

## Unstable Landscapes: Affect, Representation and a Multiplicity of Hauntings

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In 1898 Vernon Lee (Violet Paget) wrote about haunted landscapes in a piece called 'Faustus and Helena: Notes on the Supernatural in Art'. In the essay she says:

the ghost...is the damp, the darkness, the silence, the solitude; a ghost is the sound of our steps through a ruined cloister, where the ivy-berries and convolvulus growing in the fissures sway up and down among the sculptured foliage of the windows, it is the scent of mouldering plaster and mouldering bones from beneath the broken pavement; a ghost is the bright moonlight against which the cypresses stand out like black hearse-plumes, in which the blasted grey olives and gnarled fig-trees stretch their branches over the broken walls like fantastic, knotted beckoning fingers...Each and all of these things, and a hundred others besides, according to our nature, is a ghost, a vague feeling we can scarcely describe, a something pleasing and terrible which invades our whole consciousness. (2006, 310)

Here the ghost is the landscape; there is no separation between ghost and place. Lee believes that these places invade consciousness, affecting our very being. She calls this ghost-of-place Genius Loci and states:

although what I call the Genius Loci can never be personified, we may yet feel him nearer and more potent, in some individual monument or feature of the landscape. He is immanent very often, and subduing our hearts most deeply, at a given turn of a road; or a path cut in terraces in a hillside, with view of great distant mountains;...most of all, perhaps, in the meeting-place of streams, or the mouth of a river.... The genius of places lurks there; or, more strictly, *he is it*. (1898, 6, original emphasis).

For Lee there can be no landscape without haunting. The spirit of the place *is* the place and we have a bodily response to it; it affects us in the moment. Yet any spirit of place is also indelibly linked to the past. Places are always marked by what has gone before, by the people who populated and shaped the environment in many different ways, by the weather of millennia, by the habitations and actions of the non-human. Layers of memory and action are embedded in the landscape alongside the layering of the earth's history in stone. *Haunted Landscapes* explores these spaces; from the beautiful to the terrible and sometimes the

mundane, the intersections of space, place, the human, the spectral, the supernatural and the haunted are at the centre of the discussion in the essays collected here.

In 2014 Falmouth University with the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE-UKI) held a symposium entitled 'Haunted Landscapes'. Whilst it does not follow proceedings, this collection further explores some of the ideas that were discussed and generated at this lively and stimulating event. One of the most marked aspects of the day was the sheer variety of approaches, theoretical positions and scope of topics. Debate was wide ranging and this collection aims to retain this breadth. If we follow Lee's view of landscape, whereby the spirit of the place *is* the landscape, there will be an almost infinite number of haunted places, all inflected by spirits in different ways. *Haunted Landscapes* celebrates this multiplicity in the diversity of its objects of study; some canonical texts, some lesser known but equally important novels, poems, films. Its approaches, which encompass landscape studies, affect theory, psycho-geography, eco-criticism, history, memory studies, literary studies, film studies, folklore, trauma studies and postcolonial theory, reflect the wide range of ways one can talk about haunted spaces. On the first page of *The Routledge Companion to Landscape Studies*, Thompson, Howard and Waterton propose that 'landscape is something which is mental as well as physical, subjective as well as objective' (2013, 1) and this volume takes this as a central premise, in relation to the idea of landscape as well as the concept of haunting. There are different types of landscapes and diverse experiences of haunting. We have deliberately kept this collection of essays about haunted landscapes varied and wide in the subjects it addresses as well as the theoretical approaches it uses. As haunted landscapes themselves are diverse, so too are the texts that explore these extraordinary places. The comment that we want to make with this volume is that this range of texts and the perhaps contradictory approaches are *all* important and useful in specific instances and under particular circumstances.

The fact that this book is about haunting *and* landscape has been particularly fruitful in bringing together strands of theory from the spectral or supernatural, and from the more material plane of place, space and landscape. This juxtaposition of the spectral and the material, the mental and the concrete, was a central concern of Lee's thesis too. She states that 'the Genius Loci, like all worthy divinities, is of the substance of our heart and mind, a spiritual reality. And as for visible embodiment, why that is the place itself, or the country; and the features and speech are the lie of the land, pitch of the streets, sound of bells or of weirs' (1898, 5). At the heart of Lee's work as well as this collection is the fertile interplay between two concepts, absence and presence; the seemingly ephemeral plane of the spectral

or supernatural, juxtaposed with the ostensibly material realm of landscape. Later we will examine the more distanced metaphorical or representative use of tropes of haunting and the presence of various types of ghosts. First however, we begin (in a somewhat topsy-turvy manner,) by looking at the ‘affective turn’ (Clough 2007) in relation to the haunting of landscapes.

### Haunting, Affect and the Non-Representational

Ola Söderström argues that ‘non-representational thinking has led geographers to downplay in their approaches the (formerly dominant) role of mental processes, language and vision and to introduce instead, on the stage of their research and publications, new figures such as: the body, emotions, spatial practice, interaction, performance, “things”, technology’ (2005, 14). This ‘non-representational turn’ mooted by landscape studies and cultural geography, corresponds directly to the 1990s ‘affective turn’ whereby there is a re-turn to the emotions, the body, the material and experience (Clough 2007). Yet affect is more than this. It is the body’s immersion in the world; beyond consciousness, beyond, sometimes, even recognised emotion. From the point of view of affect theory therefore the landscape is no longer seen as a distant prospect to be looked at, or painted or written about as something removed and external. From the centuries’ old view of the landscape as ‘scenery’, sublime, beautiful or even mundane, ugly and polluted, these newer conceptions, coming largely from cultural geography, no longer conceptualise it as ‘over there’ at all.<sup>1</sup> Berberich et al claim that ‘increasingly, [the] acceptance of the “immaterial” has extended beyond the “pictorial” and “representational” view of landscape to also include other modes of phenomenological experience and “bodily practices” through which we encounter, “read”, relate and construct space’ (2012, 22). The division between the landscape and the body is collapsed and the focus falls onto the *experience* of landscape rather than its depiction. For Lee this is also true of the experience of the supernatural and she posits the ghostly as being unable to be represented in literature, music or art. She says,

let us see or hear the ghost, let it become visible or audible to others besides ourselves; paint us that vagueness, mould into shape that darkness, modulate into chords that silence – tell us the character and history of those vague beings...set to work boldly or cunningly. What do we obtain? A picture, a piece of music, a story; but the ghost is gone. (2006, 310)

