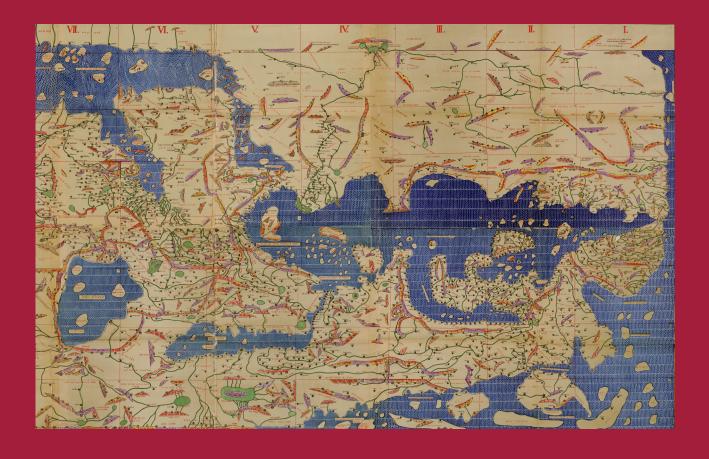# EUROPEAN ISLANDS BETWEEN ISOLATED AND INTERCONNECTED LIFE WORLDS

INTERDISCIPLINARY LONG-TERM PERSPECTIVES

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EUROPEAN ISLANDS BETWEEN ISOLATED AND INTERCONNECTED LIFE WORLDS

Interdisciplinary Long-Term Perspectives

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In the context of the so-called spatial turn in cultural and social studies, geographical space has been reconsidered as a cultural phenomenon moving away from the notion of space as a given constant and instead acknowledging its cultural component, defined and semanticised by its users and their practices. At the interface of materiality and discursivity, the island becomes a highly interesting as well as paradigmatic site for the negotiation of a specific 'islandness' (Hay 2006) from 'within' on the one hand and the metaphorical construction of the island from 'outside' on the other, having been a space for inspiration and projections to philosophers and writers for centuries. Against the backdrop of Michel de Certeau's 'Practice of Everyday Life' (1980) and his theory of the two-fold appropriation of space, as well as Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's notion of the smooth and gridded space ('Capitalism and Schizophrenia', 1980), the following paper seeks to explore the imaginary construction of the island space from two perspectives: (i) the appropriation of the island by walking on the ground, and (ii) from a bird's eye perspective from above. These perspectives create two opposite notions of the island and contribute to the establishment of various discourses on the insular, representing different power structures and critical takes on social life, confirming as well as subverting established discourses. Using a comparative approach, different examples of constructions of islands from European literary history will be employed, mainly drawing on the genre of the Robinsonade. One central imaginary of the island in European literature is the island in the far sea, often in the Pacific; this is analysed as a pre-dominant construction of insularity in the following narratives: 'Robinson Crusoe' by Daniel Defoe (1719), 'Suzanne and the Pacific' by Jean Giraudoux (1921), 'The Wall' by Marlen Haushofer (1963), 'Friday or The Other Island' by Michel Tournier (1967), 'Atlas of Remote Islands' by Judith Schalansky (2009) and 'The Pine Islands' by Marion Poschmann (2017).

Introduction

Islands and insular spaces have been a recurring motif in many literatures across the world for centuries. They have been employed to represent a multitude of notions, contributing to island mythologies and becoming part of cultural imaginaries, often embodying the 'other', or a yearning for new beginnings and ideal spaces, but also isolation, reclusiveness or even its opposite: interconnection. The island, therefore, becomes a liminal space at the interface of materiality and discursivity, one which invites exploration from a multitude of perspectives but one that is, at the same time, despite its apparent tangibility, often hard to localise.

In the context of the so-called 'spatial turn' in social and cultural studies, spatial settings have been reconsidered as a socio-cultural phenomenon rather than a given constant (Bachmann-Medick 2014, 292). Since the late 20th cent., space theory has turned away from the mere symbolic representation and reading of space, and instead has searched for a definition of space as a social construct which

is constantly redefined by its users' activities. Space has become a co-agent in everyday life rather than a mere setting that determines people's actions. In view of this critical re-assessment of the notion of space and of spatial theory, insularity and the depiction of island spaces have gained wider currency in literary studies – insular spaces are also regarded as sites that are not simply given, but created by the ways in which their users engage with and appropriate them, both in discourse and practice. Accordingly, space is turned into an acutely semanticised entity which is no longer understood as a pre-existing fact (Günzel 2007, 16). Inasmuch as it is the result of the social practices of its inhabitants and visitors, the island can therefore be considered a manifestation of social relations, often power hierarchies, subject to being re-confirmed, re-shaped and subverted through the activities of the people who interact with it.

Engaging with the interface of the imaginary and island practices from a European perspective, this paper re-assesses the metaphorical potential of insular spaces by analysing a selection of seminal island narratives. It seeks to explore how the island space is appropriated and experienced by literary characters, often shipwrecked and washed to its shores, who interact and engage with the island and the insular environment. A selection of canonical island texts are reconsidered in light of the topographical turn in literary studies,[1] where on the basis of considering space as a constructed entity, literature is regarded as a contributor to space-making processes as well as to notions of space.[2] Following Michel de Certeau's theories in 'Practice of Everyday Life' (1980), two main paradigms of the appropriation of island space in literature can be identified. Accordingly, this paper will analyse the imaginary construction of the island from two perspectives:

(i) the appropriation of the island on the ground, when walking, or through movements even closer to the ground, crawling and taking the worm's-eye-view and (ii) from above, capturing the space from a bird's-eye perspective. These perspectives present two opposite views of the island and also contribute to various discourses on the insular as they represent different power structures and critical approaches to social relations, confirming as well as subverting established ideologies.

This article explores the depiction of spatial practices in selected island narratives, focussing on visual mapping (associated with the bird's-eye view) and movement (here considered as linked to the worm's-eye-view). After a brief introduction to the interconnectedness of the notion of 'islandness' (Hay 2006) and the imaginary construction of islands, this paper will outline Michel de Certeau's spatial theory and complement it with Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's (1980) considerations of gridded and smooth space. The critique of these theories will underpin the investigation of the two-fold appropriation of the constructions of islands from a European perspective in the following corpus of literary texts, evoking insular spaces or their cartographical depiction – often Pacific islands as the central European imaginary of the island – which can be seen as paradigmatic for different forms of island appropriation: 'Robinson Crusoe' by Daniel Defoe (1719), 'Suzanne et le Pacifique' by Jean Giraudoux (1921), 'Die Wand' by Marlen Haushofer (1963),[3] 'Vendredi ou les Limbes du Pacifique' by Michel Tournier (1967), 'Atlas der abgelegenen Inseln' by Judith Schalansky (2009), and 'Die Kieferninseln' (2017) by Marion Poschmann.

