Maurice Blanchot's troubling geography: Neutralizing key spatial and temporal concepts in the wake of deconstruction

Richard Carter-White ⓘ
Macquarie University, Australia

Marcus A Doel ⓘ **and Sergei V Shubin** ⓘ
Swansea University, UK

Abstract

In dialogue with recent studies that have sought to foreground the negative and the abyssal in human geography and that have struggled in vain to prevent their foreclosure, we introduce the work of the French theorist Maurice Blanchot, whose challenging and thought-provoking writings remain largely unknown within our discipline despite their significance for deconstructing geography's conceptual architecture. After explicating Blanchot's neutralization of the problem of negativity and positivity, the paper brings Blanchot's neutral writings to bear on three areas of contemporary geographical concern: the trouble with subjectivity and identity; the unhinging of space and time; and the disaster of writing.

I Prolegomenon for a geography worthy of the name

What have we learnt from a half-century's worth of 'anti-humanism', 'anti-essentialism', and 'anti-foundationalism'? What have we learnt from 'postmodernism', 'poststructuralism', and all those "newisms, postisms, parasitisms, and other small seismisms," as Derrida (1990: 63) once ironically dubbed those convoluted theoretical disturbances from yesteryear? That we nevertheless continue to write geography with imprecision and misdirection, knowing that our words and concepts are destined to

betray us. That we continue to write geography as if nothing much had happened; as if writing 'as such', and geography 'as such', remained relatively undisturbed; as if vagary would suffice to keep everything on track (Johnson, 2015). Or else we continue to write geography "as if everything had already been done" (Blanchot, 2000a: 5). This

Corresponding author:
Richard Carter-White, School of Social Sciences, Macquarie University, 4–6 Eastern Road, NSW 2109, Sydney, Australia.
Email: richard.carter-white@mq.edu.au

duplicitous sense of accomplishment looms large in the burgeoning literature on 'negative geographies' (Bissell et al., 2021; Kingsbury and Secor, 2021) and 'abyssal geographies' (Chandler and Pugh, 2022, 2023). Much of this literature has been motivated by an appreciation of the limits of an 'affirmationist' and 'vitalist' mindset that embraces the 'productive forces' of existence (Dekeyser and Jellis, 2021); that conceives of existence in terms of what is available, relatable, or otherwise worldly (Dekeyser, 2023; Harrison, 2007; Landua-Donnelly and Pohl, 2023; Pugh, 2023). In dialogue with these literatures, this paper raises further questions about the very possibility of a relation with alterity (radical Otherness) that does not fall back on re-enchanted presents and hopeful futures, even amidst violence and despair (Dawney and Jellis, 2024; Philo, 2017b). We argue that geography is yet to be sufficiently disturbed and deconstructed so that it no longer relies on the dialectical certainty of recuperation and sublation of the negative by the positive (Bissell in Dekeyser et al., 2022; Doel, 2006, 2008; Rose et al., 2021). Furthermore, we speak to the broader vision of the 'world as abyss' developed in critical Black studies, which "holds off the lure of the world, as … transparently available," questions the ontology of "modern and colonial world-making," and foregoes the figure of the modernist subject in favour of the suspended, disappearing abyssal subject of nothingness (Chandler and Pugh, 2023: 201). However, we will approach the worldly abyss from another direction and navigate it using a conceptual compass inspired by Olsson's *Abysmal* (2007), whose cardinal points are provided by the author who is the focus of this paper, the French writer, philosopher, and literary theorist, Maurice Blanchot: the 'Outside', the 'Neutral', the 'Disaster', and the 'Return'.

The recent engagement with the 'negative' and 'abyssal', which works through their disengagement from productivity to the point of worklessness and uselessness, has allowed both a geographical inquiry into how one might relate to the world and others via everything from absence and lack to disconnection and separation, and also a geographical inquiry into all manner of empirical gaps and ontological voids, from missing persons and empty spaces to vanishing landscapes and disappearing worlds (Mutter, 2023;