The experience of haunting too, collapses the division between the ghostly or supernatural and the body. It cannot be ‘over there’, distanced or properly represented or it will effectively disappear.

Timothy Oakes and Patricia Price in *The Cultural Geography Reader* discuss the move away from seeing landscape as representational.

These cultural geographers instead pursue what is coming to be termed *non-representational* landscapes: in other words, landscapes that exist beyond humans and their dominant interpretive filters (particularly vision). These geographers suggest that landscapes may be understood as quite fluid constructs that are continually in the process of cohering and collapsing as we move through space. Thus rather than constituting fixed, static, material entities whose character is primarily visual, non-representational approaches see landscape as a sort of performance that is enacted much as is music or theatre. (2008, 151, original emphasis)

Landscapes shift and move, ‘collapse and cohere’, as we traverse them. This makes the static representation of place, catching the essence (or Genius) of the landscape impossible. Lee sees a similar impossibility in the capturing of beauty: ‘something – and that the very essence – always escapes, perhaps because real beauty is as much a thing in time – a thing like music, a succession, a series – as in space’ (1898, 82). The same is true for haunting – it too is a series, a continuation of feeling and experience that it is hard to catch the essence of. The conception of landscape, as well as haunting, is fluid and experienced by and through the body.

The bodily experience of the landscape is not always a deliberate or intended sensory experience as Clough suggests when she characterises affectivity as ‘a substrate of potential bodily responses, often automatic responses, in excess of consciousness’ (2007, 2). From this idea of an experience being ‘in excess of consciousness’ and in many other ways, non-representational theory and the theory of affect resonate deeply with the texts of haunted landscapes. An uncanny encounter in its nascent ‘becoming’ will always be beyond consciousness. The re-cognition of a ghost, the shock of the realization that a place is haunted, is subsequent to the first body-knowledge of the presence of the supernatural. In very many accounts people will feel a haunting before they ‘know’ it. A haunting is a bodily feeling of *now*, this moment; the feeling or emotion of being haunted. Being haunted is an experience that is inescapable from the body. As Lee says, ‘we crave after the supernatural, the ghostly – no longer believed, but still felt’ (1898, 312). And it is the feeling that counts even if belief is lacking. Haunting itself is merely or *only* affect; it has no existence without

affect. Being haunted is to know that one is haunted or that one is in a haunted place. Being haunted is to feel the hairs on the back of your neck rising; it is something glimpsed but not quite seen from the corner of your eye, a slight misgiving in the pit of your stomach, a delicate rash of goosebumps rising on cooling skin. As Lee asks, ‘why do those stories affect us most in which the ghost is heard but not seen? Why do those places affect us most which we merely vaguely know that they are haunted? Why most of all those which look as if they might be haunted?’ (1898, 310). Perhaps paradoxically, given the immaterial nature of ghosts, there is no haunting without a material bodily experience of it. And in particular, if that which haunts is unseen, it must be *felt*. I want to suggest therefore that for the concept of haunting the usefulness of non-representational theory and the theory of affect cannot be underestimated. There is, and can be, no haunting without feeling. If one does not emote, or feel a haunting, if one does not experience it, then it is possible to argue that ‘haunting’ itself cannot, by definition, exist. Can a landscape be haunted without a witness or someone there to recognize the fact that it is haunted? I suggest that a haunting needs an outside, interpretive presence: a haunting is an intervention, an encounter.

If I am correct and haunting requires an intervention, if there must be an encounter, there will be a material presence, of landscape and space and of that-which-haunts, (sometimes manifested as ‘ghost’), as well as the one who experiences it. In the introduction to *Popular Ghosts* María del Pilar Blanco and Esther Peeren suggest that

we have yet to consolidate the methods used to define the ghost in order to discuss it in spatial terms, as a physical occupation of everyday sites that emphasizes the materiality of the ghost and defines its agency as grounded in a particular locale – in a disturbance of space as much as of time. (2010, xvii)

Ghosts do not merely belong to the past, they are current, present entities that exist, or at least manifest (in whatever manner), *somewhere*. Lee evokes the supernatural figure of the God Pan, the ‘weird, shaggy, cloven-hoofed shape’ seen by travellers in the woods, but she extends his presence stating that ‘Pan is also the wood, with all its sights and noises, the solitude, the gloom, the infinity of rustling leaves, and cracking branches; he is the greenish-yellow light stealing in amid the boughs; he is the foliage, the murmur of unseen waters, the mist hanging over the damp sward’ (1898, 297). Pan does not occupy the wood, he *is* the wood, his being is the very materiality of the trees, the light, the sounds, the melancholy atmosphere. The super-natural is not just the beyond or other to the natural, it is native to it.