Islands between Practice and the Imaginary

In a seminal article on the phenomenology of islands, Peter Hay (2006, 26) contends that 'a case could reasonably be made for it [the island] as the

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1   On the 'topographical turn' see Weigel 2002, 151–165; Wagner 2010, 100–109.

2   A related approach to the analysis of island literature can be found in the work of the Island Research Poetics Group (Graziadei et al. 2017a and 2017b), which also partly draws on the spatial theory of Certeau with his concept of corporeal spatial practices counteracting the mapping of space (Graziadei et al. 2017a, 246) and whose notion of a poetics of the sensory 'conception' (Graziadei et al. 2017a, 240) of islands in literary texts is an important contribution to island literature studies.

3   Despite Marlen Haushofer's novel not being set on a physical island, it can be considered as one of the canonical texts in the genre of the Robinsonade, evoking an enclosed space with specific insular features and a (female) protagonist being cast away in the Austrian mountains.

central metaphor within western discourse'. Hay distinguishes, however, between constructions of islands – that is, the metaphorical notion of islands from an outsider's point of view – and what he calls 'islandness' (Hay 2006, 19) – that is the islanders' experiences and, thus, a phenomenology of islands from within the geographical island space itself. Questioning whether island metaphoricity, deeply rooted in European discourse as it is, can be disassociated from such a phenomenology of islands, Hay concludes that 'so powerful is the metaphorical idea of the island that it can be deployed in the absence of even the slightest reference to the reality of islands' and assigns the island imagery 'acts of post-colonial appropriation'. Accordingly, he considers island constructions from the continental perspective as problematic since they 'render irrelevant the realness of island lives' (Hay 2006, 30). In this concept, discursive appropriation therefore appears as opposed to, but also deeply linked with, islanders' practices and experiences of island spaces.

Another landmark essay on the intrinsic connectedness of the geographical island with its use as a site of the imaginary is the short article 'Desert Islands' by the French philosopher Gilles Deleuze, whom Tom Conley has appropriately called 'an adept of the science of being insofar as he is a geographer and a philosopher of space' (Conley 2005, 208). Starting from specific geographical features of islands, Deleuze understands the island space as one of the cases in which 'science makes mythology more concrete, and mythology makes science more vivid' (Deleuze 2002, 10). Drawing from geography, he divides islands into two categories: (i) the oceanic island, emerging from the sea and therefore representing an absolute beginning, and (ii) the continental island, which once was part of the continent and can be interpreted as a re-start, a new beginning which remains related to the mainland (Deleuze 2002, 10). Questioning the possibility of a lonely island and criticising canonical island depictions in literature, Deleuze mourns the decline of the island as an inspirational symbol and the fact that it has become merely an excuse for the recreation of continental bourgeois society (Deleuze 2002, 11 f.). Indeed, through the recreation of the continent, the myth of the island as an absolute beginning is never completely fulfilled.

In conceiving the sea as a space of opening and not limiting the island, Deleuze addresses and subverts the established idea of a clear duality between the island and the sea, with the sea being constructed as a limit of the island space, which places it at a distance from social and economic developments. Conversely, he depicts the island as a figure of thought for a continuous state of becoming and a new beginning, as a metaphor for the endless cycle of the world, therefore turning it into a place which is impossible to categorise chronologically and geographically. Combining a specific islandness with the discursive construction of insularity, he creates an alternative discourse to traditional Western ideas of the island as a clearly defined, locatable and secluded place (Moser 2005, 408–410). Deleuze thus offers a possibility of including the phenomenological experience of the island in the development of its metaphoricity, rather than a colonialist appropriation from the outside. Anticipating his later space theory, Deleuze expounds a concept of space which is in a continuous process of becoming – his text, writes Conley, 'shows that our imagination tends to make space tantamount to being insofar as being can only be thought of in terms of becoming, in other words, within the flow, force and vitality of repetition and recreation' (Conley 2005, 209). Consequentially, the insular is then considered a space that oscillates between being material and being imaginary, constituting a space without fixed boundaries in a continuous process of coming into being. Drawing on this concept of the insular, the following section of this paper will present a brief outline of the two-fold spatial practices that will serve as the conceptual framework for the literary analysis.

Spatial Practices: Maps and Routes

Certeau distinguishes between two types of spatial appropriation – one from a bird's eye perspective, which he calls 'map', and another on the ground, which he terms 'route'. Route refers to the spatial experience through bodily movement, typically walking, whilst map refers to the spatial appropriation through seeing, which is closely associated to discourses of knowledge and power. Certeau exemplifies these two perspectives using a city

space – perceiving it from the 110ᵗʰ floor of the World Trade Center (now an impossible perspective which is itself part of cultural memory). He calls the city an 'urban island' (Certeau 1988, 91), and observes: 'When one goes up there, he leaves behind the mass that carries off and mixes up in itself any identity of authors or spectators. [...] His elevation transfigures him into a voyeur. It puts him at a distance. It transforms the bewitching world [...] into a text that lies before one's eyes. It allows one to read it, to be a solar Eye, looking down like a god. [...] the fiction of knowledge is related to this lust to be a viewpoint and nothing more' (Certeau 1988, 92).[4]

The spatial appropriation from above is thus a panoptical view leading to a mapping of space as it is, for example, undertaken by spatial planners, cartographers and city planners. To this effect, the viewer becomes estranged from the spatial practices of everyday life in the streets, asserting power by surveying space and creating a 'fiction' of the space in question (Certeau 1988, 92 f.). The view from above, therefore, is part of an act of mapping the space below, that is, drawing up an imaginary grid of what is being viewed at a distance from the spatial activities of its users, placing the perspective above the everyday practices of the people who are walking and thereby creating spaces. Certeau outlines the development of the medial appropriation of space in the form of cartography since the Middle Ages, and explains how the routes – i.e., spatial practices – were gradually eliminated from the maps, giving way to an increased geometrical depiction of space that excludes every hint of graphical representations of actual human activities (Certeau 1988, 118–122). Therefore, he concludes, the map 'colonizes space; it eliminates little by little the pictural figurations of the practices that produce it' (Certeau 1988, 121).

