any neighboring country's EEZ). The zone where the coastal state can exercise the right of exclusive exploitation of natural resources (mining and fishing).
- Continental shelf: the natural extension of a state's territory, which can then exploit its non-living mineral resources exclusively. The platform can extend up to a maximum of 350 nautical miles from the coastline base line, or it can extend up to 100 nautical miles from the 2,500-meter isobath (the depth line).

The remaining open sea, called the "High Seas," remains international territory, thus free of any sovereignty. The various concepts were defined and extended over time until they came into force, and one can see the tendency of states to draw real boundaries (albeit with less sovereignty) even on the sea many kilometers away from the coast. Above all, EEZs have given rise to a plethora of disagreements and claims (especially in the Mediterranean and seas with many scattered islands) that are beyond the scope of this atlas precisely because of their sheer number and the difficulty of precisely defining their boundaries. In each case, even the most expansive (the Continental Shelf), is used to prevent sovereignty claims in this area (e.g. following the emergence of a new island).

But space is not only terrestrial and aquatic, it's also airspace and subsoil.

Under international law, a state has complete and exclusive sovereignty over the **airspace** above its territory, which corresponds to the maritime definition of territorial waters, and allows "non-offensive" passage of aircraft, even under multilateral agreements, although the state can close the airspace at any time.

Airspace outside a country's territorial limits is considered international, analogous to the high seas in maritime law. National airspace is called the *Flight Information Region* for which a country is responsible for operational control of flights.

At present, no agreements have been signed that provide the limit of vertical extent of sovereign airspace, with proposals ranging from about 30 kilometers (the maximum altitude of aircraft and balloons), to about 160 km (100 miles), which is the minimum altitude of short-term stable orbits. (Actually, the Lixing-1 satellite has a stable orbit with an apogee of 140 km). The Fédération Aéronautique Internationale has established the Kármán line (at an altitude of about 100 km) as the boundary between Earth's atmosphere (airspace) and outer space, while the United States considers an altitude of 80 kilometers.

However, both the Kármán line and the U.S. definition are only operational reference points, with no legal value on matters of national sovereignty.

Beyond these altitudes takes value the *Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies*, (*Outer Space Treaty* for short), signed on January 27, 1967 and entered into force on October 10, at the height of the first space race. The treaty prohibits signatory states from placing nuclear weapons or weapons of mass destruction in Earth orbit, on the Moon or other celestial bodies, or stationing them in outer space. In Article 2, it is stated that outer space is not subject to national appropriation or sovereignty claims. In Article 4, it allows the use of the Moon and other celestial bodies exclusively for peaceful purposes, while expressly prohibiting their use for weapons testing of any kind, conducting military maneuvers, or establishing military bases, installations or fortifications. The treaty also prohibits signatory states from claiming space resources, such as the Moon, a planet or

other celestial body, as they are considered common heritage of mankind. The treaty is initially dirmed by the U.S.A., the U.K. and the Soviet Union and therefore takes on great value.

On December 18, 1979, the *Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies*, (*Moon Treaty* for short), is signed, declaring that the Moon is to be used for the good of all states and all people in the international community. But the treaty is signed by about 15 states in which the major military powers are not included, so it has little relevance.

Ultimately, outer space and all celestial bodies beyond the Earth are regarded as international waters. This prevents the ownership of private property, but this principle is often challenged by those who claim the right to sell property rights on the Moon and other celestial bodies (such as land holdings put up for sale on the **Moon**, → in: *Extraterrestrial Nations*).

The treaty is inspired by the principles that led to the signing of the Antarctic Treaty, signed in Washington on December 1, 1959, and entered into force on June 23, 1961, whereby the continent of Antarctica and all territories (including ice caps) below the 60th parallel south are to be used only for peaceful purposes, prohibiting the establishment of military bases, fortifications, military maneuvers and testing of any kind of weapons. The treaty does not prevent the use of military personnel or equipment for scientific or other peaceful purposes (→ **Atlantic Treaty**, in: *International Legal Statutes and Organizations*).

As far as the **Arctic** is concerned, as there is no firm land north of Greenland, the North Pole and the Arctic Ocean do not belong to any country, and UNCLOS rules apply as for all oceans. Nevertheless, there are claims by Canada, Denmark, Norway, the United States, and Russia to parts of the Lomonosov Ridge that do not constitute a dispute because they are not bilateral in nature, but concern the recognition by the Commission for the Limits of the Continental Shelf of their right to extend the limit of exploitation of subsurface resources beyond 200 miles of the exclusive economic zone according to the parameters established by Article 76 of the UNCLOS.