Oliver, 2022). When nothing remains, everything shifts. Hence the insistence across the literature on negative geographies that the point is not to invert 'affirmationism' in a dialectical reversal (Bissell, 2023; Dekeyser and Jellis, 2021), but to allow our work to remain open to the negative and so allow it to be moved by an ineluctable negativity that will continue to solicit and unsettle it. For many scholars, this accords with an ethico-political responsibility to remain open to an encounter with radical alterity that accentuates its abyssal qualities. Cleaving to negativity is a perilous undertaking, however, since one is destined to struggle in vain against its recuperation by positivity (Derrida, 1978). Both negativity and nothing count for something and make a positive difference. In fact, one can make an awful lot out of nothing (Badiou, 2005; Heller-Roazen, 2017; Žižek, 2013). How to avoid recuperating the negative (Dawney and Jellis, 2024), which should perhaps by definition be without definition (Rose et al., 2021), despite the irony that 'all determination is negation', as Spinoza and Hegel famously put it (Melamed, 2012; Stern, 2016), is an avoidance destined to fail. Such a recuperation begs the question of how to engage with and think through negativity, nothingness, passivity, alterity, and the abyssal without continuing to write geography as usual – as if nothing had happened; as if nothing had already been taken into account; as if nothing were merely one concept and one thing amongst others, to be added to or subtracted from our theoretical frameworks and empirical case studies depending on the circumstances to hand.

Faced with the unavoidable recuperation of negativity and nothingness as they take their place in geography, we nevertheless wish to unsettle this settlement and so contribute to the broader endeavour to maintain the enigma of difference and alterity by turning to the work of Blanchot (b. 1907, d. 2003), who did more than anyone to *think through*, *with*, and *from* the collapse of our conceptual architecture, the ruin of words, and the disaster of writing (Bident, 2018; Fynsk, 2013; Haase and Large, 2001; Hill, 1997, 2010, 2012; Khatab et al., 2005; Langlois, 2018). While Blanchot is largely unknown in Anglophone Human Geography (Harrison, 2021), his work has influenced a great many poststructuralist scholars such as Bataille, Baudrillard, Cixous,

Deleuze, Derrida, Foucault, Guattari, Irigaray, Levinas, Lingis, and Nancy that have become key thinkers for the discipline. To expand the burgeoning discussion in human geography on avoiding the spatiality of 'negativity' and 'nothingness' being recuperated by positivity, we draw on the work of Blanchot and, in particular, his formulation of "the neuter [which is] the logical and textual matrix of Blanchot's entire corpus" (Derrida, 2000: 89). The *ne uter*, *neither-nor,* is neither positive nor negative nor nothing: it refuses all conceptual self-identity, interrupts all thought, and introduces an asymptotic distance in language that prompts the kind of deconstruction that is central to poststructuralism and, at a stretch, to poststructuralist geography. The neuter is also the logical and textual matrix of space and spacing. Consequently, this paper aims to contribute to negative and abyssal geographies in particular, and to intervene in the affirmationist orientation of contemporary geography as a whole, by explicating Blanchot's thought of the neuter and exploring its troubling implications for some important geographical concepts and themes.

We first contribute to negative and abyssal geographies by discussing recent geographical critiques of relationality that posit the latter as the abiding conceptual articulation of geography's affirmationist character, in order to outline Blanchot's relevance for this current debate in spatial theory (section 2). Specifically, we argue that Blanchot's 'neutral' thought, his unsettling of the distinction between relation and non-relation, introduces an irreconcilable alterity into a range of familiar geographical terms. These include 'subjectivity', 'time–space', 'alterity', 'otherness', and 'writing' to render what Derrida (2015:174) might term a kind of geography truly 'worthy of the name' (Bennington, 2014; Smith, 2015) – that is, a geography exposed, via Blanchot's suspension of all questions of affirmationism, negativity, and the dialectical recuperation thereof, to its own irreducible difference. In search of a form of 'geography' that would be worthy of the name geography, or in Derrida's terms, an X "worthy of the name X" (*digne du nom*), we follow Blanchot's deconstructive force of the neuter that both eludes and outstrips, and in so doing pushes geography towards its unspoken margins and refuses

its incorporation into the totality of time. For reasons that will become apparent the task at hand is not so much an up-rising to an elevated position via the grandeur of Theory as "a sliding half-gleam that clarifies nothing" (Blanchot, 1995a: 58). We then step beyond this important debate in the geographical literature to bring Blanchot's neutral writings to bear on three broad and longstanding areas of concern for contemporary human geography: subjectivity, identity, and the living death of the geographical subject (section 3); the unhinging of space and time, as manifested in experiences of migration and trauma (section 4); and the disaster of geographical writing (section 5). Having considered the degree-zero of '*relation*' (section 2), and the one, two, three of '*human*', '*geo-*', '*-graphy*' (sections 3–5), by way of conclusion (section 6) we finally write-down and write-off these promissory notes underwritten by counterfeit currency with a few more or less hollow words about a geography worthy of the name: "Behold our hollows" (Beckett, 2009: 60) – hold on to and be held by the void (Kingsbury and Secor, 2021; Olsson, 2007, 2020).

