

The Island and the Insularity at the Confluence between Disciplines

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Abstract:

The present article investigates one of universal literature's most prolific motifs: the island. This particular motif goes beyond the boundaries of literature and becomes a subject of interest for several areas and disciplines: philosophy, anthropology, biogeography, mythology, psychoanalysis. In the context of the contemporary world, a new discipline developed, "the nissology", which deals with the study of the islands "in their own terms".

Keywords: insularity, alterity, "nissology", motif, topos, archetype

The island as home of a castaway is one of the major themes of universal literature, because island space has not ceased to exert a hardly definable attraction, through its paradoxical and ambivalent nature, through the attraction and rejection reaction it sometimes causes simultaneously in the human being. The theme of insularity and the motif of the island prove a historical persistence in the evolution of literature, which is supported by the many texts built around them.

The deserted island sparked the interest of researchers belonging to different fields, so that this topos undergoes a multidisciplinary analysis. There are relevant studies dedicated to this particular space in geography, philosophy, humanistic geography, psychoanalysis, symbolism, anthropology, biogeography. Also in the twentieth century a new discipline was established, "nissology", which deals exclusively with the study of the islands. The topos of the island is linked to the studies of researchers from the 20th and 21st centuries, such as Mircea Eliade, Yi-Fu Tuan, Jean-Jacques Wunenburger, Lucian Boia, Virgil Ciomoș, Gilles Deleuze, Jacques Derrida.

The coordinates in which the assumed space can enroll contain a wide range of meanings: paradise, hell, refuge, welcoming home, fortress. The possibilities subscribed are virtually limitless, depending on the creative potential that manifests in the boundaries of the insular space taken over by man. The island is an element that triggers imagination, offering successive modeling, perpetual redefinition. It is that vast, isolated space, where the castaway meets "the other".

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Island space is the subject of different searches; most of the time the adventurer who conquers the island expects at the subconscious level the fulfillment of expectations which he did not even give a concrete dimension: “The island escapes the laws of reality. The bold navigator who explores it is, without knowing it, in search of his own past, because there he will find – or at least the artists expect to find – the vestiges of an obscure ancient history, or even the beings remaining in a fabulous Golden Age which, in the world he comes from, can be found only in the mind of scholars” (Pippidi, 1999: 26).

The island, like the aquatic element, is a plurivalent symbol, meaning, depending on the context, isolation, fragmentation, exotism, shipwreck, utopia, dystopia, and its importance is deeply rooted in the collective imagination. Despite the obvious delimitation of this isolated space, the island also presumes the opening. This dialectic between the inside and the outside is legitimated by the existing relationship between *earth* and *water* (a creative tension), by the myths of various nations, by the cosmogonic myths of different cultures. “The mystery of the waters along a relationship supported with their fantastic hurricane and monsters, death and despair, suffer a transfer, converting to the very mystery of the islands they bathe.” (Ciomoş, 1999: 165)

The island has been in the past a special world, a world of excellence, giving to the European man the opportunity to get in touch with people of a different, sometimes shocking condition. The climax of the island’s imaginary was reached at the end of the Middle Ages, providing ground for making great discoveries. Through insular experience the existing distance between the center and the periphery is checked. Lucian Boia sums up the amount of possibilities that wild space offered to the European man: biological monstrosity, shore for the most obsessive dreams and desires, sexual freedom, as well as ascetism, holiness (Boia, 2000: 163).

On the other side, from the contemporary perspective, the modern researchers emphasize the contrary, the linking with the world. John R. Gillis, who is carrying out his activity of research at the Stanford University, is underlining the existant binder between the insular space and the world; placing the sign of equality between the island and insularity, we are getting distracted from the real aspect, the one which is showing us that the islands are linked to the world (Gillis, 2014: 5).

The exact same idea of connection, of binder, of link, is also noticed by the anthropologist, ethnographer and writer Epeli Hau’ofa. He dedicated his lifetime work to give islanders the condition of dignity; in this way of meaning, the study called “Our Sea of Islands” becomes relevant, in which he removed the prejudices on the islands of the Pacific, the author revealing the fact that these islands are not isolated

and separated by the immensity of the ocean, but, on the contrary, they are being linked because of the ocean.

Hau'ofa ascertains that after the research of cosmogonies, myths and legends of Oceania, the islanders had a holistic vision over the world which they belonged to, and the things were seen in the totality of the relations which were weaving between them.