As far as the **subsurface** is concerned, there are no formal sovereignty limits; in fact, under international law it is subject to state sovereignty up to the depth that permits any use. Hence, analogous to the Kármán line in the atmosphere, one can consider the limit between the Earth's crust and mantle, which is defined geologically as the transition between rocks that contain feldspars and those that do not, and of course is different physically, in that the mantle is predominantly liquid or semisolid. This boundary has depths ranging from 35 to 70 kilometers below sea level. Currently, the deepest use of the Earth's crust has been the *Kol'skaja sverchglubokaja skvažina* [Kola superdeep well], which descended to 12,262 meters below sea level. The design called for a maximum depth of 15 kilometers, but already at 12 the temperature was 180°C (and not the expected 100°C) and the rocks already had a plastic consistency and drilling could not continue; thus the limit of use (just over 12 kilometers) is less than that of the entire earth's crust.

Finally, vessels and aircraft constitute the *Floating territory of the State*, for which the laws of the State whose flag they fly apply, distinguishing, however, between military vessels and aircraft, where it always applies even when one is in the territorial waters or airspace of other States, and civilian vessels and aircraft, where, if one is in the territorial waters or airspace of another State, the laws of that State apply.

Finally, always related to the concept of statehood, is the **capital** or seat of government. This is a modern concept, encompassing not only (and not always) the largest or most populous city, nor is it always the seat of government, but it may be the one that is symbolically most important or geographically most central. Before the 16th century, the capital was identified with the seat of government, which, for example in medieval Europe, was itinerant, and was not always a city. Even during the Roman Empire the imperial seat was moved from Rome, for example in the 4th century to Mediolanum (Milan), but Rome retained the honorary title of capital. There is a modern example of this situation: in fact, in the Netherlands the capital Amsterdam is different from the seat of government and the royal residence, which are in The Hague instead; until a few years ago in Bhutan during the winter the rulers move from the capital Thimphu to the more spring-like Punakha, *de facto* moving the seat of government for about six months.

There are states that have had more than one capital, for example, the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Currently, countries with more than one capital are South Africa, which divides the various func-

tions of government between Cape Town (legislative capital and seat of parliament), Pretoria (administrative and executive capital) and Bloemfontein (judicial capital); Bolivia, with Sucre being the constitutional capital and La Paz the *de facto* executive capital; Malaysia, with Kuala Lumpur being the constitutional and executive capital and Putrajaya the administrative capital; Sri Lanka, with Colombo being the constitutional and executive capital and Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte the legislative capital; and Eswatini, with Lobamba being the legislative capital and royal seat and Mbabane the administrative capital.

In addition to the state, a key term is **nation**, the modern meaning of which is defined by Treccani as “the complex of people who have commonality of origin, language, and history and who are conscious of this unity, even independently of realization in political unity.” So in the nation there are the prerequisites of the state, but a nation does not necessarily have a modern state-like organization. The most famous example of the latter case is the Indian nation, that is, the organizations of Native American (or Amerindian) tribes, which, while possessing a strong communal identity, do not have a state of their own. Hence the nation is bound by identity, which is normally cultural, linguistic, territorial, religious and historical, but which may also extend to other areas or lack some of these characteristics, including territoriality, such as the People of Israel who, as a result of diaspora, live in various parts of the world, while still considering themselves a united community.

For this reason, I believe, the term **micronation** is used to refer to those numerically small peoples or communities that aspire to their own state. We explore this topic in the introduction of the appropriate **Part I** of this *Atlas*, devoted to *Micronations*.

We can liken the nation to the concept of **ethnicity**, which encompasses the common linguistic and cultural features of a community, with the only possible distinction of more subtle diversification (e.g., several Indian ethnicities form a single Indian nation).

Until the 20th century, ethnicity included somatic (and racial) traits, but science now definitively considers the currently living *Homo Sapiens* species as a single race and has relegated the term to zoology. The term “race” could perhaps be attributed to *Homo Sapiens Neanderthalensis* (which is of the same species as ours), if it did not have the negative meanings that social and political history has assigned to the term. In any case, the somatic differentiations of Earth’s peoples are now associated with genetic diversities, thanks to which peoples can be divided into **haplogroups**, i.e., genetic populations composed of the same genetic haplotypes (mitochondrial Dna sequences), identifying similar eye and facial conformations, height, hair color, eye color, and skin color, which can help study genealogies and kinship among populations.

From these different meanings of nation are derived different concepts of nationality, which follow somatic (the *ius sanguinis*), territorial (the *ius soli*) or cultura (or *ius culturae*).

Precisely from a nineteenth-century ethnic-related concept of nationhood with somatic meaning, descends (and transcends) that of **nationalism**, whereby the common cultural features mentioned above are exalted and promoted to values at the expense of other nations and international cooperation. A different derivation is **statism**, in which the state exercises control over all human activity, even that which is strictly individual. Finally, **patriotism**, which is the love and faith in one’s nation or state.

Ultimately, we can say that **citizenship** is a person’s membership in a state, while **nationality** is membership in a certain ethnic group. Today there are numerous examples of stateless nations, states comprising many nations, or nations living in several states.