II In relation to geography: Space, identity, and alterity

One of the central premises of the emerging negative and abyssal geographies literatures is that many works in human geography portray identity and space as 'relational', in the sense of being constructed or assembled via different modes of connection between various things, as part of a broader 'relational turn' across the social sciences (Pugh, 2016; Yeung, 2005). Inspired by key theorists of relational space, including Amin (2004), Massey (2005), and Murdoch (2006), such approaches conceive of spatial formations and processes as a dynamic convergence of networks and flows. Once seen as a "provocation," it is now argued that the widespread embrace of relational thinking in human geography "risks becoming a routine to be mastered and repeated" (Anderson et al., 2012: 172). By prioritizing connections and flows "it is easy to stop short of a set of subsequent questions" (Anderson et al., 2012: 172) about the exact nature of those

relations (Harrison, 2008), the identity of the entities connected within this relational ontology, and the role of the dual processes of differentiation and integration that sustain such relations (Elwood et al., 2017; Gibson-Graham, 2008; McCann and Ward, 2010). Perhaps the fundamental concern was best raised by Malpas (2012): that the *openness* of space is tied together with its *boundedness*. Boundaries, limits, and the 'non-relational' (Harrison, 2007) are the conditions of possibility for a relation (Canoy, 2022; Joronen and Rose, 2021; Pugh, 2023; Romanillos, 2015). Our engagement with Blanchot therefore begins with a consideration of the critical implications of Blanchot's work for recent critiques of relationality in order to unsettle deep-rooted assumptions in geography about the possibility of a meaningful relation to another. In what follows, we capitalize the Other to accentuate both the strangeness and the estrangement that comes between *it* and the 'I' who would venture into such a peculiar 'relation' with *it*. The Lacanian overtones of this Big Other, and the anxiety that comes in *its* wake, are not coincidental (Lacan, 2006, 2014). Where, precisely, is *it* to be located? That's a profoundly challenging geographical question. So, let the hunt begin …

We start by opening up implicit understandings of identity in the geographical literature, where the self (identity) is constructed *in relation* to other identities by means of boundary creation and differentiation from 'others' (Barnett, 2005). Here, one's relation to alterity is characterized as either an engagement with a yet unknown object-cum-subject or else as a call from an autonomous object-cum-subject escaping the knowledge and power of the knowing subject. This approach to relationality tends to naturalize difference by assigning the Other an identity and presenting one's exposure to alterity as merely an event of recognition or misrecognition. However, so long as presence, identity, and self-identity remain unperturbed within 'relational geographies', the nature of "all possible ways in which the subject may relate to the other" is lost (McNay, 2000: 3). Blanchot introduces a hesitation into this analysis of the assumed relation between oneself and the Other that in traditional accounts of relationality leads to proximity and the interiorization of difference by relentlessly pursuing the relinquishment of identity, the

estrangement from one's own self, and the accentuation of "the distance [that] is in the heart of the thing" (Blanchot, 1982: 255). What kind of relationship is possible when 'I' am distant and distanced not only from the Other but also from myself; when "I is another," as Rimbaud (2005: 371) said?