The insular space it's a topos which provokes the imagination, it's meanings going further than the idea of isolation, of loneliness. The valences of this controversial topos were also highlighted by J. Edward Chamberlin in the volume called "How islands transform our world": "There are islands that limit us, and islands that liberate us; islands where love flourishes, and islands where hatred takes roots; islands that hold us together, and islands that keep us apart. Some islands, special for spiritual reasons, are to be visited only by the elect; others are strictly reserved for prisoners. Some with material resources, have been occupied by a few families for centuries, while other islands, with no resources at all, are now home of thousand of residents" (Chamberlin, 2013: 13).

Chamberlin reveals the importance of the imaginary insular in the context of the globalization phenomenon, considering that the islands became – in the contemporary context – a genuine academic fetish. In the vision of the author quoted earlier, the island demonstrates it's ambivalent character, the characteristics are found in opposite poles, for example: love – hate, freedom – limitation, binder – separation element, stability – wandering, isolation – opening.

In literature, the island contains itself a challenge, a serie of tests made by the faith. In the vision of Gilles Deleuze, the castaway demonstrates his capacity to re-create the world from its beginings, to start over. Relating on the poststructuralist philosopher quoted earlier, the characters like Robinson Crusoe, fail dramatic in front of this task which assumes the reiteration of the divine gesture of creation. The Deleuzian vision over the "landmark" character, Robinson Crusoe, is a dazzling one. Crusoe is blamed for the absence of creativity: the mythical re-creation of the world, on a virgin island, it's transforming in the case of Defoe's character in a dull reconstruction of the bourgeoisian daily life (Deleuze, 2004: 12).

The island it's a specific literary topos, which offers the boundaries where the castaway manifests, the isolated human, far from humanity, surprised in different situations which can be stored and analyzed from perspective of gender dynamics. The literature that developed around this plurivalent topos was predominantly a masculine one. The individual Robinsonade, outlined in *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe,

but also the collective one developed in *The Coral Island* by R.M. Ballantyne, caused a lot of rewritings.

Along the time they have made room with timidity for the female character. Peter Sloterdijk, the philosopher who suggests that the secret of space is a secret of space and femininity, is relevant in this respect.

The feminine characters evolving in island spaces illustrate several types of femininity: the angelic female Cezara from the homonymous novel of Eminescu, Virginia from the novel *Paul and Virginia* by Bernardin de Saint Pierre, the independent woman: Suzana of Bellac, the protagonist of the novel *Suzan and the Pacific* by Jean Giraudoux, the woman writer: Susan Barton from J.M. Cotezee's novel, *Foe* (1986), the one who boldly reinvents the Robinson Crusoe myth. The Spanish writer Alvaro Pombo also proposes a woman narrator in the novel *Where the Women* (1996). The author imagines an island of absolute femininity. The last novel that puts femininity in the island context is Wayne Johnston's novel *The Custodian of Paradise* (2007). The narrator is the female journalist Sheilagh Fielding, who isolates herself willingly on Newfoundland to analyze her past and to write about her experiences.

Island as an object of “topophilia”: the perspective of humanistic geography

The attraction exerted by the island space assumes distance, remoteness. Man has an inborn attraction for everything that comes out of the immediate sphere. Over time, explorers, colonizers, adventurers, settlers have searched for islands, coordinated by goals that force the limits of human imagination or go deep into the human subconscious. The attraction of the island topos has a force directly proportional to its remoteness into space, and human life is based on a polarity such as: familiar space – open space, suitable for the adventure.

Umberto Eco considers that the island's charm is due to the impossibility of determining exact coordinates until the eighteenth century, not so much by isolation. The island thus escapes the certainty, creating a waiting horizon, always misleading humanity.

In the view of the humanist geographer Yi-Fu Tuan, the island, alongside the shore and valley, are toposes that have aroused human imagination to a high degree. The author imposes the concept of *topophilia* to designate the connection between feeling and place: “The word *topophilia* is a neologism, useful in that it can be broadly defined to include all of the human being's affective ties with the material environment. These vary greatly in intensity, subtlety, and mode of expression. The response to the environment may be primarily aesthetic” (Tuan, 1990: 93). Tuan argues that the space itself does not have an irresistible power to make a difference; it raises the *topophilia*, but the

sensory stimuli that the environment provides confer the shape of man's ideals. Thus, the island is a topos that draws humanity through its extraordinary characteristics; this space encompasses several archetypes that define it, the island becoming an archetypal space.