As Gregg and Seigworth argue:

Affect is in many ways synonymous with *force* or *forces of encounter*. [Affect] often transpires within and across the subtlest of shuttling intensities: all the miniscule or molecular events of the unnoticed. The ordinary and its extra-. Affect is born in *in-between-ness* and resides as accumulative *beside-ness*. Affect can be understood then as a gradient of bodily capacity ... Hence affect's always immanent capacity of extending further still: both into and out of the interstices of the inorganic and non-living, the intracellular divulgements of sinew, tissue, and gut economies, and the vaporous evanescences of the incorporeal (events, atmospheres, feeling-tones). At once intimate and impersonal, affect *accumulates* across both relatedness and interruptions in relatedness, becoming a palimpsest of force-encounters traversing the ebbs and swells of intensities that pass between "bodies" (bodies denied not by an outer skin-envelope or other surface boundary but by their potential to reciprocate or co-participate in the passages of affect). Bindings and unbinding, becomings and un-becomings. (2010, 2, original emphasis)

There are deep resonances with the conceptions of haunting here. A haunting is the 'extra' of the ordinary, the 'super' of the natural. A ghost is a becoming *and* an un-becoming – they exist at the same time as they do not. A ghost is the undoing (the un-becoming) of the human body and its life. Ghosts inevitably reside in the in-between, whilst a haunted space is defined *as* being the in-between. David Matless writes that 'landscape...carries a relational hybridity, always already natural and cultural, deep and superficial, which makes for something inherently deconstructive' (2003, 231). A haunted landscape deconstructs itself. Boundaries, borders and spaces themselves dissolve in fluid reconfigurations as that which haunts moves in *and* out, here *and* there, in-between *and* nowhere. The boundaries between ghost, place and those who witness or experience the haunting are deconstructed, only to be re-constructed anew by affect.

In 'Notes on the Supernatural in Art', Lee describes, 'that supernatural which really deserves the name, which is beyond and outside the limits of the possible, the rational, the explicable – that supernatural which is due not to the logical faculties, arguing from wrong premises, but to the imagination wrought upon by certain kinds of physical surroundings' (2006, 296). The natural, the supernatural, the material and the immaterial, the living and the non-living are conflated and remodelled in relation to each other and the affect each has on the other. Boundaries are transgressed and those things that should be separate: the invisible and the visible, the supernatural and the 'real', are separate no longer. Boundaries and material barriers do not hold back ghosts who can pass through corporeal bodies, through

rocks, walls or any other material impediment. Ghosts, that-which-haunts, as well as those who experience the haunting are defined by ‘their potential to reciprocate or co-participate in the passages of affect’ (Gregg and Siegworth 2010, 2) as the haunted and the haunting each impinge upon one other. A haunting, an encounter with a ghost, is a dialogue of affect. Gregg and Siegworth contend that with the practice of affect theory,

almost all of the tried-and-true handholds and footholds for so much critical-cultural-philosophical inquiry and for theory – subject/object, representation and meaning, rationality, consciousness, time and space, inside/outside, human/nonhuman, identity, structure, background/foreground and so forth – become decidedly less sure and more nonsequential. (4)

This is strikingly similar to descriptions of haunting. A haunting is, in some form or other, a re-turn and thus there is an inevitability of the non-sequential. In Lee’s evocative story ‘Oke of Okehurst’ the suggestion is that the present Mrs Alice Oke is a reincarnation of a long-dead ancestor (also called Alice Oke) who murdered her lover. Our narrator, an artist employed to paint the wondrous and other-worldly Mrs Oke considers that perhaps the idea of a reincarnated woman and the ghostly presence of her murdered lover is not so peculiar. He says ‘when you come to think of it, why not? That a weird creature, visibly not of this earth, a reincarnation of a woman who murdered her lover two centuries and a half ago, that such a creature should have the power of attracting about her...the man who loved her in that previous existence, whose love for her was his death – what is there astonishing in that?’ (1898, 111). Nothing is certain, nothing secure and the past melds with the present and the dead with the living. Even when there is a tale of a haunting with a reason or purpose there is a collapse in rationality as well as in time, space and dimensionality. The ‘firm’ and the graspable are lost. What is left is a feeling, an emotion or a physical unease. This however is not separate to, or separable from, place.

Occasionally in ghost stories it is a person who is haunted, with the ghost beside them wherever they may go, but it is not these stories (and they are relatively few and far between) that concern us here.<sup>2</sup> *Haunted Landscapes* is, of course, concerned with haunted places. Roger Luckhurst suggests that ‘it is worth recalling that ghosts are held to haunt specific locales, are tied to what late Victorian psychical researchers rather splendidly termed “phantasmogenetic centres”. This might suggest that the ghosts of London are different from those of Paris, or those of California (where *Specters of Marx* was first delivered in lecture form)’ (541-2, original emphasis). I will return to Derrida and *Specters of Marx*. Here I want to emphasise, following Luckhurst, the idea that ghosts are specific and *placed*. They belong

to, and sometimes help to define, locales. And whilst Oakes and Price, talking about the living (the human) state that, ‘though we are profoundly *emplaced* creatures, we are not *place-bound*’ (2008, 253, original emphasis), ghosts and sites of haunting most often *are*. Ghosts, whilst being the very definition of in-betweenness, are caught in-between in the liminal space of here and not-here. Yet ‘here’ is usually very specific. Oakes and Price suggest that place ‘in its most simple expression...is often equated with locality as in “you are here”’ (254), and it is this specificity of locality, this presence of place that *Haunted Landscapes* is concerned with.