This questioning of basic relations between self and Other raises, in turn, doubts about the construction of spatial and temporal distance, which is of course central to geographical inquiry. Spatial science has always been concerned with spatial 'relations', exemplified by the investigation of things like spatial dependence, spatial autocorrelation, and spatial interpolation, on the basis of what Tobler (1970: 236) famously called "the first law of geography: everything is related to everything else, but near things are more related than distant things." Relations and co-relations all ostensibly wane with distance; as do all of their associated qualities, such as gravitational pulling power, affinity, and affect. Why? Because proximation is our centre of gravity. This approach has been the subject of a longstanding and multifaceted disputation between spatial science and its critics since the 1960s (AAAG, 2004; Billinge et al., 1984; Golledge et al., 1988; Gould and Olsson, 1982; Olsson, 1980). Part of Blanchot's specifically geographical appeal is the cumulative effect of his writing in shifting the focus from 'relationality' *between* locations (e.g. 'distance decay' and 'friction of distance') to relations that traverse location *itself*, dislocating it from the off. Moving beyond the contested nomothetic 'law of distance', we are concerned with what Derrida (2011a: 25) called, after Blanchot and Heidegger, "the lawless law of dedistancing" (*Entfernung*, *é-loignement*). The disconcerting character of Blanchot's writing poses the question of what happens, for example, when the nearness of the near comes *from* afar or when I am alone *with* myself (Derrida, 2011a, 2011b)?

A specific sense of *spatial* distance emerges whenever something *comes* near or *draws* near. It approaches *from* a distance. It approaches *as* distance (Wylie, 2021). In this context, the very possibility of a relation depends not on the proximity often expected in communication, but on "the strangeness between us: a strangeness it will not suffice to characterize as a separation or even as a distance"

(Blanchot, 1993: 68); it depends on preserving the dis-jointure between individuals and maintaining one another's difference. "Let us enter into this relation" (Blanchot, 1992: 1). This amounts to guarding such strangeness, which is not reduced or reconciled by attempts to develop 'commonality', but is sustained by opening a "relation of non-relation" (Hill, 1997: 110) amongst one another. The relation of non-relation that radically estranges one another may herald a community of those who have nothing in common, as Lingis (1994) once put it (Minca et al., 2021; Nancy, 1991, 2016; Popke, 2003). More fundamentally, however, this relation of non-relation estranges one's self, and demands another kind of labour: "Not to maintain together the disparate, but to put ourselves there where the disparate itself *holds together*, without wounding the dis-jointure, the dispersion, or the difference, without effacing the heterogeneity of the other" (Derrida, 1994: 29, original italics). Such a relation unsettles spatio-temporal foundations built on self-presence and the assumed positioning of the other as an extension of the self. This 'neutral' theorization, this irreconcilable 'neither/nor/nothing', suspends the spatialized understanding of identity in geography, which is often expressed in terms of reciprocity and conceived as relative (more or less distant, distanciated), differential (betwixt and between), structural (emplaced and displaced), or negatory (not, with out).

Furthermore, Blanchot's insistence on "distancing" and the maintenance of the separation of self and Other highlights different temporalities of relating, throwing into question what Derrida (1991) called the dominant form of the 'metaphysics of presence'. Indicative of the affirmationist orientation of contemporary human geography is its abundance of words and phrases that are underwritten by the presumed proximity, intimacy, and interiority of presence. In Blanchot's interpretation of relation, proximity to an Other always comes with an infinite distance and temporal interruption that escape all measure and cannot be traversed. Such an interpretation of space and time in terms of non-coincidence and asymmetry (Barnett, 2005; Shubin, 2022) leaves our most familiar, intimate, and taken-for-granted terms profoundly disturbed,

such as 'presence' and 'absence', 'near' and 'far', 'proximate' and 'distant', 'here' and 'there', and 'now' and 'then'. Neither affirmationist nor 'negative', neither something nor nothing, geography is un-hinged and de-ranged (Doel, 1999, 2023; Lyotard, 1990). Throughout Blanchot's writings, presence is never present. It is always mediated and relayed, differed and deferred, sent elsewhere and elsewhen, and rendered otherwise. It is always already past and yet eternally still to come. The present passes, to be sure, but in so doing it passes away, taking place as it comes and goes: "the end is coming: something is happening, the end is beginning" (Blanchot, 1999: 194). Unsettling the popular view of the 'living present' and 'lived experience' in human geography, Blanchot's passion for the passing of the present ruins the integrity of every relation and every identity. With this relentless deconstruction of presence as a point of departure, we now explore three broad themes in the geographical literature through which Blanchot's troubling 'neuter' might meaningfully resound. We begin by considering the implication for geographical work on subjectivity of Blanchot's ruminations on the inaccessible and inadmissible par excellence: *my death* (Derrida, 1993).