That the nation has the right to a state is enshrined in the **Atlantic Charter**, signed by U.S. President Franklin and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill on August 14, 1941, which provided for the enunciation of certain principles for the future world order, which is the idea behind the birth of the **United Nations**, which rejects all territorial acquisitions obtained by the use of force, including colonized nations lacking self-government.

Under this principle (called the **Self-Determination of Peoples**) all peoples have the right to freely choose their own system of government (internal self-determination) and to be free from all external domination, particularly colonial rule (external self-determination). First proposed during the French Revolution, this principle is supported by statesmen such as Lenin and Wilson, and pits peoples (nations) against states understood as government apparatuses. Regarding many of these

situations we refer the subject to the introduction of the appropriate **Part III** of this *Atlas*, devoted to *Unrepresented Peoples*.

Finally, different types of states can be distinguished, starting with a general formal classification, which divides them into monarchy, republic and dictatorship, and then into the types of **government** that characterizes them. A **monarchy** can be absolute (kingdom, principality, or state derived from another noble title such as duchy, grand duchy, emirate, etc.), theocratic (if the title is sacred, as in the Papacy), can be constitutional (if there is a statute that even the head of state must abide by), parliamentary or semi-parliamentary if it is replaced or joined in decision-making by an elected assembly.

The **republic** can be presidential, semi-presidential or parliamentary (depending on the role of the head of state versus that of the elected assembly), democratic, liberal or socialist (depending on the political system in place), federal or regional (if it associates several states with autonomous governments or autonomous regions). Finally, **dictatorship**, which can be autarkic, oligarchic, depending on who and how many wield actual power. Moreover, the types of government that are possible but difficult to practice may be even more. The **utopias** described by various authors of the past or science fiction are many, ranging from utopian socialism to communitarianism and communism (abolition of various degrees of private property and money), from anarchy and anarchism (without a government or with a non-coercive government), to direct or cooperative democracy (the assembly is composed of all citizens) to tribal society (decisions made by tribe or clan) and olocracy (decision is made by the masses, thus not individually by all citizens, but by the crowd, e.g., by acclamation), from pacifist, religious or fideist utopia to scientific, technological and individualist utopia (hyperliberal or anarcoliberal). We must keep these limiting ideas in mind, because since they are feasible almost exclusively for small communities we find them mostly in **micronations** (we refer again to **Part I**, *Micronations*).

Another concept that has gained prominence in recent decades is that of **international community**. Ultranational communities can also be considered since ancient times as alliances, mainly military, between different states. During the phase of colonialism, the agreements were also economic and of common exploitation.

It was not until the 20th century that the need for continent-wide or global *superpartes* international organizations for cooperation in various fields arose, manifested first with the *Société des Nations* [*League of Nations*] and then the *United Nations*. Or organizations that bring together nations and states with a common historical and cultural bond, such as the *British Commonwealth* replacing the British Empire or the *Sodruzhestvo Nezavisimych Gosudarstv* [*Commonwealth of Independent States*] replacing the Soviet Union. Finally with intergovernmental societies, such as the *European Coal and Steel Community*, from which first the *European Community* and later the *European Union* will come into being, effectively sanctioning the birth of a new type of supranational entity. Here we refer the subject to the introduction of the appropriate **Part IV** of this *Atlas*, devoted to the *UN*.

But even states themselves, however precisely their boundaries are delineated, can have ambiguous forms of interdependence with other states, so it is also necessary to define the term **independence**, which refers to a country that has achieved a condition whereby it is not dependent on, subject to, or subordinate to other states or governments. Thus, theoretically, a state that does not have to answer to some internal action. It is clear that with the emergence of international communities such as the EU, the concept of independence is eroded, although membership is absolutely voluntary. Certainly different, and more vague and ambiguous, is the concept of **autonomy**, which allows a more or less extended space for legal and legislative maneuvering always respecting the fundamental laws of the state to which one depends (the Statute, the Constitution) and formally recognizing its higher authority. As can be understood there can be different types of autonomy, ranging from the autonomous region (which enjoys autonomy in particular areas, such as fiscal or administrative), to the former colony that is self-determining, with a separate government and legislative bodies.

Similar is the **protectorate**, which allows self-government but entrusts defense to another state that *de facto* also influences political life. While lacking autonomy is the colony, which is often simply a territory without territorial contiguity, subject to the jurisdiction of the colonizing state. This

type of political dependence was gradually abandoned in the 20th century partly due to the Atlantic Charter doctrine. More or less similar forms remain today, with varying degrees of relationship with the mother country, limited to small, often uninhabited territories or islands.

There are many other interdependent relationships and territories that are exceptions mainly for reasons of diplomatic or military conflicts, such as the Demilitarized Zone, No Man's Land or *Terra Nullius*. We take up this discussion in the introduction of the appropriate **Part II** of this *Atlas*, devoted to *Anomalous States and Territories*.

