

# Contents

List of Illustrations xi

Preamble 1

## PART ONE: DEFINING ISLANDS AND ISOLATING DEFINITIONS

1. Defining Islands and Isolating Definitions 13  
Definition 13    Epistemology 16    Dialectic 18  
Nesology 20
2. Horizontal and Vertical 26  
Horizontals 26    Verticals 30
3. Animate Swimmers and Inanimate Floaters 35  
Big Fish 35    Ship 38    Floating Island 40
4. Material Substance and State of Matter 42  
Ice Floe and Lava Flow 42    Northwest Passage 45  
Feeling for Snow 48    Bergman's Island 50

## PART TWO: PLACEMARKS AND CULTURES

5. Cities in Straits 57  
Straits 57    Island-Cities 59
6. Naming and Sovereignty 81  
What's in a Name 81    The Trouble with Islands 85
7. Utopias and Laboratory Hypotheses 93  
One Place as Another 93    Hypotheses 94  
Three Island Utopias 97

8. Politics, Philosophy, Epic Drama 104  
 War of Civilizations 104 Poets' Contest 106 Islands Razed  
 and Raised 107 If Athens Were an Island 109 Aristotle's  
 Drowning 114

### PART THREE: HAMLET'S GLOBE

9. The Distracted Globe 121  
 The Globe 121 North Sea Empire 124 *Holmgang* 132  
 Plots and Patches 135 Thin Ice 141 Sublime Coast 146
10. Island Words 151  
 Ham 151 Elsinore 153 Orisons 154
11. Dire Straits 160  
 Passages, Geological and Zoological 160 Hven in Øresund 163  
 Hamlet's Egg 166 The Goodwin Sands 169 Breaking Out 170
12. Liberty 172  
 Exile, Theatrical and Corporeal 172 *Ping* and King 173 Magna  
 Carta Island 178

### PART FOUR: SEA AND LAND

13. Hamlet *Is* Germany 183  
 Rule, Germania! 183 Planted on a Free Island 188  
 Germany *Is* Hamlet! 192
14. The Region of Illusion 194  
 The Ring in the Reef 194 *S.O.S. Eisberg* 202 Airships 207
15. Building for a Future 215  
 Beyond the Pale 215 Floating the British Empire 218  
 Postamble 231  
 Speaking on the Shore 231 Terra Infirma and Critical  
 Topography 235 Geography as Institution 237  
 Where to Sit 245
- Acknowledgments 249  
 Notes 251  
 Name Index 333  
 Place Index 345