On the other hand, walking represents the opposite way of accessing space, one which can be considered an individual appropriation, constantly shaping space anew and re-arranging it (Certeau 1988, 98). Comparing the adoption of space by walking to a speech act, Certeau calls it the 'walking rhetorics' (Certeau 1988, 100). He further analysises humans' motion in the city with the acts of reading and writing, and develops a notion of walking as 'an emancipatory transgression of the spatial order and the symbolic system of language respectively'[5] (Wagner 2005, 178; Author's translation). As in the case of language, the process of spatial production bears a subversive potential which can undermine existing configurations of space and question established discourses.

The route and the map, therefore, represent opposite ways of experiencing and creating space. Maps are instruments of the appropriation of power, whereas walking is an everyday life activity, subject to constant re-definition and change which cannot be surveilled by hegemonic power. Beyond his distinction between route and map, Certeau distinguishes places from actual spaces; whilst a place is just a momentary constellation of fixed points, space is created by means of spatial activity. Space is thus considered a process intrinsically linked to humans' use and movement in contrast to the mere visual mapping from a distance. The act of walking 'is a process of 'appropriation' of the topographical system on the part of the pedestrian [...]; it is a spatial acting-out of the place' (Certeau 1988, 97 f.). Both ways of experiencing space define subjective images of space, leading to different types of 'fiction' in Certeau's formulation. He accordingly suggests that narratives function as a threshold between places and spaces because narratives constitute the moment of transition from one state to the other. They are essential for the creation of different types of spaces in societies because a society without narratives would be deprived of all its spaces, left only with abstract places (Certeau 1988, 123). Certeau is particularly interested in the spatial constitution of narrative texts as they have the function of guiding the pedestrians' footsteps (Certeau 1988, 116). Narrative texts, therefore, may commonly determine our experience of space – they influence our idea of space and its power relations, and they have the performative power to transform and even shift boundaries.

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4   Certeau's use of the masculine pronoun hints at the gendered notion of this viewpoint from above.

5   'Zugleich eine emanzipatorische Überschreitung der räumlichen Ordnung bzw. des symbolischen Sprachsystems' (Wagner 2005, 178).

Similarly, Deleuze and Guattari differentiate between two modes of practice producing different kinds of space: the smooth and the striated, corresponding to the 'nomad space and the sedentary space' (Deleuze/Guattari 1987, 474). They take Certeau's theory of spatial practice as a starting point sharing the idea of '[i]nventive ways of crafting time and space (as) modes of creative resistance' (Andermatt Conley 2012, 96) against hegemonic power, in this case, first and foremost, capitalist social relations. As anticipated with regard to Deleuze's reflections on the island, the two authors expound the idea of space being constantly in a state of coming into being through human motion and daily activities, all of which leads to new processes of subjectification and to different ways of thinking (Andermatt Conley 2012, 96 f.). The world is in unrelenting motion through processes of disengagement from and re-attachment to spaces, continuously creating spaces and turning smooth space into striated space and vice versa (Deleuze/Guattari 1987, 475). Whilst the striated refers to the organisation and mapping of space, the smooth space comprises a direction and an intuitive flow of movement, not being led by a specific route or points of reference. Smooth space becomes striated by being mapped and measured, for which the sea is a particularly apt illustration: the 'smooth space par excellence' (Deleuze/Guattari 1987, 479), which was striated by the maritime explorers and navigators on their mission to discover new continents, measuring and mapping the sea and therefore subjecting it to their own objectives (Deleuze/Guattari 1987, 479). Employing the metaphors of the tree and the rhizome, Deleuze and Guattari question conventional binary modes of thinking and suggest a rhizomatic, nomadic type of movement which comprises a 'lateral, and circular system of ramification' (Deleuze/Guattari 1987, 5), spreading out to various directions, forming new connections and a diversity of possible combinations.[6]

This theoretical framework provides the basis for a reading of European island narratives that concentrates specifically on the literary depiction of different manners of spatial appropriation and engagement. On that account, the following analysis of six literary texts will showcase how the map and the route – as the two dominant modes in the literary representation of island spaces from a Western perspective – have contributed to a cultural imaginary of islands.

Daniel Defoe: 'Robinson Crusoe' (1719)

Shipwrecked on the shore of the island he later names the 'Island of Despair' (Defoe [1917] 1992, 58), the trajectory of Robinson Crusoe's first walk exploring that unknown environment is the top of a hill, from where he looks down on the land he will, later on, call himself sovereign of: '[...] I travell'd for discovery up to the top of that hill, where after I had with great labour and difficulty got to the top, I saw my fate to my great affliction, viz. that I was in an island environ'd every way with the sea, no land to be seen, except some rocks which lay a great way off, and two small islands less than this, which lay about three leagues to the west. I found that the island I was in was barren, and, as I saw good reason, un-inhabited' (Defoe [1917] 1992, 43). Crusoe's reflections tellingly reveal how, as early as on the second day after he set foot there, he consciously places himself above the island, drawing a mental map of the land below, measuring the dimensions of the isle, and anticipating the ways in which he will engage with the space. Accordingly, he occupies the bird's-eye perspective mentioned in relation to Certeau, visually striating the island space from above and appropriating it by taking an elevated, distant perspective. Crusoe spends his first weeks securing all the goods and equipment from the ship stranded off-shore. He soon chooses a place for his dwelling and builds a fort – his 'castle' (Defoe [1917] 1992, 129) – safely protected by walls, in a position from which he can overlook the sea (Defoe [1917] 1992, 48). In the course of the years he spends on this island Crusoe's main concern is to achieve a life-style as similar as possible to the one he had on the continent. To that purpose, he upholds European standards of living and develops his settlement inspired by the capitalist ideas already prevalent in England at the time. As Deleuze writes in

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6   For a more in-depth discussion of the spatial turn in literary studies as well as the space theories of Michel de Certeau, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari see Dautel 2019, 29–34, 54–60, 69–77.

his critique of Defoe's novel as an example of the failure of the island imaginary, 'Robinson's vision of the world resides exclusively in property; [...] The mythical recreation of the world from the deserted island gives way to the reconstitution of everyday bourgeois life from a reserve of capital. Everything is taken from the ship. Nothing is invented. It is all painstakingly applied on the island' (Deleuze 2002, 11).