Vernon Lee’s ghosts too are most often held firmly in place – they exist only within a particular locale. Her ghost stories are filled with luscious, sensuous, exotic and almost erotic descriptions of the landscape. Yet the beauty of these places is enlivened and even created by the presence of the supernatural and she tells us in ‘Oke of Okehurst’ that ‘the very air, with its scent of heady flowers and old perfumed stuffs, seemed redolent of ghosts’ (1898, 111). In his essay ‘The Ghosts of Place’, the environmental sociologist Michael Mayerfeld Bell states that ‘[g]hosts are...ubiquitous in the places in which we live, and they give a life to those places. Ghosts are much of what makes a space a place’ (1997, 813). For Bell, ghosts can help define a space and give it meaning and ‘life’. He continues,

I have been primarily drawn to the ghosts of place as a way to describe a central aspect of the social experience of the physical world, the phenomenology of environment. Such experience arises in part from the social relations of memory, and the memory of social relations. But the ghosts of place should not be reduced to mere memories, collective or individual. To do so would be to overlook the spirited and live quality of their presence, and their stubborn rootedness in particular places. (816)

In an understandable, but somewhat peculiar turn of phrase, Bell points to the *liveness* of ghosts. Yet why not? If we continue with our affect theme then any experience of ghosts must be a present and a living one. And an important part of the ‘liveness’ is the rootedness in place. As Avery F. Gordon in another sociological text suggests, ‘The ghost, as I understand it, is not the invisible, or some ineffable excess. The whole essence, if you can use that word, of a ghost is that it has a real presence and demands its due, your attention’ (2008, xvi). A haunted landscape must be experienced for it to be haunted at all and therefore we have the cry from that which haunts (albeit perhaps muted, but none-the-less imperative) of ‘I am *here*’.

Derrida, *Theories from the Margins and an Ethics of Haunting*



Thus far I have discussed the em-placedness of ghosts and haunting and the way that the specificity of place and the resonance of affect impact on their presence as well as their reception. Both ghosts and the concept of haunting, however, have been (and often still are) viewed from different perspectives. The most ubiquitous of these comes from Derrida's oft-cited book, *Specters of Marx* (1994/2006). Derrida posits a spectre that haunts society; a spectre of the future as much as of the past, of being and of non-being (hauntology). Derrida's discussion is overtly and deeply political. He states, '[h]egemony still organizes the repression and thus the confirmation of a haunting. Haunting belongs to the structure of every hegemony' (Derrida 2006, 46). Haunting here is a metaphor that points to oppression, repression and terrible social injustices that are occurring at this present moment, in very many societies. For Derrida, to speak of the ghost, of the experience of haunting, one must ethically evoke the spectres of those who have gone before and those who are not yet here. He claims,

It is necessary to speak *of the* ghost, indeed *to the* ghost and *with* it, from the moment that no ethics, no politics, whether revolutionary or not, seems possible and thinkable and *just* that does not recognize in its principle the respect for those others who are no longer or for those others who are not yet *there*, presently living, whether they are already dead or not yet born. No justice...seems possible or thinkable without the principle of some *responsibility*, beyond all living present, within that which disjoins the living present, before the ghosts of those who are not yet born or who are already dead, be they victims of wars, political or other kinds of violence, nationalist racist, colonialist, sexist or other kinds of exterminations, victims of oppressions of capitalist imperialism or any of the forms of totalitarianism. (xviii, original emphasis)

For Derrida, it is imperative to address the ghost figure in order to respect and bear responsibility towards those from the past and those from the future who will suffer the most terrible oppressions and violence. This is an *ethics* of haunting and of ghosts. For Derrida, this is another recognition of the cry (even if it belongs to the past, or to that which is not yet come): 'I am *here*'. In this way, the ghost, the haunting, is brought into the present, placed centre stage (where no ghost can comfortably exist) and spoken about, to and with. Julian Wolfreys in *Victorian Hauntings* follows Derrida and argues that perhaps haunting is not to do with the past, but the present: 'according to Derrida, haunting is not simply a thing of the past or, indeed, something from the past. Instead, the experience of haunting has never been greater' (2002, 1). For both Derrida and Wolfreys these hauntings occur in the landscapes of

modernity: the nation-states, hegemonic ‘democracies’, spaces of totalitarianism and the ‘new international’. Haunting makes these landscapes present.

It is this view of haunting and ghosts that post-colonial theory, queer theory and feminism have made such productive use.<sup>3</sup> Haunting as a metaphor, as well as the figure of the ghost, carries powerful resonances. Yet this is not quite accurate. Feminist, post-colonial and queer theorists who employ these tropes do not exactly use haunting as a metaphor, rather it is a way of presenting (in temporal terms too) and bringing to the fore the violences of the past, the terrible oppressions, injustices and traumas. Texts explored in the essays in this volume, the films *The Devil’s Backbone* and *Aftermath* and the novels *Beyond Black* and *White is for Witching* feature ghosts and use the concept of haunting to explore, and sometimes to lay to rest, the memories of appalling traumas. In a thoughtful essay ‘Postcolonial Haunting: Anxiety, Affect, and the Situated’, Michael F. O’Riley discusses the use of the concept of haunting for the postcolonial imagination. He claims:

[i]n large part, the advent of postcolonial consciousness has emphasized the imperative of returning to occluded colonial history through a reckoning with the specters of the nation’s colonial heritage. Postcolonial theory has relied, to a great extent, upon the idea of haunting in order to bring awareness of colonial history to the present. (2007, 1)

Using the concept of haunting makes colonial history more present and visible, hidden histories can return and make their presence felt. O’Riley says that ‘[c]onventional symbols of historical and psychic dissonance, haunted places have been employed to figure the post-colonial recovery of a past beyond appropriation yet historically emblematic’ (4). The concept of haunting has been important in post-colonial reconciliations with past atrocities and traumas and with the violent appropriation and violation of colonized landscapes.