One critical and non-political conclusion we can deduce is that the concept of nation, state, and government have changed throughout History, and the foundations on which much of the world's society today is based are relatively recent. Placing the nation above everything else for the composition of a state, or conversely, placing the state above nationality, ethnicity, culture or any other kind of common character are two orientations that lead to very different consequences.

The nineteenth- and twentieth-century exaltation of national units, which in many cases demolished (rightly) earlier non-democratic systems (feudalism, aristocratic power, caste politics) did not always correspond to the introduction of democracy. In some cases nationalism has led to populist dictatorial systems (Nazi-fascism), and outside Europe to states based on non-secularism (the Islamic republics), dictatorships based on socialist principles or pre-existing monarchical systems (in the East).

On the one hand, the principle of territorial wholeness of the state is a foundation on which the international system (and the UN) is based today, and it is flanked by the self-determination of peoples. The contrast is obvious in cases where a people want to secede; unfortunately, there are cases where this second principle has been welcomed (as with South Sudan or Kosovo) and others where territorial integrity has been preferred to be safeguarded in spite of the peoples, justifying decisions with alleged subtle differences that are almost always compromised by world political interests.

Perhaps today the era of the nation-state is over, and it is time to rethink a social scheme that takes into account all the complexities of a, for better or worse, globalized society. A planet divided into some 200 territories in which one government makes decisions divorced from the rest of the world seems a system suited to preglobal societies. Today there is a need to organize the peoples of the world on several levels, starting with *superpartisan* international organizations (which should always be democratic, so elected and with a need for periodic ratification and should guarantee peace and an arbitration to appeal to), within which there are nation-states, which in turn are divided into autonomous regions that pander to all the particularisms and localisms that human society presents. In this way, the state will tend to become an intermediate government and lose the absoluteness of sovereignty that it still retains. Within it, in fact, autonomous regions and territories, or even different types of micronations (with their political and organizational variety, perhaps even utopian, no longer vaguely independent, but subnational) would be inscribed in a complex concentric and specific system of organizations, where even the smallest and most local communities can somehow dialogue with the institutions of large supranational organizations.

LEGEND

DATA SHEETS

Each nation is presented with its full official name in the main official language (with translation), flag (standardized to two ratios: 1.33:1 or 1:1) on the left, and geographical location on a map. The space below indicates:

- **The type of state**
- **The composition of the territory, followed, after the semicolon, by the state that currently administers it de jure**
- **The date(s) of founding and extinction**



the capital city



the currency(ies)



the official or de facto language(s)



passport issue



stamps issue



coin issue



banknotes issue

- **The number of inhabitants (residents or non-residents with passports)**

- **The area (occupied or claimed)**



website



classification and **EVENTUAL RECORD IN MAGENTA** (only among filed entities)

The classification includes the following letters:

- The letter **"R"** (**Real**) indicates a real movement that has independence, secessionist, autonomist intentions or in general recognition of a historical, cultural or linguistic identity; the letter **"U"** (**aUtonomous**) indicates a region that has the status of recognized autonomy; **"S"** (**Simulation**) indicates a group that simulates the same intentions as the previous groups in an entirely intentional way and has in some way (even informally) communicated this to the relevant authorities (official documents sent to national institutions, actual declarations of independence or secession, political acts that have involved institutions or police forces, discussions in which the marginal role of micronational entities is clear, discussing and engaging in the real possibility of being heard by international organizations by sending official communications); **"I"** (**Imaginary**) indicates a group that simulates the same intentions as the previous groups by creating imaginary, unreal, virtual, derisory or otherwise unverifiable historical facts (real people in nonexistent places, animals as politicians, history, invented culture and/or fictional characters, even the presence of only one imaginary element, people discussing micropolitics or fantasypolitics, declarations of real, fictitious or "cold" wars between rulers, meetings between presidents or self-appointed politicians; "government-cosplayers" are not discriminating of a group I or S, this depends solely on the creation of fictional elements and real intentions towards authorities); **"F"** (**Fictional**) means a national entity created in a work of fiction (literary, film, theater or musical works, games or video games, memes, jokes or urban legends); **"O"** (**Organization**) the intermicronational organizations.

After the slash (/) follows the possible change(s) or subsequent official name(s). In round brackets the alternative name(s) and/or acronym (if any), in square brackets the Italian translation if neces-

sary. Some stated official names have been normalized where possible to an international standard (Republic of, Kingdom of).

The names of rulers are always translated into Italian wherever possible. Officially, a monarch bearing the first number of the name (e.g., Queen Elizabeth I) assumes the number only when followed by an identically named successor (e.g., Pope Francis). Unfortunately, many micro-kingdoms seem not to know this rule or prefer to ignore it for the “decorum” of assuming the number after the name. We have respected this wish.

This is followed by photographs of the place and any coins, banknotes, passports or stamps.