This mind-set is reflected in the way Crusoe interacts with the island space. Instead of exploring the island and engaging with its surroundings, inventing creative ways of using its resources and establishing new routes, Crusoe focusses on using the space for the purpose of setting up a one-man society, reaching out to the island country mainly for hunting and harvesting, believing that he 'was king and lord of all this country indefeasibly, and had a right of possession' (Defoe [1917] 1992, 83). Walking around the island in a rather narrow radius, only one and a half years after his arrival, he notices that the other side of the island is more fertile (Defoe [1917] 1992, 92). By measuring and mapping the island space and drawing up a table of the seasons and the climate, he gradually turns the smooth space into a striated one, also by agriculturally working the land. While making use of it, he thus imposes a hierarchical system onto the island, mimicking the mores prevalent on the continent, whereby he is 'lord of the land'.

Crusoe's act of exploring the island on foot can be considered a speech act that slowly transforms the island space into a text as he records his discoveries in a journal where he counts and categorises them. In marking down his observations in his diary, he constructs his own island, subjecting it to his needs and re-writing his own existence by inventing a new subjectivity and individuality, making himself the ruler of the space (Ljungberg 2007, 486). Tellingly, the novel's third sequel (1720) includes a map of the island, drawn from the bird's eye perspective, which consolidates Crusoe's colonialist approach inasmuch as it represents the entitlement and the claim of ownership of the land he has to protect from an invasion, that which the discovery of the footprint on the beach symbolises for him (Ljungberg 2007, 489–491).

In the course of the spatial transformation of the island – an enterprise for which building up structures of enclosure such as walls, borders and fences, is essential, enacting the process of land enclosure which forms the start of capitalist property relations – Crusoe seeks to overcome his spatial and temporal disorientation by turning the wild into a domesticated space (Smit-Marais 2011, 107–109). Crusoe thus materially turns the island's smooth space into striated terrain and sets up a social as well as an economic system based on the Western hierarchical model he pre-empts by way of his voyeuristic act of mapping the island space from above. As Daniel Graziadei stresses, 'the conversion of the desert island into a colonial island and of the castaway into a pious ruler is thus developed in close relationship of space, place, subject and writing and declines again after his return to the imperial'[7] (Graziadei 2015, 425; Author's translation). When, after twenty-eight years, he returns to England, he has inverted the role of the island space into a subjected space, into a trophy of his conquest like any other British colony.

Jean Giraudoux: 'Suzanne et le Pacifique' (1921)

Alongside 'Robinson Crusoe', Deleuze regards the novel 'Suzanne and the Pacific' by French author Jean Giraudoux as the second example of a failure of island mythology. The island is a recurring motif in Giraudoux's work; he employed island spaces to create utopian visions, and in Suzanne he turned the island space into the paradisiac setting for a female Robinsonade (Gauvin 1999, 60). Whilst Deleuze criticises Crusoe's replication of a European lifestyle based on capitalism, with regard to Suzanne he negatively highlights the depiction of luxury and abundance the island provides. The eponymous protagonist in Giraudoux's novel, a young woman from Bellac, suffers shipwreck on a Pacific island while being on a sea journey around the world. Since the island is rich

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7   'Die Bekehrung der einsamen Insel in eine Kolonialinsel und des Schiffbrüchigen in einen gottesfürchtigen Herrscher wird also in einer engen Beziehung zwischen Raum, Ort, Subjekt und Schrift entwickelt und lässt nach seiner Rückkehr auf die imperiale Halbinsel wieder nach' (Graziadei 2015, 425).

in fantastic resources, she does not need to create anything anew. The island's vegetation provides, for example, 'coconut trees, which were higher than oaks [...] On all sides unknown trees [...] the bread tree, the milk tree, [...] maybe the meat tree [...] trees without fruit and nearly without leaves, but with red rings, so that one expected from them an extraordinary abundance [...]'[8] (Giraudoux [1921] 1975, 85 f.; Author's translation). It is exactly this abundance which Deleuze refers to when he notes that 'mythology [...] dies, though in Suzanne's case it dies in a particularly Parisian way' (Deleuze 2002, 11 f.).

Not only does the island set-up in Suzanne differ from the one in Defoe's novel, but also the way Suzanne engages with the island space is at odds with Crusoe's colonialist approach. Being washed ashore, she immediately feels an intimate connection with the island, calling it 'my island'[9] (Giraudoux [1921] 1975, 85; Author's translation) very soon without employing Crusoe's forms of appropriation. In the morning of her first day there, she walks the length and the periphery of the isle, exploring the newly-found environment, also climbing up the hills and becoming aware of the shape and size of the archipelago: 'Until the evening I had jumped over all seven streams, the most torrential and widest, however, I had to follow up to its origin; I had climbed the mountain and became aware [...] that two or three kilometres South was another, slightly bigger island, and half way between that one and the horizon [...] a third one [...]'[10] (Giraudoux [1921] 1975, 88; Author's translation). She soon takes up swimming regularly around the entire island and becomes aware of the unspoilt innocence of the space, not yet transformed into a hostile place by humans (Giraudoux [1921] 1975, 109). Having become a good enough

swimmer, after one year she crosses over to the second island, which she perceives as a space in constant transformation, in an endless cycle turning matter into living creatures: 'Each clod of earth falling from the island into the sea was turned into a muskrat, into an otter and was immediately returned back, giving it [the island] back all that in the form of life and hair it had lost in rock and leaves. Another small effort by the island and I would see the sunken roots in the water move, turning into trunks'[11] (Giraudoux [1921] 1975, 129; Author's translation).

Suzanne's first experience of this second island is a more hostile one – the earthquake that develops upon her arrival may be construed as this island's desire to repel her (Giraudoux [1921] 1975, 125 f.) and she finds traces of the past life of another castaway who had worked and subjected the land (Giraudoux [1921] 1975, 134). Suzanne remains negatively baffled by the way her predecessor made use of the island space despite its obvious abundance (Giraudoux [1921] 1975, 134 f.). When she finds the castaway's diary, entitled Robinson Crusoe (Giraudoux [1921] 1975, 199), she learns that he only explored the whole island after thirteen years and enters into an imaginary dialogue with him in which she gives advice on how to branch out, leave his usual routes and follow his intuition (Giraudoux [1921] 1975, 201 f.). Suzanne directly refers to Crusoe's way of engaging with the island space; Giraudoux thus creates an explicit intertextual dialogue with Defoe's novel. Crusoe's meticulous mapping of the island makes Suzanne feel threatened as if her 'unsteady life on this float had found an end. I felt myself pinned with ropes to the four corners of the horizon'[12] (Giraudoux [1921] 1975, 205; Author's translation).