The insular topos from a philosophical perspective

The island is also revealed in the perimeter of philosophy as an unquestionable attraction, which is the common denominator of all the theories developed on this topos. From philosophy derive original theories on the island imaginary. Thus, the island is defined from the point of view of the permanent tension between the two elements: water and earth, the demiurgic vocation the island imposes on man, from the perspective of the absence of sexual difference, paradisiac and infernal values, from from the perspective of the phenomenon of isolation. Philosophers have developed theories derived from the research of island space since antiquity.

One of the most famous islands that appeared in the philosophical writings of antiquity is Atlantis; In 360 BC, Plato, in his *Dialogues*, speaks through the voices of Critias and Timaeus about Atlantis, a city of harmony, an island world beyond the borders known to space and time humanity, an idealized but imperfect world. According to the Greek philosopher, Atlantis was an immense island in the Atlantic, and the beings that inhabited it were essentially semi – divinely descendants of Poseidon and mortal Cleito. The leaders of Atlantis have decided to conquer Athens and Egypt, but because of the *hybris* committed, the inhabitants were punished by the gods, and the island was swallowed by the sea, the story thus constituting an antediluvian myth. Plato used the Atlantean myth to draw a praise of simplicity to demonstrate the superiority of the Athenians in opposition to the extravagance and opulence of the Atlanteans.

The island served as a space in which the utopia is being built; the word itself: *utopia* is born with the homonymous work belonging to Thomas Morus. The island's name can be decoded in three ways: *ou-topos* – *nowhere*, *eu-topos* – *good place*, or *u-topos* – *u-shaped*, thus alluding to the shape of the insular space itself. *Utopia* is in the view of Thomas Morus an imaginary island, a complex, sophisticated world in which members of the community adhere to a common set of cultural values and share the same lifestyle. The space of Golden Age is changing thus, making it easier to be defined geographically .

In the contemporary context, most of the philosophical theories derived from the meditations caused by the island space have as a common denominator: its ambivalence, the reactionary reactions the island provokes or its values at opposite poles. It also functions as a

common denominator and the tendency to define the nature of the attraction inspired by the uninhabited space of the island. “Why do we love islands? Why don’t we like the islands? Why some love the islands, and others do not like islands, some dreaming them, searching for them, dwelling in them, refreshing themselves in them, others avoiding them, running away from them, instead of using them as a refuge?” (Derrida, 2013: 112).

The most controversial and wide – ranging insularity theories have developed in modernism and postmodernism and the philosophers who have dedicated insights into insularity issues belong to different currents and cultures: Jean-Jacques Wunenburger, Gilles Deleuze, Jacques Derrida, Virgil Cimos̃, Peter Sloterdijk.

Gilles Deleuze analyzes the springs of the enthusiasm, the impulse which enlivens the human being towards a deserted island. The dream of arriving on a deserted island conceals a subconscious desire for separation, extraction from the real, fleeting context, because the island itself was born out of fragmentation, disarticulation, breaking the continent. This self – imposed separation leads to the practice of the demiurgic vocation of the individual in the position of the god.

The poststructuralist philosopher emphasizes first and foremost the eternal opposition between the ocean and the earth, considering that both islands, of both continental and oceanic origin, are the result of a perennial struggle. Whether they have formed through erosion, fracture, or underwater eruptions, all the islands subsume this tension, this struggle between earth and water. The attribute of desolation seems to be born absolutely natural in this belligerent context. People will always have a reservation in terms of island space because of the feeling of insecurity; as long as the two elements dispute their primacy, people can only mask their fear, resorting to symbolic stratagems, giving the earth and water gender roles: mother and father, in order to give them a familiar air, convincing themselves that the struggle is over (Deleuze, 2004: 23).

Despite this tension, man feels the excitement, enthusiasm that accompanies him on his journey to the island. Deleuze defines the fascination that insular space causes on humanity; the impulse that leads to the formation of the island through the piercing of the aquatic surface is doubled by the impulse that attracts people to the island’s nature. The cosmogonic vocation of the island ends and is taken over by man, who has to create, to begin his world *ex nihilo*. The creative function of the island is taken over by man. From this point, however, man can prove to be a creator, or he can lead to perfection the state of desolation of the island, invoking it with a sacred dimension; the highest degree of creativity would be achieved when the human gives the island a

dynamic image of itself, thus recording a transfer from man to island and vice versa.

