

## Is the island paradox such a paradox?

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*Abstract.* The paradox of an island, we are told, is at once to be isolated from and open to the rest of the world. It seems the paradox is easily solved by clarifying isolated and open to the rest of the world.

In her book *Writing Sri Lanka*, Minoli Salgado reports a paradox:

'The paradox of the island' according to Meyer 'is to be at once isolated from, yet open to the rest of the world.' (2007: 45)

I enjoyed the creativity that went into devising the so-called paradox, but it seems easily solved. An island is isolated in the sense that one cannot reach it by continuous travel on land. Now imagine an island which a human being can travel to and enter by some point or region of its shore. It can be described as open to the rest of the world. But "travel to" does not entail continuous travel on land, so there is no contradiction.

Perhaps the contradiction is with a stricter interpretation of open to the rest of the world. How can it be open to the rest of the world if it is not open to those who can only use continuous land travel? But it is strange to think that an island is only an island if it meets such a strict condition of openness. Indeed, it is doubtful that an island to be an island must be open by a weaker standard, such as the one introduced above.

### Reference

Salgado, M. 2007. *Writing Sri Lanka*. London: Routledge.