The listing of the entity in the category was decided by considering the presumed will of the entity in subordination to the behavior adopted. The choice of category is not for the purpose of evaluating the entity itself, but has purely classificatory value, so it is not open to review.

In Part I, given the huge number of micronations, the ease of creation and the equal frequency of abandoned projects, only those entities that have had **significant media coverage** (newspapers, publishing, active and well-known website) are considered. However, all projects of which news can be found are listed in the *Universal Directory* in the *Appendix*.

UNIVERSAL DIRECTORY

The Universal Directory presents all entities in alphabetical order of the denonym (or name for short); the official name is written in full with the denonym in bold to make it easier to find.

– in underlined text all entities described in the sheets, followed by the page where to find them, letter “P” and page number;

– in CAPITAL LETTERS the states recognized by the UN (voting members) and the states recognized unanimously even if not voting members (the Vatican);

– the rest of the entities present the letters of the card classification (thus **R, U, S, I, F, O**), plus possible letter of issues, **P: Passport**, **E: philatelic** issues (Emissions), **N: coin** issues (**Numismatic**), **B: Banknote** issues, with the possible addition of the letter “A” (active) followed by a number from **20** to **24**, indicating that the project is still active in recent times (2020s) and in which year an activity can be found in the media or online.

After the slash (/) follows the possible change(s) or subsequent official name(s). In round brackets the alternative name(s), if any, the acronym, the assumed year of founding, and the active site; in square brackets the Italian translation if necessary.

Some official stated names have been normalized where possible to an international standard (Republic of, Kingdom of, Island of). If we do not know the exact official language of the name, it is reported in English.

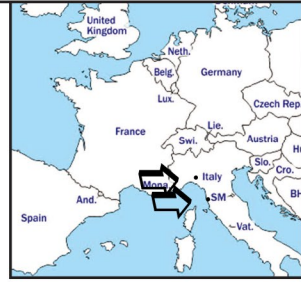
Entities with the same name or referring to the same state concept have been merged even if the initiators are different people, because they can be considered as different attempts to constitute the same state entity, thus as re-foundations. (If, for example, the founding of an entity with the identical name of an existing but discontinued entity, it should be interpreted as a re-foundation, i.e., rebirth of the same entity.) Exceptions are homonyms of well-known projects, which certainly cannot be considered the same refounded entity. Projects that have statedly changed their name have been merged where the news is clear.

Projects are reported *only* if they are present with fully public content, i.e., not subject to possible log-in, thus **excluding projects present exclusively on social media or forums** (Facebook, Twitter/X, Reddit, Telegram, Discord, forums of any kind, etc.) or any site that requires a log-in (even if the site is currently set to public mode), and portals of online worlds (such as “Nation States,” “Cyber Nations,” or “Micras”). **However, projects found on social networks, forums or dedicated portals that have at least one track in public sites without log-ins or official periodic publications are considered, even if only mentioned.**

*For the Universal Directory, it is plausible, especially for the first edition, that there are some inaccuracies; **any supporting news may encourage changing or adding letters in future editions** (→ Appendix for email address to use).*



FEDERAZIONE DELLA NAZIONE OSCURA CAOTICA (KAOS-SF, NOC) / NEOREPUBBLICA DI



TORRIGLIA [FEDERATION OF THE CHAOTIC DARK NATION / NEOREPUBLIC OF TORRIGLIA]

parliamentary republic

houses of Lukha B. Kremo, Torriglia and Livorno

(and claimed municipalities), and caravan; Italy

December 21, 2004 - (present)

 Trantor

 avatär

 Italian

3 resident citizens, ~200 citizens (maximum)

0.0003 km²

    nazioneoscura.wordpress.com

 S



In 2004 Lukha B. Kremo (Gianluca Cremoni Baroncini), an Italian science-fiction writer and musician, decided to make an artistic action, a n/action; so he declared autonomy on September 18, 2004 during an art exhibition in Casier, Treviso, Italy, as part of the mail-art projects of artist and music critic Vittore Baroni.

On December 16 at a public venue in Milan (actually an occupied art gallery named *La Cueva*) declares the independence from Italy of the Kaotica Obscura Nation, effective from the solstice, that is, December 21, 2004. It appoints a government with ministers and ambassadors (including writers Vittorio Curtoni, Vittorio Catani, Sandro Battisti, and Giovanni De Matteo), creates a currency (the avatär), a passport, several sets of stamps, and a national anthem that it plays in the place. Since then he has published new stamps and the *Gazzetta Ufficiale di Trantor* [Official Gazette of Trantor] annually.

After joining **Loss** (→ in: *International Legal Statutes and Organizations*), in 2008, on the occasion of the purchase of a property in Torriglia, it is renamed to the Neorepublic of Torriglia, recalling the Partisan Republic of Torriglia born during World War II (→ **Repubblica Partigiana di Torriglia**, in: *De Facto Administrations*) and claiming the municipal territory.