Exploring the island herself mainly by walking and swimming, in contrast to Crusoe's bird's-eye view from the top of the hill, Suzanne interacts

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8 'Des cocotiers plus hauts que les chênes [...] Partout des arbres inconnus [...] l'arbre pain, l'arbre-lait, [...] peut-être l'arbre-viande. Des arbres sans fruits et presque sans feuillage, mais cerclés de cercles rouges, qu'on devinait pleins d'abondance [...]' (Giraudoux [1921] 1975, 85 f.).
9 'Mon île' (Giraudoux [1921] 1975, 85).
10 'Le soir même, j'avais franchis les sept ruisseaux, obligée, pour le plus rapide et le plus large, de remonter à leur source; j'avais gravi la montagne, aperçu [...] à deux ou trois kilomètres au sud une seconde île, un peu plus grande, et, à mi-chemin entre celle-là et l'horizon [...] une troisième [...]' (Giraudoux [1921] 1975, 88).

11 'Chaque motte de l'île tombée à la mer devenait un rat musqué, une loutre, et la regagnait aussitôt, lui redonnant en vie et en poil tout ce qu'elle perdait de roche et de feuillage. Un élan encore de l'île, et j'allais voir les racines plongées dans l'eau s'agiter [...]' (Giraudoux [1921] 1975, 129).
12 'Vie errante sur mon radeau était finie. Je me sentais tenue aux quatre coins de l'horizon par des câbles' (Giraudoux [1921] 1975, 205).

with the island space, slowly transforming and becoming a part of the island herself, even inventing her own language. As she turns into a female nomad and becomes one with her non-human surrounding, she allows herself to be guided by her intuition and by the island space, physically blending into the space to the extent that she is not immediately recognised as a human by the British men who come to rescue her. The epilogue to the 1968 German edition states that women in Giraudoux's works counteract the conventionally rational approach to life by men (Best 1968, 255), therefore confirming traditional gender stereotypes. However, Giraudoux's female castaway does not just offer an alternative model to the way Defoe's Crusoe appropriates space by suggesting a more rhizomatic access to space; instead, Suzanne undertakes, in a similar manner as her predecessor, an attempt at striating the isle. At a later stage of her island life, in an effort not to lose her memories of her former life in France, Suzanne begins mapping the island space by turning it into a text. She provides trees with street names, thus striating the smooth space, giving it points of reference. Nonetheless, as she feels that the words she uses to name the trees have lost, in her mind, their cultural meaning, she senses a profound feeling of alienation from the language of her former life on the continent and an even bigger feeling of estrangement from Europe (Giraudoux [1921] 1975, 152 f.). Turning the space into a text, therefore, is not a feasible way of engaging with the island space for Suzanne; it requires alternative forms of connecting with it, which are developed through the narration of Suzanne's manifold spatial practices – contrary to Deleuze's critical analysis of the novel's island construction.

Marlen Haushofer: 'Die Wand' (1963)

By enclosing the female protagonist as the only human being within an invisible wall, in her novel 'The Wall' Marlen Haushofer evokes an insular setting in the Austrian mountains. Even though the story is not set on an island, through the evocation of an insular space and a castaway as protagonist, her novel has become one of the most famous female Robinsonades of German-language literature (Abraham 1986, 75; Berentelg 1998, 83), bearing, in

Buchholz's words, a utopian 'vision of an escape from masculine civilization' (Buchholz 2015, 153). In 'The Wall', the spatial boundaries of the island in the forest are deployed to experiment with an alternative form of society, drawing on questions of gender roles and hierarchies. The spatial barrier creates a chamber play, an atmosphere in the heart of nature whereby the author questions human existence outside society. By isolating the main character – an unnamed woman in her forties – from civilisation, the wall around her seems to dissolve the boundaries between nature and culture. Yet, a closer analysis of her interaction with the space, paradoxically, reveals that it fosters differences between humans and animals, thus reinforcing a culture-nature dichotomy. The spatial engagement of the protagonist shows that boundaries remain. The text is, indeed, a 'web of dense as well as indissoluble entanglements of a patriarchal discourse regime and pre-feminist strategies of subversion'[13] (Landfester 2000, 229; Author's translation), which, however, remain an attempted and ultimately failing experiment.

Compared to Giraudoux's Suzanne, who enters into communication with the island in a rather intuitive, sensorial way, the first-person narrator of Haushofer's novel engages in a different manner with her surroundings. She almost fully refrains from visually mapping the space from above, but instead engages in a rather strategic plotting of the forest environment by walking through the countryside, calling it 'my valley' (Haushofer [1963] 2013, 47). She does not feel an urge to explore the space and only walks up to an alpine pasture months after having discovered the wall. During the first few days in the forest, she obsessively marks out the route of the invisible wall with fresh branches as if she was re-creating the wall herself, artificially naturalising it, so to speak; in so doing, she reinforces the boundaries, and maps her area, trying to bring a 'bit of order in the huge, terrible disorder that had invaded my life. [...] In marking it out with green sticks I was making my first attempt [...] to assign to it an appropriate place'

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13 'Geflecht so dichter wie unauflöslicher Verstrickungen von patriarchalem Diskursregime und präfeministischen Subversionsstrategien' (Landfester 2000, 229). Ulrike Landfester refers to the analysis by Frei Gerlach 1998, 209.

(Haushofer [1963] 2013, 24). She continues striating the space by cultivating the land over the entire period recorded in her diary, setting up a small farm where she subsists with a dog and other domesticated animals from nearby abandoned farms. Like Crusoe on his island, Haushofer's protagonist relies on using the utensils and equipment she finds in her hosts' cabin and in other deserted hunter's lodges and sets up boundaries, for instance making her potato field look like a 'fortress in the middle of the forest' (Haushofer [1963] 2013, 54).