The second poststructuralist philosopher who analyzed controversial aspects of island space is Jacques Derrida. During the first volume of *The Beast and Sovereign*, Derrida develops the issue of sexual difference, and in the second volume it overlaps with the theme of insularity. Derrida highlights the fascinating nature of insular discourse in Western culture from the perspective of the absence of sexual difference. The author explains the eternal attraction that Robinson Crusoe exerts and all the novels born in his ideological paradigm through the fact that sexual differences do not exist or have no meaning anymore, the island becoming a paradisiacal topos in which the readers find their status as innocent children. Referring to the Robinson Crusoe myth, Derrida defines the island by the very absence of woman, femininity, desire and sexuality, suggesting that there is a secret contract between the paradisiacal euphoria and the absence of the woman; singular and exceptional sovereignty is defined by the presence of the slave, the beasts and the total absence of femininity. So the myth that perpetuated in the context of the western canon presupposes the existence of subjects as nonsexual entities (Derrida, 2013: 98). Derrida, like Deleuze, surprises a double movement of the human caused by island space: on the one hand, the escape to an island, and on the other the run away from the island. The author thus identifies a double contrasting movement of attraction and allergy, attraction and aversion, *insularophilia* and *insularophobia*. This double movement is assimilated to the impulse, the elan that draws people to island spaces, identified by Deleuze. Following the insular phenomenon's analysis, Derrida concludes that "the essence of the island" resides in an experience of solitude, perceived as "isolation, retreat, insularity" (Derrida, 2013: 91).

A different view of the island is articulated in the work of the German philosopher Peter Sloterdijk, which in the volume *Foams*, the third one in *Spheres. Plural Spherology*, develops an original theory of isolation, focusing on island formation process: "insulierungen". In the first chapter of this volume, Sloterdijk describes the island as a result of the isolation, demonstrating how different isolation modes create different types of islands.

The German philosopher, like Deleuze, captures the quality of the island as a prototype of the world itself. This aspect is due to the insulating effect of the sea, the humidity, the moisture, that surrounds the island space, but also to the segregation of the world. It is underlined the frame role of the sea, Sloterdijk concluding that isolation is the factor that gives the specificity of the island space. "What the frame does for the picture by excluding it from the world context, and what

secured borders achieve for peoples and groups, is carried out for the island by the isolator – the sea” (Sloterdijk, 2016: 290).

The insulating attribute of the sea allows the emergence of a world model, and its most prominent feature is the island’s atmosphere. The entire subchapter focuses on the isolation action that can also be accomplished with human agents. Starting from the sea, as an insulating agent, Sloterdijk glides from the concept of “found island” to the “made island”. Sloterdijk emphasizes that the art of isolation, the construction of artificial islands, repeating the essential features of the natural islands has developed amazingly in the context of contemporary times.

“Nissology”: studying the islands in their own terms

The island is also the subject of research of a new discipline, “nissology”, whose status is controversial. The term derives from the Greek root for the *island*: *nisos* and *logos* meaning *study*. Defining this science is “studying the islands in their own terms”. Abraham Moles, a space psychologist, introduced the term “nissonology” in 1982 to designate “insular space science”. His research was followed by extensive research work involving scientists, geographers, anthropologists, ethnographers, sociologists of different nationalities: Christian Depraetere, Grant Mc Call, Godfrey Baldacchino, Epeli Hau’ofa, Pete Hay.

The term “nissology” promotes the point of view of an islander, not of the continental man. Creating a new discipline centered around island studies involved the restoration of the center, the sliding from the continent to the islands. In the contemporary context, research into island studies area is rather difficult because the scholars have to cope with the impact of the hybrid identity of the subjects of research: inhabitants of the islands, natives, colonizers. For most of the Earth’s population, the island residence is somehow unworthy, and in the view of many writers, the islands are spaces that require rescue, as places that need to be upgraded to the standards imposed by the continent.

The island phenomenon is also a subject of provocative study for contemporary anthropologists who tend to demonstrate that island societies “apparently” isolated before Columbus and Magellan have migrated and were involved in a vast network of communication and exchanges with their neighbors; therefore, their alleged isolation was an erroneous European hypothesis. Nisologists reproach humanities and social sciences focusing on defining insularity on the idea of boundaries, limits, dichotomies such as earth – sea, island – continent. Nissology intervenes correcting this aspect, emphasizing the links that are being established between the islands, influencing the way the islands are conceptualized in literature.