It is not just postcolonial theory or texts that have employed the concepts of haunting and ghosts. Feminist theory and queer theory both utilize the figure of the spectre. In her examination of Victorian ghost stories, Vanessa D. Dickerson positions oppressed Victorian women as ‘the ghost in the noontide’. Dickerson argues that women in middle class Victorian homes were often invisible and taken for granted and she describes them as being ghostly-already: ‘the Victorian woman was above all the ghost in the noontide, an anomalous spirit on display at the center of Victorian materialism and progress’. The argument is that Victorian women were ‘barely-there’ – caught in what Dickerson terms ‘their own special brand of ghosthood’ which pushed them into the margins and the background (1996, 11). As

conceptions of ghosts and haunting seem to echo the experience of the marginalized and oppressed it is not surprising that this idea of ‘ghosting’ is also to be found in the contemporary debates of queer studies. This is Diana Fuss in the introduction to her volume *Inside/Out* speaking about heterosexuality and homosexuality:

[e]ach is haunted by the other, but...it is the other who comes to stand in metonymically for the very occurrence of haunting and ghostly visitations. A striking feature of many of the essays collected in this volume is a fascination with the spectre of abjection, a certain preoccupation with the figure of the homosexual as spectre and phantom, as spirit and revenant, as abject and undead. (1991, 3)

It seems that the ghost itself figures the marginal. And whilst this could be seen more conventionally as a clear demonstration of the ‘return of the repressed’ conceptualizing the ghost goes further. In her book *The Queer Uncanny*, Paulina Palmer argues that,

[t]he figure of the ghost is particularly rich in metaphorical significance, both traditional and post modern. As well as evoking connotations of invisibility and fluctuations in visibility...it can operate as an image for liminality and border-crossing, as illustrated by its ability to traverse the boundaries between inside and outside, present and past and, even more mysteriously, life and death. (2012, 66)

Palmer examines lesbian and male gay versions of the ghost story, which she argues are ‘particularly inventive’ and here the figure of the ghost can be seen as positive and liberating. Thus the figure of the ghost can bring into view that which is most usually hidden. The ghost body for those who are marginalized, forces notice onto itself and will not be ignored (‘I am *here*’). As O’Riley remarks in relation to postcolonial uses of the spectral, ‘[h]aunting is pervasive in postcolonial thought precisely because of its affective dimension, a dimension that creates a sense of the imminently important, present, and disruptive’ (2007, 4).

### From Criticisms to Multiplicities

All of these uses of the concepts of haunting and ghosts form a part of what Roger Luckhurst has called ‘The Spectral Turn’ (2002). He is one of several theorists to critique this more generalized view and use of haunting. The danger, he suggests, is that ‘the generalized structure of haunting is symptomatically blind to its generative loci’ (528). Hauntings come from somewhere; they are generated by different circumstances, places and histories. Hauntings, ghosts and spectres, he maintains, are specific, historical and located in both space

and time. Luckhurst (and others) focus much of their criticism on Derrida and contend that too often he treats these phenomena as representative and general. Luckhurst says, '[t]he spectropoetics or hauntological frameworks encouraged by *Specters of Marx* routinize specificity beneath a general discourse regarding the spooky 'secret sharer' of Enlightenment modernity' (541). The argument is that the term 'haunting', used too widely, and in too general a way, can both diffuse the power (perhaps even finally negate the meaning) of the term, and universalize the experience in a manner that is not always useful or positive. O'Riley extends the criticism to the way that postcolonial theory has employed haunting as a conceptual model. He argues that '[t]he compulsion to figure colonial history as a haunting trace does not necessarily lead to a so-called ethical relationship with the Other, nor does it result in an avoidance of some of the theoretical issues related to place, history, and appropriation' (2007, 4). And Blanco and Peeren warn that 'care needs to be taken not to turn the ghost into an abstract, universal figure or catch-all' (2010, xix). For all of these critics the problem stems from a lack of specificity of place, history or individuality.

As we were discussing above, hauntings are *placed* and ghosts belong to particular locales. Here though these critics argue that we have what O'Riley terms as haunting in 'a placeless place' (2007, 3, n4). He says,

the use of haunting in postcolonial theory as a placeless yet always-quotable mode of resistance also suggests a lurking anxiety concerning the ways that situated conflicts and encounters are not always aligned with the often intangible nature of new transnational realities and postcolonial forms of oppression. Viewed this way, we might say that the deployment of haunting in postcolonial theory represents a suspended condition, in-between because it is symptomatic of an era poised between the traces of an increasingly inoperative colonial history and uncertain transnational forms of hierarchy and oppression. (1-2)

O'Riley argues that in this case, haunting can be productive of a state of being 'caught in-between' leading to stasis and imprisonment. He continues: '[r]ather than creating awareness of contemporary conditions of inequality, such a haunting can produce a retrospective gaze that tends to archive instances of colonial injustice, transforming them into colonial sites of memory' (7). This he believes can memorialize people and their experiences of trauma and oppression into a state of static victimization. Further, he suggests that this fixation on the past using the tropes of haunting and ghostliness 'ultimately diverts attention away from contemporary realities that beg our attention' (9). With this conception of haunting he argues, we lose sight of the present and fix the past. There is a problem here as it is quite obvious that

many commentators from the margins see the figure of the ghost and the idea of haunting as useful, productive and empowering. Yet, seen from an-other side, these concepts can secure a single conception of the past, making it inert, and keep those who are already oppressed in a space of ‘otherness’, transparency and indeterminacy.