III No I in dies: The living death of the geographical subject

Blanchot's analysis of death as a strange, uncertain, and (im)possible event that demands a movement beyond the order of representation introduces an element of irreconcilable difference into how geographers might conceive of subjectivity. Furthermore, Blanchot's writing on death exemplifies his thought of the neuter: by definition, death can never be present as such; can never be experienced as such. It is antithetical to any living presence. Death comes to me, but it never arrives. Consequently, one is destined to live as an immortal without ever experiencing death as such. This is a profound predicament that Blanchot articulates in three ways. First, he reconsiders human *finitude*, and through it the conditions of a potential relation to the Other and to the world. Blanchot offers a double and paradoxical interpretation of death. On the one hand, there is

death that conditions the life of the subject through negation – it ensures its life and the right to experience by maintaining the subject towards death. This reading of death as a mortal destruction, rooted in Hegel's philosophy, presents it as "the most fundamental *possibility* of the Subject" (Critchley, 1993: 120, original italics). In Blanchot's (1981: 55) terms, death, as the possibility of finitude, "is the greatest hope of human beings, their only hope of being human." On the other hand, death is also an impossibility since it can never be experienced by any human subject, who disappears in dying. "To death we are not accustomed," states Blanchot (1992: 1), pointing to the inability to grasp death, think death, and make it work to produce or condition life (Derrida, 1993, 2020). In engaging with irreducible extremity, the geographical subject is suspended: it is "really dead and at the same time rejected from the reality of death" (Blanchot, 1999: 73–74).

While death is the possibility of the subject, it also indicates the disappearance or withdrawal of the possibility of dying. *The 'I' cannot die* since death cannot be experienced as such and with death any actions of the 'I' no longer pertain. When the *possibility of death* is accepted as the *impossibility of dying*, negation and affirmation come together in an interminable neutrality: "[T]here is one death which circulates in the language of possibility, of liberty, which has for its furthest horizon the freedom to die and the capacity to take mortal risks; and there is its double, which is ungraspable. It is what I cannot grasp, what is not linked to *me* by any relation of any sort" (Blanchot, 1982: 104, original italics).

This particular understanding of death as a "double death" (Blanchot, 1982: 103) has profound implications for how geographers apprehend subjectivity. This question has been the focus of a productive debate within non-representational geographies that has sought to understand subjectivity beyond the knowing and volitional 'I' by exploring pre-reflexive action and different modes of knowing (Anderson and Harrison, 2016; Thrift, 2004) other than the order of representation, often described in terms of affect. However, as Harrison (2008: 432) notes, such work still tends to define the subject and its relations in terms of an "outcome of activity," as part of the process of being alive. By contrast, and as

Blanchot relentlessly demonstrates, in its abyssal encounter with death, being is always haunted by alterity, absence, and nothingness. The withdrawal of the subject in dying is not a function of consciousness, but of acquiescence and waiting: "And when this day effaces itself, I will be effaced with it" [*Ce jour s'effaçant, je m'effacerai avec lui*] (Blanchot, 1999: 191, translation modified).

Second, the opening to death and self-effacement is the appeal to a form of *passivity that exceeds human power* and ruins the subject's fantasy of capacity, knowledge, and determination. The 'I' is dispossessed of its defining limits and opens onto otherness both within and without. "[M]y relation with myself is altered and lost—making of me this foreigner, this unknown from whom I am separated by an infinite distance, and making of me this infinite separation itself" (Blanchot, 1993: 133). In contradistinction to relational approaches in geography, which consider the subject as a product of emerging relational entanglements, Blanchot's work points to the suspended, effaced, and internally separated subject that cannot be recuperated in affirmation. In Blanchot's terms, dying is the enactment of an inescapable finitude and an affirmation of a limit experience, and yet it is also a response to the 'ungraspable' alterity beyond that limit, which can be neither negated nor sublated by the subject. Instead of attempting to contain and circumscribe, the self succumbs to the futility of containment and the limit of the self becomes the function of the limitlessness encountered in death. Instead of the figure of the subject attempting to master death and complete meaning, we are faced with the disappearing subject in the asymptotic space of dying, beyond its abilities to choose and represent.

