

More relevant for us here is the importance the 'missing' islands can acquire albeit in a literary space. This paper explores two path – breaking novels that deliberately contest the historical legacies of this geography by inventing and introducing islands that incite the reader's imagination for a critical reflection on the other courses history could have taken, what historians and social scientists call the 'historical alternatives'. This paper focuses on Vassily Aksyonov (1981, 1983)'s *The Island of Crimea* and Aka Morchiladze (2004, 2006)'s *Santa Esperanza*. The former engages the reader on a counterfactual exercise with Crimea becoming an island off the coast of Soviet Russia, inspired by Communist China troubled by a maverick Taiwan at arm's length. The latter has a more nuanced and sophisticated formulation where a British dominion of three islands comes into being and survives as safe haven for multicultural coexistence as long as it could, in relation with the fragilities imposed across the sea. Fictive islands can thus sometimes play a greater role than real islands.