The criticisms of the ‘spectral turn’ correlate to the criticisms from landscape studies and cultural geography of ‘representational theory’. This way of looking at landscape views it from a distance and prioritizes the ocular and objective. This, it is argued, is too general, too objective, and too distant. As we know, affect theory or non-representational theory brings things literally back down to earth, back to the embodied, lived experience of the landscape. Similarly, the way to move from the universalizing ‘spectral turn’ is to situate ghosts and haunting, not just in time as Derrida does, but ‘in time *and* space’ (del Pilar and Preen 2010, xi, original emphasis). In his own work Luckhurst proposes a strategy for countering ‘the generalized conjuring of haunted modernity’ by looking instead at the ‘grounded manifestation of communities in highly delimited locales’ (2002, 536). In Luckhurst’s work this involves an examination of London localities. Here what is important is the move back to the specificities of place. For our purposes we need both the specificities of place as well as the specificities of experience. The term ‘haunting’ echoes a multiplicity of meanings and experiences, from the directly phenomenological, to visions of ghosts, the trace hauntings of trauma or remnants of the past. Hauntings are multiple *and* specific; there are *hauntings*, plural but particular. Therefore perhaps unsurprisingly, the call in *Haunted Landscapes* is one of, and for, diversity.

As noted above, ghosts and the conception of haunting are inherently deconstructive. Haunting disrupts the nature/culture debate that is never far away from discussions around landscape. Haunting breaks down binary distinctions: visible/invisible, present/absent, alive/dead, here/there. Haunting transgresses boundaries as well as binaries. What is the natural and what the supernatural? Where does one begin and the other end? There are always multiplicities of hauntings and multiplicities of spaces and places. Berberich et al claim that landscapes too are plural: ‘landscape is not one thing, but always *multiple* and connected relationally to a host of other cultural and political concerns’ (2012, 19, original emphasis). Echoing the calls for the pluralizing and diversifying of the definitions and uses of the term ‘haunting’ they continue, arguing:

the idea of *landscape* has become increasingly utilized in a much broader, poetic sense, to signify a whole set of meanings and associations – the landscapes of the mind, the landscape of fear, the landscape of loneliness. These uses show the need for

a wider definition in the notion of *landscape* to encompass more than just the ‘land’, the ‘surfaces of the earth’ and even the ‘visible terrain’, a term more able to suggest the range of contacts, encounters and experiences one might have with the world, the representations of the world and the feelings, emotions, sensations, affects bound up with that “exchange” or “dialogue”. (21-2, original emphasis)

It seems that the most productive way forward is not simply to accept multiplicity, but to actively strive for a pluralizing of definitions, concepts and approaches, whilst remaining attentive to the particularities of landscape and haunting. Echoing this sentiment, Blanco and Peeren claim there is currently a need ‘to understand ghosts and haunting in diverse, rather than theoretically monological ways’ (2010: xviii). Plurality, diversity and multiplicity, an acceptance of differences and the inclusion and juxtaposition of seemingly oppositional theories and approaches characterise the array of essays in *Haunted Landscapes*.

### Multiplicities

Representational theory, non-representational theory, the ‘spectral turn’, the move away, the ‘affective turn’, the universalizing tendency: all exclusive ways of perceiving things lead to binaries and schisms, contradictions and oppositions. Yet why must we choose between ‘this’ or ‘that’? Speaking about the differences in theoretical perspectives within cultural geography, Oakes and Price comment that many ‘approaches have a great deal in common, and over time the antagonism among various sub-groups has subsided considerably’ (2008, 151). This easing of antagonisms in cultural geography could be usefully extended to the study of the spectral, the supernatural and the ghostly. Derrida is useful. The use of the concept of haunting and the resurrection of a variety of ghosts for theorists and those imagining from the margins are empowering and productive. Yet the turn to affect, to the lived, the experienced, the bodily, specific and personal also provides powerful tools. Owain Jones and Joanne Garde-Hansen cite what they see as ‘a creep towards “presentism”’ within non-representational geography and worry that this presages a neglect of the past (2012, 8). However, if a landscape of *any* sort is haunted by *any* sort of entity, ghost or memory, the past cannot be neglected. Astrid Erll et al propose ‘different *modes of remembering* in culture. This approach proceeds from the basic insight that the past is not given, but must instead continually be re-constructed and re-presented’ (2010, 7, original emphasis). This presents us with a productive way to conjoin affect theory with theories of haunting. The past is not fixed, rooted or singular itself, and therefore the past represented by, suggested by or

evoked by a haunting is not static either. And it is worth pointing out that a haunted landscape is *not* a stable one. In the same way that Oakes and Price describe landscape ‘cohering and collapsing as we move through space’ (2008, 151), so must an emplaced haunting be constantly dissipated and then re-made. A haunting is a very human thing and, as I have been arguing throughout, cannot exist without someone to experience, witness, remember or recognize it in some form or another.

The essays collected in *Haunted Landscapes* explore these encounters. Coming from all sub-sets of theory, they use the concept of haunting to heed the echoes left by the terrible traumas of the past, they explore diverse landscapes from traditional haunted houses to wilderness spaces, imagined places and the haunted landscapes of the psyche and the mind. The approaches range from what could be seen as the unashamedly representative, such as the haunting echoes of Holocaust atrocities, to the psycho-geographic exploration of Whitechapel and the more traditional literary and film criticism looking at texts such as *Coraline* and *The Haunting of Hill House*. Fictional ghosts, ghosts of the mind, and ‘real’ ghosts sit side by side. Individual and very personal experiences of hauntings are juxtaposed with communal (if perhaps not universalized) encounters. There is ‘collective’ memory as well as personal, individual memories in these haunted landscapes. Folklore, legend, urban mythology, narratives of trauma and memory are all present here. The landscapes evinced as ‘haunted’ are also diverse. There are the urban and the rural, the liminal and the ‘other dimensional’. Perhaps inevitably this collection of essays raises more questions than it attempts to answer. As we have been seeing, haunted landscapes themselves have a tendency to deconstruct any familiarities, assumptions or certainties. Even some of our most usual tropes are dissipated, such as that of the idea of the appearance of ghosts or the phenomenon of haunting as being representative of the return of the repressed. ‘Haunting’ suggests a return or an un-covering of that which has been hidden, yet sometimes this concept of a re-turn becomes redundant within the realm of the always-already-there. A haunted landscape may not be able to exist without someone experiencing it, but it most certainly is not always the case that the haunting came with that person. The specific place itself may be haunted by something ‘other’; that which is ‘other’ to us may be intrinsic to the place; the ‘Genius’ of specific landscapes may not be familiar or necessarily comfortable for us. Yet whatever haunts the place, be it material (a ghost) or immaterial (memory, nostalgia, emotion) the space between the ‘here’ and the ‘there’, the otherworldly and the worldly is itself occupied. And whether light or dark we must always pay heed to that which is calling ‘I am *here*’.