In 2010 he inaugurated the blog that shows the work of the government voting its assent or dissent in elections of important premiers in the world.

In 2013, it endows itself with a new Constitution, which protects

*Passport of
Nazione Oscura Caotica*





Roy Bates greets from Sealand

At a conference on micronations, hosted by the University of Sunderland in 2004, Michael Bates represents Sealand as the Royal Prince; it is his first outing as Sealand's representative to the world.

In 2006, a major fire occurred on the platform, so the following year, Michael Bates resoundingly decided to put the Principality up for sale. On January 9, The Pirate Bay, a Swedish torrent file exchange site, announces that it wants to

buy Sealand by raising funds through donations paid into a Paypal account. But negotiations stall because Michael Bates entrusts the sale to the agency InmoNaranja, which negotiates the sale of islands. The presso is set at 750 million euros, a high figure because it is symbolic. The clauses specify that the purchase prohibits activities that could harm the UK, but there is doubt that file-sharing could do so. However, the agency fails and the sale goes away.

In 2012, unconfirmed reports suggest that Julian Assange is planning to move WikiLeaks servers to the principality.

On October 9, 2012, Roy Bates dies at the age of 91. The title of Prince passes by hereditary right to his son Michael.

Between 2018 and 2019 due to the impending exit of the United Kingdom from the European Union, the principality was the subject of many citizenship applications from British citizens opposed to Brexit.

Meanwhile, Johannes Seiger has never stopped claiming to be the legitimate governing authority of Sealand; in the 1990s he issued Silandan dollars with the effigy of the exiled prime minister. According to Roy, however, he was deposed in 1978.

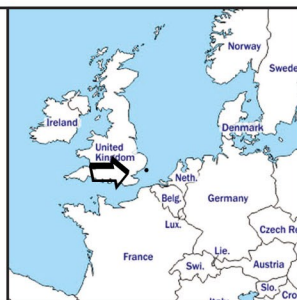
On the legitimacy of Sealand and its international status, two different legal opinions have been produced by academics: the first in 1978 by Béla Vitány of the University of Nijmegen, and the second in 2017 by Jacobo Rios Rodriguez of the University of Perpignan Via Domitia, aimed at proving the legitimate sovereignty of the principality.

Sealand stamp series





PRINCIPALITY OF SEALAND




constitutional monarchy

fortress-platform H. M. Fort Rough; UK

September 2, 1967 - (present)

 HM Fort Rough

 dollar of Sealand

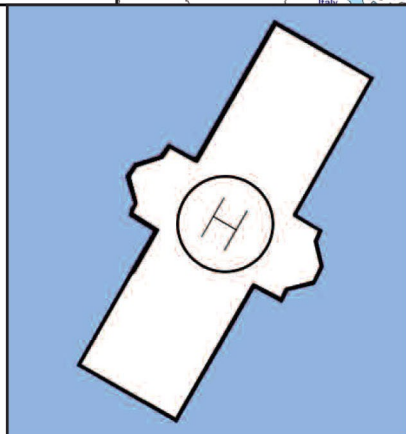
 English

50 resident citizens (maximum), ~100,000 citizens (estimate)

0.000045 km² (100 km² including sea)

     www.sealandgov.org

 R **MOST FAMOUS MICRONATION**



In 1941, at the height of World War II, platform-based sea forts were built in England, called Maunsell Sea Forts, named after the builder, Guy Maunsell. One of them, built in 1942 and named *H. M. Fort Rough*, consists of a platform on the seabed, on which mount two towers joined by a bridge on which other structures were added. To build the sea fort, a floating barge was towed to the Rough Sands sandbar where it was sunk so that the hull would find a stable position on the seabed. The structure currently visible above sea level is the superstructure of the barge.

The platform was occupied by 150-300 members of the Royal Navy throughout World War II, only to be evacuated and abandoned at the end of hostilities.

In the second half of the 1960s, the pirate radio period begins, and some amateur radio operators, in order not to be intercepted, broadcast while sailing. Some occupy one of Maunsell's forts, including Paddy Roy Bates, a British fisherman and former military man with a passion for radio, who in 1965 installs his Radio Essex on one of them. The forts are in British territorial waters and are cleared. The exception is *H. M. Fort Rough* which was located outside territorial waters. Thus, after discussions with his lawyer, Paddy Roy Bates occupies *Fort Rough* on December 24, 1966.

Ronan O'Rahilly, founder of Radio Carolina, also has the same idea and decides to occupy the fort, storming it. Roy responds with an air rifle and Molotov bottles, sending him fleeing.

At that point, on September 2, 1967, Roy decides to proclaim the platform an independent state based on the interpretation of international norms, effectively creating the Principality of Sealand and proclaiming himself Prince Roy.