Afraid of losing orientation, with time, her exploration of the space becomes more restricted and mainly confined to the routes she knows: 'I have no reason to stray wild in the forest; the deer still use their old trails, and I could find the paths of the potato field and the meadow by the stream in my sleep. Even if I don't admit it, though, without Lynx [her dog] I'm a prisoner of the valley' (Haushofer [1963] 2013, 96). This sense of insecurity precludes her from venturing off on her usual itineraries and, accordingly, from opening new and alternative paths in the forest. The domestic realm and her fields become the main living space and her occupation during the years of her secluded life in the forest, immersing herself in the life and the labour of a peasant. Whereas Suzanne in Giraudoux's novel gradually becomes unaware of the seasons, the cyclic life in the mountains still continues as if the wall did not exist: 'The wall forced me to make an entire new life, but the things that really move me are still the same as before: birth, death, the seasons, growth and decay' (Haushofer [1963] 2013, 115). While Crusoe's conventional use of the island space springs from his desire to subject it according to his colonialist ideas, Haushofer's protagonist refrains from engaging with the isolated space in more inventive ways for different reasons. Her fear of the unknown beyond the realm she domesticates and adapts to her lifestyle leads to her cultivation of the land as a symbolic mapping of space in order to gain a sense of security.

As (apparently) the only human in the forest, Haushofer's character engages intensively with the natural space. She also questions her former life in urban civilisation – mainly in relation to her role as a woman – to the extent that she starts losing her identity as an individual and develops a sense of being part of something 'larger', of a collective: 'I'm not sure that my new self isn't gradually being absorbed into something larger that thinks of itself as 'We' (Haushofer [1963] 2013, 142). However, the way she interacts with her environment – cultivating the space but not inventing new ways of engaging with it – still accounts for the idea of a lifestyle imagined from an urban point of view she is not able to move beyond – similar to her 18th cent. male predecessor. Haushofer thus explores and questions the possibility of an 'insular' new beginning beyond established social roles.

Michel Tournier:
'Vendredi ou les Limbes du Pacifique' (1967)

'Friday or The Other Island', Michel Tournier's debut novel, is an explicit adaptation of Defoe's 'Robinson Crusoe' with an eponymous protagonist set a hundred years later, which has been interpreted as a 'parody of patriarchal, Enlightenment culture' (Brantly 2009, 129). This French Robinsonade hyperbolically mimics and calls into question Crusoe's striving for the submission of the island, which Tournier meaningfully renames 'Speranza' (Tournier [1967] 1984, 42). In depicting what can be analysed as a remarkable change from the map perspective to a route perspective, Tournier's novel subverts Defoe's construction of the relationship between Crusoe and the island.

Friday begins with the visual mapping of the isle from above just after Crusoe's arrival, and then recounts the protagonist's obsessive cultivation of the island's soil as well as his fixation with measuring it, as he seeks to chart it entirely and tame its wilderness. In his journal, Tournier's Robinson writes: 'One of my tasks must be to make full survey of the island, its distances and contours, and incorporate all these details in an accurate surveyor's map. I should like every plant to be labelled, every bird to be ringed, every animal to be branded. I shall not be content until this opaque and impenetrable place, filled with secret ferments and malignant stirrings, has been transformed into a calculated design, visible and intelligible to its very depth' (Tournier [1967] 1984, 57–59). Sexualising and personifying the island space are two hallmarks of Tournier's Robinsonade. Having drawn a

map of the island, Robinson interprets the shape of the island as a headless woman: it 'resembled a female body, headless but nevertheless a woman, seated with her legs drawn up beneath her in an attitude wherein submission, fear and simple abandonment were inextricably mingled' (Tournier [1967] 1984, 42). Beyond Defoe's depiction of the colonial mapping of the island, Tournier adds another related component to the way Robinson Crusoe adopts the space by drawing on gender hierarchies as well as the sexual appropriation of women, also metaphorically expressed in the spatial expansion of Robinson's explorations.

This sexualisation characterises Crusoe's relationship with the island in 'Friday'. Not only does Tournier's castaway appropriate the space on its surface, but similar to a worm he also vertically crawls into the soil towards the inner space of the island, seeking to become one with it, turning it into a sexualised being and developing a more sensorial and bodily connection to it than just a visual one: He 'slid down slowly but steadily like food down a human gullet. [...] Its walls were perfectly smooth but curiously shaped, like the interior of a mould designed to fashion some very complex object. The object, Robinson suspected, was his body, and after a number of attempts he succeeded in finding a posture' (Tournier [1967] 1984, 87 f.). Huddled into the inner space of the island grotto, he finds a position that makes him forget 'the limitations of his body [...]. He was suspended in a happy eternity. Speranza was a fruit ripening in the sun whose white and naked seed, embedded in a thousand thicknesses of skin and husk and rind, bore the name of Robinson' (Tournier [1967] 1984, 88). Robinson's sexual relationship with the island culminates when he becomes so physically aroused by Speranza that he pours his semen on the ground (Tournier [1967] 1984, 103 f.). This episode is central to Crusoe's interaction with the island – as a result of this insemination of the soil, a new species of plant grows with its roots expanding in the form of a young girl, therefore giving rise to a new, rhizomatic way of spatial expansion (Tournier [1967] 1984, 111).

This changing connection with the natural space causes Robinson to increasingly doubt his approach to the 'cultivated island' (Tournier [1967] 1984, 114) and to search for alternative ways of understanding the island and his life on it. His search for alternative forms of being causes him to hope for an earthquake to disarrange his spatial order on the island. He then comes to the realisation that 'in the ordering of the island lay his only salvation until such time as another kind of life [...] was ready to take place of the wholly human course of behaviour which he had steadfastly pursued since the shipwreck' (Tournier [1967] 1984, 103). Yet, eventually, it is the slave Friday who jeopardises the order on the island – instead of obeying Robinson and fulfilling his orders, Friday undermines his authority playfully, disarraying Robinson's organised spaces. When he smokes in the entry to the grotto where Robinson stores his gunpowder, Friday causes an explosion which demolishes the walls of Robinson's fortress thus creating completely new forms of spatial connections: 'Where the entrance to the cave had been there was now an avalanche of great boulders shaped like towers, pyramids, prisms and cylinders, a mountain of rubble dominated by a vertical spire of rock which must afford an admirable view over the island and the sea. [...] it was as though some architectural genius, operating at the point of extreme violence, had used it (the explosion) to indulge a fancy for baroque design' (Tournier [1967] 1984, 152). Covertly liberated from the oppressing rigidity of the 'cultivated island' after this event, Robinson is ready 'to enter upon an unknown road' (Tournier [1967] 1984, 154); in time, he establishes and ventures out into new routes on the island, re-inventing himself in an 'astonishing metamorphosis' (Tournier [1967] 1984, 156) that changes Robinson's and Friday's lifestyle and relationship positively. This change is confirmed when the British sailors come to rescue the islanders – Friday, looking down from the hill when he 'climbed to the top of the rocks, taking with him the spyglass' (Tournier [1967] 1984, 183), exemplifies the map perspective, whereas Robinson, as a result of his routing of the island, realises he does not want to leave his life in Speranza. Friday, eventually, secretly leaves the island with the sailors to start a new life in Europe, and Crusoe remains, thus inverting the roles of Defoe's characters and undermining European versus native stereotypes.