## Structure of the Book

*Haunted Landscapes* is divided into three sections: 'Landscapes of Trauma', 'Inner and Urban Landscapes' and 'Borderlands and Outlands'. The chapters in the first section 'Landscapes of Trauma' demonstrate the contention of the collection as a whole: landscape is indelibly marked and therefore haunted by the past, and the process of mourning while offering some measure of consolation, must always remain incomplete. The first two essays deal with the terrible traces and haunted terrain of the Holocaust. In chapter 1, 'Place as Palimpsest: Paul Celan and Martin Heidegger and the Haunting of Todtnauberg', Mark Riley investigates a single site, Martin Heidegger's hut in the Black Forest. Riley examines Paul Celan's poem, 'Todtnauberg' which was written in response to a meeting between Heidegger and Celan at the hut in 1967. In the poem, Celan's appreciation of Heidegger's rural mountain life was inflected by his knowledge of Heidegger's involvement in National Socialism. Riley explores fractures and erasures in Heidegger and Celan's 'real' lives as well as the space that haunts them both; the affective terrain of the hut.

Tracing the networks of haunting and spectrality in the cinematic spaces of two films, Matilda Mroz discusses Polish director Wladyslaw Pasikowski's *Aftermath* (2012), and the Spanish-Mexican production, *The Devil's Backbone* (Guillermo del Toro, 2001). This chapter, 'Earth and Spectre: Haunted Spaces and Mourning Rituals in Polish Cinema', considers spectral return in terms of the Holocaust and the Spanish Civil War. Using Derrida's writing on haunting in *Spectres of Marx*, Mroz investigates the *look* possessed by the spectral figure. Working with concepts of seeing and not-seeing the chapter explores sites of trauma in relation to remembrance and mourning. Here hauntings are cyclical and whilst *Aftermath* manages to dismiss its ghosts, *The Devil's Backbone* suggests some sort of continuance. Mroz takes both films though as part of the circulation of images of haunting and places them in a culture obsessed by memory and the unearthing and return of past events.

The next essays in this section are concerned with contemporary fiction and move to Britain. Beginning with post-imperial metropolitan landscapes, Ryan Trimm's chapter 'Witching Welcome: Haunting and Postimperial Hospitality in Hilary Mantel and Helen Oyeyemi' examines how home spaces still resonate with the ghosts of empire. Trimm examines how in *White is for Witching* and *Beyond Black*, spirits trouble and fracture time, producing inhospitable spaces for the living. In this essay Trimm argues that the spirits are summoned by place, rather than bound to it. He suggests that the spirits in both novels trouble



conceptions of home as the national past haunts the present making habitation anxious and uncomfortable. The present is no longer secure and the ghosts must be exhumed before home can become a hospitable place again.

The final essay of this section, Niamh Downing's 'Tender Bodies': Embracing the Ecological Uncanny in Jim Crace's *Being Dead*', looks at the notion of super-nature and the ecological uncanny, where the site of trauma is the decaying corpses of a murdered couple who are turning into landscape. Downing contends that *Being Dead* is not a novel that uncovers or exorcises ghosts of the past. Instead the site of trauma is revealed to be the human body itself, which proves to be excessive; less supernatural than super natural, an excess of nature. The putrefying and decaying corpses become uncanny sites of materiality; nature that is haunted.

Section two, 'Inner and (Sub) Urban Landscapes', addresses some of the main themes present in the study of ghosts and haunting; the haunted house, nostalgia and the sub/urban landscape. These essays question power and gender relations, the idealized spaces of the city, the home and the American dream. Examining both literature and film they chart hauntings of inner human, and externally man-made landscapes. In chapter 5, Karl Bell explores haunted urban spaces. Bell's chapter, 'Phantasmal Cities: The Construction and Function of Haunted Landscapes in Victorian English Cities', draws on urban supernatural folklore and examines the haunted landscapes of Victorian English cities. Arguing that supernatural encounters can be transformative, Bell looks at the experience of communal, collective hauntings and the cityscape. Although inevitably un-mappable, these sites are changed by haunting and ghost lore becomes affective as it is subjectively experienced in the Victorian urban space as supernatural and physical landscapes intertwine.

In chapter 6, "'The Girl that Wouldn't Die": Masculinity, Power and Control in the Haunted House Novel', Kevin Corstorphine discusses the intertextual relationship between Shirley Jackson's *The Haunting of Hill House* and Richard Matheson's *Hell House*. Corstorphine explores the cultural and historical underpinnings of the haunted house in the context of 'bad places' in relation to the idea of the 'Male Gothic' novel's focus on imperilled female victims. He raises questions about how masculinity is portrayed in the novels and argues that they represent valuable examinations of domesticity, nationality, masculinity, and their attendant crises and anxieties.