In 1968 his son Michael Bates is summoned to trial because of an incident in which some shots leave a British navy frigate in the vicinity of Sealand. According to some reports, the occupants of the vessel intended to frighten Bates into ejecting him from the fortress, although the operation was covered up by claiming they were working on repairing a nautical buoy. On November 25, 1968, the court says that because the incident occurred outside British territorial waters, it has no jurisdiction over the case.

In the 1970s Sealand begins printing stamps, passports, identity cards and mints coins (the Sealand dollar).

On September 25, 1975, the Sealand Constitution is promulgated. It consists of a preamble and seven articles. The preamble affirms independence, while the articles define Sealand as a constitutional hereditary monarchy, regulate the functions of government offices, advisory Senate, advisory legal court. They define the prohibition of bearing arms except for members of the Sealand Guard, the exclusive right of the sovereign to direct foreign policy and amend the Constitution. Sealand's court system claims to follow British common law, and statutes take the form of decrees issued by the sovereign.

During those years, the government offers Bates 5,000 pounds to leave the fort, which still remains the property of the ministry. Bates asks for 90,000 pounds and the government refuses.

The prime minister in charge, Alexander G. Achenbach establishes a company in Luxembourg called Sealand Information Gathering and Messaging Agency, through which he sells Sealand stamps and coins. In 1976. Achenbach and several other people are accused of engaging in a fraudulent business based on an imaginary country.

On August 2, 1976, Achenbach filed a petition with the Cologne District Court to revoke his German citizenship as a citizen of the Principality of Sealand. The court rejected the petition, finding that Sealand was not a state because it did not meet the territory and population requirements of the Montevideo Convention (→ in: *Introduction*).

In August 1978, Achenbach invites Roy and Joan Bates to Austria to discuss his proposal to purchase the fort. The offer is a scam: a group of Germans led by Achenbach's lawyer, Gernot Ernst Pütz, arrives in Sealand by helicopter, showing Roy Bates's son Michael a false document of sale of the principality. Michael is skeptical, but he lets them in, at which point the men lock him in. After a few days, they put him aboard a boat and ship him to the Netherlands. Suspicious of the postponement of the meeting, Roy and Joan return to England and contact Michael. Learning of the plot, they launch the assault from a helicopter piloted by John Crewdson, a pilot who had worked on stunts for the 1969 James Bond film. Alexander Achenbach is charged with "treason against Sealand" and detained along with German nationals. Dutchman Hans Lavoo sails to the fort to help negotiate the release of the German prisoners, but is himself taken hostage by Bates. So the governments of the Netherlands and Germany petition the British government for the release of their citizens who were victims of piracy, but the UK disavows any responsibility, citing the 1968 court decision. Germany then sends Dr. Christoph Neimöller, a diplomat, to negotiate Achenbach's release. Roy Bates releases him, taking the opportunity to claim that the diplomatic visit constitutes Germany's recognition of Sealand. Following his repatriation, Professor Achenbach establishes a government-in-exile in Germany, in opposition to that of Roy Bates, assuming the title of Secretary of the Privy Council. This affair could be considered the first real war between micronations. In the late 1970s, some representatives of the Spanish government tried to buy the principality to use it



Principality of Sealand

as a bargaining chip to negotiate with Gibraltar. For a similar reason, during the Falklands War, a group of Argentines reportedly asked to buy the fortress and establish a possession on Britain's doorstep.

Meanwhile, in 1987 the United Kingdom extended its territorial waters, in accordance with International Law (→ in: *Introduction*), from 6 to 12 miles, including *H. M. Fort Rough*.

In August 1989, Alexander Achenbach resigned for health reasons and the rebel government's Minister for Economic Cooperation, Johannes Seiger, assumed the title of Prime Minister and Secretary of the Privy Council.

For a time, Sealand printed and sold passports (mainly in Eastern Europe from \$1,000 to \$9,000 each) through a Spanish group believed to be associated with Seiger's "government-in-exile". These passports had not been authorized by the Bates family, and some holders become involved in serious crimes, such as the murder of Gianni Versace. The fashion designer is gunned down in front of his Miami mansion with two gunshots by Andrew Cunanan, later found to have committed suicide, who possessed Sealand's passport. The story that rose to the headlines reveals that there are as many as 150,000 Sealand passports in the world (including 4,000 in Hong Kong alone), when in fact the Bates family claims to have issued about 300. So in 1997 the Bates family revokes all passports issued up to that point, including their own, although they continue to sell ID cards. The Panama Papers reveal that Sealand Trade Development Authority Limited, a front company set up by Achenbach and Pütz, conducted negotiations with arms dealers.

In 1999, son Michael Bates is listed as Prince Regent and Head of State and Government, as Ray Bates suffers from Alzheimer's disease.

In 2000, HavenCo, a data company owned by Michael Bates himself and U.S. Ryan Donald Lackey, sets up its headquarters in Sealand and takes over management of the platform. HavenCo gives willingness to host websites deemed to be of questionable legality in their home countries (including Napster). But the project never got off the ground; it was dropped by Lackey in 2002

and shut down for good six years later.