Christian Depraetere says abruptly: “Islands are the rule, not the exception” (Depraetere, 2008: 17), underlining the importance of studying the islands in the problematic context of the 21st century. The author insists that island studies must be supported by a strong theoretical foundation in order to draw the attention of contemporaries to the fact that the islands represent an authentic *deus ex machina* of the global understanding of the world of the archipelago. Despite the phenomenon of globalization that actually unfolds around us, humanity continues to perceive the island phenomenon as peripheral, marginal. “Nissology” aims to analyze the islands from an innovative point of view, to render their dignity, because the islands have been perceived for centuries as isolated geographic entities and sometimes impossible to map, as areas requiring occupation, colonization. The remote islands connotate the periphery, representing for centuries an easy target for the settlers who have subjugated and organized them. At this point, the aspect of alterity, of *the other* also comes along. The islanders have been and continue to remain a vulnerable group, because the former colonizers were replaced by condescending observers. However, the identity of a place does not derive from its internal history, but from the specifics of the interactions with the outside world.

The attitude developed by continentals regarding islanders is paradoxical: on the one hand, mainland people feel pity for those who live on the islands, although islands have always fascinated the inhabitants of the continents. The consciousness of insularity also implies an acute sense of inferiority. In the study *Our Sea of Islands*, Epli Hau’ofa offers a retrospective look at Oceania’s history. In Oceania, unfavorable, discriminatory, indigenous cultures can be found from the early years of interacting with Europeans (Hau’ofa, 1994: 149). Epli Hau’ofa struggles to strengthen the dignity of island peoples, considering denigrating the idea that indigenous people live in small, limited spaces. He opposes this prejudice a broad view based upon the founding legends and cosmologies of these nations, making it obvious that they have not conceived their world in microscopic proportions. Hau’ofa has overturned the binary structure: earth / water, imposed by the western canon, by suggesting a postcolonial reception of the island.

The Island from a Symbolic, Archetypal and Psychoanalytic Point of View

The island is one of the most cherished and prolific motifs in literature and mythology, it is a complex symbol, a multi-archetypal model, involving many contradictory meanings. Over time, meanings such as: refuge, space of innocence, isolation, confinement, solitude, death, femininity have emerged.

Remote spaces, which ordinary people have relatively little information tend to be mythologized and they are defined according to subjective perceptions. In a spatial study, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*, Yi-Fu Tuan notes that distance has a defining role in shaping these subjective perceptions. These situations of the type – distant space, little information – lead to the creation of mythical space; this is an intellectual construct generated by human imagination (Tuan, 2001: 86). The humanist geographer believes that the space invested with mythical value is actually the answer of feeling and imagination to a fundamental human necessity. People have not given up on the search for a terrestrial paradise although they have been repeatedly disappointed, considering that this kind of space must exist, being part of a complex system of beliefs. An eloquent example of mythical space is provided by *Navigatio Sancti Brandani*. In his evangelistic journey, Saint Brandan, with fourteen monks, discovers the mythical *Island of the Blessed* in 512. The island's space is paradisiacal and it supports Yi-Fu Tuan's conception of mythical spaces. People have deficient knowledge about these spaces, so they have to believe in them despite the lack of cartographic evidence.

The same concept of mythical space is mentioned by Mircea Eliade, who offers the example of the island itself; so the myth of the terrestrial paradise has survived to the present day as the oceanic paradise. European literature has evoked the islands, but the reality of those spaces is totally different. Eliade claims that the function of Earth Paradise – which had taken shape in the 19th century – was the same in the economy of human psychism: “existence takes place outside of Time and History; man is happy, free, free of constraints, do not have to work to live, women are beautiful, eternally young, no law limits their love” (Eliade, 1994: 14). These islands of mythical character have been challenging research topics for geographers who have set out to demonstrate the fantastic character of mythical islands; their research has assumed cartographic evidence. All of the existing versions of Saint Brandan's islands share the burden that St. Brandan receives in arriving at that distant island with an always warm, bright, vegetal abundance. The real aspect is that he really visited the islands in the Atlantic archipelagos of the Atlantic; on the basis of these innocent expeditions were grafted the elements of fiction that confer the mythical air of the island. The image of the island as a paradisiacal space is supported by the remoteness from the continent, and the dangers it entails. The island's perimeter is therefore protected by the sea. The paradigm conveys peace, spiritual balance, innocence. Those islands that are perceived as paradisiacal appear in cosmogonic myths, but also in eschatological myths that follow the journey of the soul to a space of

happiness. In Greek mythology there are many references to the island as a place of initiation, as a sacred place, an origin of the heroes.