Zhaoding Yang has re-assessed Tournier's novel in the context of postcolonialism and of

Said's theory of being as a constant process of becoming. Yang claims that the 'postcolonial condition' is, among others, defined by an overcoming of boundaries, thus opening new ways of communication between the self and the other as well as of overcoming binary constructions (Yang 2009, 73 f.). Tying in with Deleuze's notion of the island as a space in a continuous process of coming into being, Tournier's subversion of spatial orders in 'Friday', as Crusoe comes to open new routes on the island, lays radical emphasis on the reconsideration of the self, now as one that is in constant dialogue with its spatial surroundings.

Judith Schalansky:
'Atlas der abgelegenen Inseln' (2009)

German writer Judith Schalansky's innovative island text 'Atlas of Remote Islands. Fifty Islands I have not visited and never will' was published in 2009. Beyond the boldness of mapping spaces, the author (or rather the narrator of this experimental, semi-documentary work) has never experienced (and apparently never will), her publication is highly interesting in the field of literary studies due to its intermedial combination of image and text as well as the symbolic representation of maps classing them as literature. In the tradition of the *insularium* of the Renaissance period (Moser 2005, 421 f.), Schalansky deviates from the ordinary form of an atlas, including only cartographic representations by adding descriptions to the maps of the fifty islands selected, in which she combines factual and fictional elements. Interestingly, since the publication of Schalansky's 'Atlas', an increased fascination with the depiction of spaces in the form of a text-image combination has emerged – most notably in relation to cartographic depictions – with a range of authors publishing atlases and illustrations of fictional places; mapping and reading maps has become trendy.[14]

In the foreword to her 'Atlas', Schalansky points out the poetic power of cartographic representations (Schalansky [2009] 2010, 23). Indeed, her undertaking to map selected islands can rightly be deemed to be a work of art, but it can also be construed as an appropriation and as another form of subjecting spaces. Being aware of this, the author toys with the symbolic fascination with maps as well as with their potential power when she remarks, '(i)n their merciless generalization, these maps tame the wilderness' (Schalansky [2009] 2010, 9). In this way, Schalansky's maps and short texts engage with established island discourses. As Moser has noted, the 'attributes of finiteness and statics assigned to the island in Western discourse, facilitate [...] the colonial [...] access'[15] (Moser 2005, 410; Author's translation). In cartographing the islands in her 'Atlas', it is exactly such an act of colonisation that Schalansky performs and foregrounds, thus highlighting the idea of the colonialist appropriation of islands as spaces that can be charted and exploited by humans. Notably, by dedicating one spread to each island, she also separates the islands from one another, singling them out and depriving them of their global context and concealing the routes that connect them to the surrounding countries and archipelagos.

One of the main reasons cartography can be regarded as a controversial craft is its symbolic representation; maps assumingly depict space 'as it is'. The creator of a map, however, is always biased by his or her worldview, and consciously chooses the pieces of information shown in the cartographic representations of a given space. Maps, therefore, have the power to shape their readers' view of the spaces they depict as they guide the viewer according to the ideology of the cartographer and are, as Schalansky (2010, 10) points out, 'merely one interpretation' of reality. The geographical information provided with each map in Schalansky's 'Atlas' refers to the exact position of the islands, their geographic coordinates and their distance to the nearest

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14 See for instance Eco 2013; Lanni 2015; Tallack 2017; Lewis-Jones 2018; Francis 2020. As editor of 'The Island Review', Malachy Tallack held an interview with Judith Schalansky about her Atlas in 2013. He might, therefore, have directly been inspired for his book on undiscovered islands by Schalansky's work, Tallack 2013.

15 'Die Attribute der Begrenztheit und der Statik, die der Insel im westlichen Denken zugeschrieben werden, erleichtern nicht nur den kolonialen, sondern auch den intellektuellen Zugriff' (Moser 2005, 410).

continent, all of which gives the readers an impression of verifiability and creates a geometrically striated space.[16]

In his short history of cartographical depictions, Certeau writes: 'The map, a totalizing stage on which elements of diverse origin are brought together to form the tableau of a 'state' of geographical knowledge, pushes away into its prehistory [...] the operations of which it is the result or the necessary condition' (Certeau 1988, 121). Thus, the act of mapping would typically entail the gradual removal of routes and of any connections to the spatial practices which created them. The visual therefore wins over the practical. Smooth space is turned into striated space by being measured and mapped, and therefore being subjected to specific purposes. In mapping selected islands and garnishing them with myths in the accompanying texts, Schalansky creates a conflicting image of these islands – their 'paramaps' (Wood/Fels 1992, 192) present them as real, but any everyday-life, contemporary activity on these islands is, on the other hand, omitted, which turns the island spaces into a liminal zone between reality and the imaginary. Strikingly, the act of selecting fifty islands and granting each of them a spread in the 'Atlas' gives these islands prominence over all others that are not selected. The choice of selecting certain islands and leaving out others deprives the latter of the credit of qualifying as remote islands. Paradoxically, however, due to Schalansky's presentation of the selected islands as spaces between materiality and discursivity which reinforces images of insular remoteness, the islands are moved away even further from a perceived centre of attention and construed as peripheral to the implicit continental reader's lived-in-world, while the island dwellers and any perception of 'islandness' are explicitly not included in this act of mapping as they will never be visited.

Marion Poschmann: 'Die Kieferninseln' (2017)

In 'The Pine Islands', German writer Marion Poschmann constructs a clear east/west dichotomy in the way space is perceived, with the focal point of the travel narrative being an island in the bay of Matsushima in Japan. She evokes spatial ambiguity and draws on the relationship of space and language, thereby contributing to questions about spatial aesthetics in an intercultural context. By representing space as a flexible concept and deploying an island metaphor, Poschmann counteracts the traditional European discourse constructing islands as clearly defined and remote spaces (Moser 2005, 408–410). Furthermore, she constructs space as a variable entity, turning it into a matter of subjective perception and negating its materiality. In 'The Pine Islands', this spatial ambiguity is constructed by evoking a two-fold notion of space: from a distance, through seeing or reading; and close up, through the experience of space on-site on the route of the trip.