In 2003 the Danish soccer team Vestbjerg Vintage Idrætsforening agreed to represent the principality of Sealand in national competitions by surprisingly drawing 2-2 with the national team of the Czech Republic, and losing 6-1 to the national team of the Republic of Northern Cyprus. So does Canadian marathon runner Darren Blackburn.



Passports of Sealand

Sealand's 50th anniversary of Independence coins (2017)



Kingdom of 10Town	I
6ème Dimension (1998, www.6emedimension.net)	I
Regno 90 (1788)	F
People's Republic of A1 / Federated Republics of A1 (2008)	S
United Kingdoms of Aaawwubbis and Fanboys (2022)	A22
Federal Empire of Aarbaro (2017)	
Principality of Aaren-Issbau and Vorpotock (2011)	
Unión of Aariania / Aarianian Union of North America (2011)	
Republic of Aarland (2020)	A20
Nation of Aaron	
Empire of Aaronland	
Principality Tribe of Aarsisii (2024)	A24
Ab Roma	S
Ābā Qiāngzú Zāngzú Zìzhìzhōu [Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture of Qiang e Aba]	U
Island of Abac	
Island of Abad Santos	
République de Abalecon (1969, abalecon.lfrl.net)	RIA22
Île Abandonnée	
Abari	F
Abazinia (Abaza, Abazashta , 1995)	R
Abbavilla	
' Abd al-Kūrī Island (1969)	
Royaume des Abdalles (1735)	F
Empire of Abeldane and the Commonwealth / Abelden (2014, govab.wordpress.com)	SPBA22
Kingdom of Abemama (1979)	R
Abendland Projekt (1930)	R
Republic of Abenica (2021)	SNBA22
Kingdom of Aberland / Kingdom of Jehovah (2019)	
Aberystwyth	
Royaume d' Abi	S
État Fédéré d' Abia	
Republic of Abies / State of Pacem (2015)	IA22
Unitary Democratic Republic of Abilene (2021)	A21
Abiwyn (2007)	
Abjasia	
Sovereign Order of Aboba (2008)	
Nation of Aboriginal Australians (1995)	RP
Île Abraxa	
Abristan / Kingdom of Luana (2019)	A21
Royaume d' Abron	
Kingdom of Abrus / Republic of Abrus (2015)	
State of Absaroka (1939)	P146
Federal Republic of Absentia (<2007)	I
Absurdistan (1971, 2006)	FI
Juzur ' Abu Musaa, Tunb al-Kubra wa Tunb al-Sughra (1971) [Abu Musa and Big Tunb and Small Tunb]	P367
Imārat Abū Zaby (1761) [Emirate of Abu Dhabi]	P665
Republic of Abuddin (2014)	F
Free Republic of Aburiria (2006)	F
Abvei Area (2005)	P356
United Abvei Republic (2022)	SA22
State of Abyssland	
Kingdom of Acacia / Republic of Acacia (<2003, 2007)	FS
Federal Republic of Acadame North (1993)	I
Socialistična Federativna Republika Acadame Severa (1999)	S
Acadia / Confederation of Acadia (2010)	
Sovereign Kingdom of Acalia (2024)	A24
Keurajeuën Acèh Darussalam (Atjeh , 1976)	P519
Democratic Republic of Aceland	
Achæan Territory of Antarctica / Grand Duchy of Westarctica (2001)	P085
Hanseatic and Confederate States of Achsen (2020, ehamicro.wixsite.com/achsen)	IA23
Achterdijk	
Kingdom of Achu (2016)	F
Região Autónoma dos Açores	U
Reino Unido dos Açores (1999)	S
Acquarius Project	
Acquasorgiva (1939)	F
Islamic Emirate of Acre (2020)	A20
República do Acre (1899)	P592
Kingdom of Acrim	
Kingdom of Acrin (2014)	I
Actaxey (2001)	S
Empire of Acuña-Tesar	I
Sovereign Principality of Acworth (2001)	R
United Republic of Adal (2022)	F
Kingdom of Adaluncafiff (1990)	SE
Pays de Adam (1952)	F
Adamburg (2016)	
Empire of Adammia (2013, empireofadammmia.org.uk)	IEA24
Republic of Adana	
Democratic Republic of Adanse / Democratic Regions of Afrika	A24
Ad-Diffā l-Ġharbivā wa Qitā' Gazzah (1993) [West Bank and Gaza Strip]	P355
Republic of Adelaide (2013)	
Dominion de Adèle (2001)	S
Provinsë d' Adelsann	
Kingdom of Aden (2013)	
Principality of Adequate	
Anarchic Principality of Adhartir (2014)	
Autonomous Republic of Adjara (1991)	U
Adjikistan (2006)	F
Emirate of Adjistan / State of Adjistan (2008)	
Adjnabistan	