The Islands of the Blessed support the eschatological dimension of the island imaginary; there are many references in this regard to Hesiod in *Works and Days*, Pindar, in *The Olympic and Pythian Odes*, Homer, in the *Odyssey*, Vergil in *The Aeneid*. In the Chinese legends (which are similar to the Taoist theories of immortality), we find references to the three blessed islands in the ocean, finding a certain correspondence with the mythical lands of Sakadvipa and Svetadvipa of the Hindu traditions. Hindu doctrines mention the same Edenic valences, talking about an essential island made of jewels, where you can find well – smelling trees; at its center there is a palace, the oriental correspondent of *lapis philosophorum*, and inside, in the palace, reigns Magna Mater. The Island of Jewels, Manidvipa, takes the form of a golden circular figure and it is positioned in the midst of the quiet, blue waters of eternal life, Amritarnava. In Romanian mythology, the presence of a blessed island is mentioned by Vasile Lovinescu in the *Hyperborean Dacia*. According to the author, the White Island would be the Snakes Island itself, located “right in front of the Danube Delta”. The references to this island can be found back to Antiquity, and the Snakes Island can be identified as Leuky (white). On this territory there are the ruins of Apollo’s temple. Mythology presumes that Achilles’ body was taken by the goddess Tetis to the White Island, at the mouth of the Danube, where the hero married Elena and had a fulfilled life.

On the opposite side of the Paradise Island is the island as a space of eroticism or associated with the female principle. In the context of the exotic island, humanity manifests its sexuality indefinitely. Thus, an exemplary example is the Polynesian myth (Tahitian), which implies an absolute freedom, the uninhibited, natural, unalterable manifestation of sexuality in a paradisiacal setting, preserving the characteristics of the Golden Age. The island topos also implies femininity in a variety of meanings: the mother offering protection, the seductive, the vindictive feminine, the warrior.

In mythology, numerous legendary islands are inhabited only by women, suggesting that the island is a feminine symbol of an oasis that a man desires or repels. The femininity associated with island space is encountered, for example, in *The Odyssey*, by Homer. After long wandering, Ulysses arrives on Ogygia Island, becoming the prisoner of the goddess Calipso for seven years. Calipso represents the positive version of the feminine afroditic, developed in a passionate way, expressing excellence in everything concerning charm and pleasure (Bodiştean, 2013: 19). Calipso’s island has a dual nature, symbolizing at the same time the temptation and the imposed imprisonment.

The feminine can reveal in its insular context, the dark, vindictive side. For instance, on the island of Lemnos (also called *gynaikokratumene*, that is, *led by women*), in Ancient Greece, the women left by their husbands for the trace women, killed all the men on the island as an act of vengeance. When the Argonauts arrived on the island, they found only the women led by Hypsipyle, the daughter of King Thoas, becoming Jason's lover with whom she had two sons. This is one of the Greek myths where strong, independent women are perceived as a threat to a patriarchal order.

The island also accounts for the center, a primordial center, sacred by definition, and its fundamental colour is white. "The island where you can only reach on a water trip or a flight is the symbol of a spiritual center and, more precisely, of the primordial spiritual center" (Chevalier, 1993: 156).

The island also symbolizes a shelter against the dangers of the ocean, a safe space that avoids the possibility of drowning. According to Carl Gustav Jung, the island is refuge from the threatening assault of the sea of the subconscious, or, in other words, a synthesis between consciousness and will; the psychoanalyst highlights the multiple valences of the symbol amongst: the refuge, the limitation, the area of danger. Jung follows here the Hindu belief that the island must be seen as a perimeter of metaphysical forces, where the forces of illogical immense ocean are dissipated. "Modern psychoanalysis highlighted especially one of the essential features of the island: the fact that it evokes a refuge. The search for the island of the desert, or the unknown island, or the island rich in surprises is one of the fundamental themes of literature, of dreams, of wishes. The island would be a refuge where consciousness and will unite to escape the assassinations of the unconscious: you defend yourself from the ocean waves seeking the support of the rock" (Chevalier, 1993: 157).

The vast palette of valences of the myth of the deserted island proves its protean character, the opening to a perennial redefinition; the island creates bridges between the real and the imaginary, and the island's topos is found in the literary fiction of Antiquity to postmodernism. Regardless of the field of research, the attempts to capture the essence of the insular imaginary reveal an ambivalent space, located at the real and unreal confluence, a space that evades a concrete definition. Although the identification of the "essence of the wilderness island" remains a challenge, the contemporary context allows the change of the binar, opposed type vision with a global holistic approach.

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