In 'The Pine Islands', a German man called Silvester travels spontaneously to Japan, where he meets the young man Yosa Tamagotchi,[17] whom he prevents from committing suicide by claiming that he should first find a better place for taking his own life. Venturing together onto the route of the famous Japanese poet Matsuo Bashō, in the following days the two characters look for the ideal place for dying. Guided by Bashō's and other literary texts as well as by a handbook for suicide, the pattern of their journey is one of repeated disappointment: the closer they get to places, the more disappointing the actual spatial experience turns out to be. During his flight to Japan, Silvester had dreamt of being able to fly as he oversees the Japanese islands 'from above': 'Japan from above, the countless islands, thickly forested mountains, solemn blue, he flies over the gruesome beauty of this country one final time' (Poschmann [2017] 2019, 14). However, experiencing the natural sites

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16 For a more detailed analysis of the symbolic nature of maps in relation to Schalansky's 'Atlas' see Dautel 2016.

17 Using the surname referring to an electronic toy – a virtual pet – mainly popular in the 1990s, Poschmann clearly plays with cultural stereotypes and questions the real existence of Yosa Tamagotchi who disappears at the end of the novel.

as he walks through them, Silvester feels a sense of disillusion because he finds that the closer he gets to them, the less he is able to see them clearly and to define them verbally (see for instance [2017] 2019, 64).

Furthermore, Poschmann constructs a dualism of private and public spatial appropriation. In the Aokigahara forest, the travellers repeatedly ignore advice on the excessive public signage and continue walking deeper into the rhizomatic grounds: 'They disregarded multiple warning signs. [...] under no circumstances leave the marked routes, otherwise you won't be able to find your way out of the forest' (Poschmann [2017] 2019, 58). In order not to get lost in the forest, they unwind a yellow plastic tape while walking further into the woods, mapping their path to the projected suicide site, subverting the publicly established order, and creating their own routes.

When Silvester sees Matsushima Bay with its hundreds of islands and their famous pine trees, the islands seem slightly disappointing: 'A panoramic view. Haze in the bay, a few shapes, flecks, much of it couldn't be made out. As always, an exaggerated amount of fuss had been made over a banal landscape. From above, the islands just looked like mossy stones in the fog' (Poschmann [2017] 2019, 167). When he crosses over to the island Ojma, he tries to see the pines, but is not able to focus on and digest any detail (Poschmann [2017] 2019, 171). But the closer he approaches the islands, the more he feels he accesses the sites with all senses rather than just visually. As a result of this, he also gains more routine in writing poetic texts in the form of the traditional Japanese haiku. The European traveller is increasingly able to grasp an understanding of the sites and aesthetically re-write them, thereby assigning a meaning to space in his own 'fiction' (Poschmann [2017] 2019, 172). At the end of his tour, Silvester's perception of space appears fundamentally changed, accepting rather than refusing its changeability.

In this novel, Poschmann examines an ambiguous concept of the natural environment in literature as she compares European and East Asian perceptions of space and its linguistic representations. She takes the island space in Matsushima Bay to question Western spatial discourse, which traditionally ascribes the island a high level of tangibility and clear-cut boundaries (Moser 2005, 408–410). De-constructing the island space into its multifacetedness, Poschmann re-assembles the island as a figure of thought rather than as a given entity. While writing about the ambiguity of nature and its cultural construction, she does not only challenge established ways of perceiving space from an essentialist point of view, but also puts into doubt Western discourses on East Asian aesthetics by continuously evoking stereotypes about Japan and the protagonist's reluctance to accept other ways of perceiving reality.[18]

Conclusion

The analysis of the spatial practices and island-shaping processes in these texts has led to an understanding of European island narratives in a different light, drawing upon spatial aesthetics beyond the consideration of spaces as a mere setting. The two paradigmatic ways of interacting with the island space reveal that literary notions of island spaces and island mythology often construct the island as a far-away place, uphold the traditional visual appropriation of insular spaces over the practical, and therefore nurture the Western idea of islands as limited spaces easy to conquer. In the examples discussed, this tradition following Defoe's 'Robinson Crusoe' is also continued in Haushofer's 'The Wall', and even more drastically in Schalansky's 'Atlas of Remote Islands', in which the act of mapping or striating fifty islands from a distance and therefore eliminating social practices carries Certeau's bird's-eye-perspective even further. Yet, in the European literature of the 20th cent. the analysis has also found some significant attempts at subverting and changing that traditional idea of insular spaces – this is exemplified by Giraudoux's 'Suzanne', Tournier's 'Friday' and Poschmann's 'Pine Islands' in particular, works that, as we have seen, proffer alternative forms of engaging with insular spaces. These authors

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18 For a more detailed analysis of Poschmann's 'The Pine Islands' see Dautel 2021.

challenge obsolete, rigid notions of islands by way of renegotiating established forms of using space. In Giraudoux's novel, 'Suzanne' engages with the island space from below by walking, increasingly blending into her surroundings. Poschmann employs the island metaphor in order to question established ideas of space, evoking a certain spatial ambiguity. Travelling to Japan, her protagonist Silvester slowly gives in to a more sensorial way of perceiving space. Finally, Robinson in 'Friday or the Other Island' takes an even closer worm's-eye-perspective from below by crawling into the inner space of the isle; he experiences a significant metamorphosis caused by an explosion creating new spatial orders, which also question established categories on the island. In the three respective novels, the authors seek to subvert dated hierarchies and power structures, including gender relations, colonialist bias, and hierarchical notions of periphery and centre. Moreover, they contribute to a changing perception of the spatial environment in general – one that recognises spatial practices and discursive appropriations of space as inseparable from any human perception of space and deeply linked to the construction of socio-cultural realities and related practices.

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RESSOURCENKULTUREN 16

EUROPEAN ISLANDS BETWEEN ISOLATED AND INTERCONNECTED LIFE WORLDS

Island studies have seen an upswing in recent years. Whereas in the past, research was largely oriented at external perspectives and perceptions, at present we witness an increasing interest in viewpoints internal to the island societies examined (with an 'inside-out' approach). This volume contributes to such efforts with transdisciplinary and methodological reflections from the fields of archaeology, ethnology, geography, history, philology, and literary studies. Focused on the interplay between geographic isolation and commercial as well as cultural connection, the studies here assembled investigate the role of the knowledge, resources, and practices of islanders in processes of crisis management, identity formation and transformation.

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