Holly Gale Millette's chapter, 'Theatrical Alleys and Bloodied Cobblestones: The Uncanny Psycho-Geography of London's Whitechapel Ward', maps the spatial geographical area of Whitechapel – site of the infamous late nineteenth century murders. Millette examines

spaces, the violence done there and the ghosts that are left behind. Using Bakhtin (among other theorists) she argues that Whitechapel as a geographic space has been mythologised and therefore fictionalised. Examining Whitechapel as a gendered haunted place, Millette discusses how, right up until the present day, Whitechapel has been/is being re-imagined. She argues that Whitechapel itself is gendered female and that the violence against women perpetrated in that space has been co-opted and therefore perpetuated and normalised.

In chapter 8, '(Sub)urban Landscapes and Perception in Neo-Victorian Fiction', Rosario Arias examines the felt experience of landscape in the telluric space of the Margate shell-encrusted grotto, discovered by Joshua Newlove in 1835. Through her phenomenological and sensorial reading, Arias demonstrates that the novel operates as a channel for material embodied connections between past and present, Victorian culture and the contemporary reader.

The final part of the book, 'Borderlands and Outlands', extends the discussion to the margins – the Irish and Northern peripheries, the open landscapes of Suffolk and the imagined spaces of Otherness in children's films. Daniel Weston begins this section with his chapter, 'W.G. Sebald's Afterlives: Haunting Contemporary Landscape Writing'. Weston looks at how the influence of Sebald's own work haunts landscape writing that came after. Weston argues that the impact of his work is inescapable and that it haunts subsequent imaginings of the English landscape and particularly that of East Anglia. He wonders whether Sebald's influence has been perhaps too compelling and suggests that his innovative work has been turned into a convention. Perhaps therefore, a 'turn away' from these constructed genre boundaries might be more true to the spirit of Sebald's work.

Chapter 10 turns to the borderlands between Scotland and England. Alison and Colin Younger's chapter, 'Reivers, Raiders and Revenants: The Haunted Landscapes of the Anglo-Scots Borders' traces the mythic shadow-lands of this liminal place. Examining supernatural Border ballads and the work of Walter Scott, the Youngers look at what they term the 'debatable lands' of the borders and argue that the folk literature from this region subverts the Anglicized notion that this area is anachronistic and 'other' to itself. Instead, they suggest the uncanny spectrality associated with this 'excluded middle' exudes from the landscape itself.

In chapter 11, 'Haunting the Grown-Ups: the Borderlands of *ParaNorman* and *Coraline*', Rebecca Lloyd takes us to the fantasy landscapes in two stop-animation children's films. Arguing that character and the landscapes they occupy are not separate, Lloyd looks at the desires and wishes of children for home and integration. Yet too often this type of comfort is not to be found either in the home or the outside world and Lloyd examines how

the characters of Coraline and Norman negotiate the darkness that surrounds them, finally coming to a place that, if it is not perfect, is at least habitable.

Finally, we turn to Bram Stoker in William Hughes' chapter "'The Triumph of Nature': Borderlands and Sunset Horizons in Bram Stoker's *The Snake's Pass*". Hughes begins with a description of a sunset given by the novel's English hero Arthur Severn, a first time traveller in Victorian Ireland. He explores the borders of a sublime landscape that is both close to England and yet resolutely alien in Arthur's perception. Here there are questions of imperial power and ownership of a land that is haunted by myth and legend. Hughes looks at the scholarship on Stoker and how he is defined Anglo-Irish – with his perceptions coming from London rather than Ireland. Hughes however argues that there is a fusion of the two and that in the end *The Snake's Pass* provides a positive outcome whereby the urban and English modern and progressive 'outside' is welcomed whilst the old, haunted landscapes of rural Ireland are not over-run but are made to be productive.

As this introduction has shown, *Haunted Landscapes* is concerned with diversity – of haunting types, landscapes and theoretical approaches. The collection synthesises ideas from different critical approaches: spectral, affective and spatial, and provides new routes into these subjects. Examining urban and rural landscapes, haunted domestic spaces, landscapes of trauma, and borderlands, this collection of essays is designed to cross disciplines and combine seemingly disparate academic approaches under the coherent locus of landscape and haunting. And the ghosts themselves? We will leave the last word of this introduction to Vernon Lee who believed that ghosts are not separate from our environment, but surround us daily; things of the imagination, memory *and* materiality. Ghosts and ghostly things she says,

are things of the imagination, born there, sprung from the strange confused heaps, half-rubbish, half-treasure, which lie in our fancy, heaps of half-faded recollections of fragmentary vivid impressions, litter of multi-colored tatters, and faded herbs and flowers, whence arises that odor (we all know it), musty and damp, but penetratingly sweet and intoxicatingly heady, which hangs in the air when a ghost has swept through the unopened door, and the flickering flames of candle and fire start up once more after waning. (1898, 10)

<sup>1</sup> Although Tim Ingold suggests that perhaps landscape was never perceived as separate or distanced from the self. He argues that 'to perceive, as to imagine, is to participate from

within in the self-making of the world' (14). We are not and cannot be separate from the world or the landscapes we are part of.

<sup>2</sup> Sheridan Le Fanu's story 'Green Tea' is one such tale as is M. R. James' 'Oh Whistle and I'll Come to You, My Lad' and Robert Hichens' creepy tale 'How Love Came to Professor Guildea'.

<sup>3</sup> See for example Castle, Terry. 1995. *The Apparitional Lesbian: Female Homosexuality and Modern Culture*. Columbia University Press; Gordon, Avery F. (1997) 2008. *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*. University of Minnesota Press; and Fuss, Diana. ed. 1991. *Inside/Out: Lesbian Theories, Gay Theories*. Routledge.

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