Blanchot's writings on death are not only transformative for understanding individual subjectivity, but also for understanding collective subjects and communities. As he writes: "What, then, brings me most radically into question? Not my relation to myself as finite or as the consciousness of being before death or for death, but my presence before another [*à autrui*] who absents himself by dying […] [T]his is what puts me beside myself, this is the only separation that can open me, in its very impossibility, to the Open of a community" (Blanchot, 2000b: 9).

Indeed, Blanchot's deconstruction of the individual subject reframes intersubjective space, which he sees not as the space between a subject and her other, but "a doubly dissymmetrical relation between two (or more) existents, irreducible to all dialectical reciprocity and equalisation" (Hill, 1997: 176). This conceptualization squarely foregrounds debates in human geography about the ex-centricity of subjectivity and the obligation to create space and cultivate a response-ability for the Other (Anderson, 2010; Bissell, 2011; Brown and Dilley, 2012; Häkli and Kallio, 2014; Howitt, 2022; McCormack, 2012; Shubin and Sowgat, 2019; Tschakert, 2022), while simultaneously raising serious doubts about the very idea of 'being with' the Other by way of a possible, shared co-presence. In place of the knowledgeable geographical subject, whether in the singular or the multiple, grouped under a collective identity, we witness the emergence of "the anonymous non-person withdrawn from possibility… suspended, interrupted, effaced" (Hill, 2012: 110). Blanchot speaks of an estranged, fractured, "morcellated self, injured intimately"; a self that receives the Other and is exposed to what shatters it – death (Blanchot, 1992: 6). Such an argument expands the terms of what might be included in a 'community', which in some geographical writings assumes the production of a collective subject through effacement of alterity and assimilation of the Other (Elder et al., 2004). Instead, Blanchot's logic of the neuter emphasizes dissymmetrical, discontinuous, and non-hierarchical community, and by means of radically reconfiguring social relations *as such* it broaches a set of issues around being and non-being in the debates in 'more-than-human' and 'post-human' geographies (Andrews, 2019; Boyd and Straughan, 2023; Ginn, 2017; Isaacs, 2020; Miele and Bear, 2022; Wakefield et al., 2022). Blanchot's emphasis on the effacement of the subject that contests all authority provides a complementary philosophical approach to the discussion of the "abyssal subject" in critical Black studies, providing a way to re-articulate the crossed ~~subject~~ of the 'irretrievable selves' of the transatlantic slave trade and racist violence, suspended "outside or against the cuts and distinctions of an antiblack world" (Chandler and Pugh, 2022: 3).

Third, an encounter with the (im)possibility of death produces *a paradoxical subject* that is *always other than itself*. Blanchot's writings speak to the literatures on negative geographies by thinking relation outside the question of the subject and its identification, and by further emphasizing the neuter that escapes affirmation and negation alike. The thought of the neuter, which turns the finite possibility of death into the infinite impossibility of dying, can further challenge the logic of unity and totality in broader geographical inquiry: "[W]e die with the one who dies… [N]othing is said… In the narrow space where this is accomplished without being accomplished, there is no longer any law, nor society, nor alliance, nor union" (Blanchot, 1992: 106).

Here, the death of the Other is at stake. With the shattered self, the relationship to the Other cannot be guaranteed or expected as it happens at the limit marked by death (Fynsk, 2013). Since at the heart of this impossible relationship is death as something unspeakable and unknowable, it is always an interruption that nevertheless calls out – "nothing is said" – and escapes the order of dialectics and discourse – "no longer any law… nor union" (Blanchot, 1992: 106). In *dying-with* (or *for*) the Other what is shared is the movement of exposure and the finitude of each being, which cannot be named and remains unknown: "the unknown that nevertheless has a face, the face of the unknown – by a call that escapes not only the propriety of relations, but the human relation of relations, and thus is a mark of what one must call unreasonableness" (Blanchot, 1992: 60). This quotation describes the encounter with the Other as fundamentally exceeding human capacity and going beyond knowledge of relations and discourse (marked by "unreasonableness"). It expresses not a living relationship with alterity, but an almost prohibitive, impossible relation that is conveyed by this movement of opening up to the infinite, to the unknown. In Blanchot's writings this exposure suspends the presumed familiarity of the relationship between self and Other modelled on vitalistic action and the production of meaning (and some sort of identity), and instead expresses it through passivity, which is exemplified by the impossible sharing of death. The double logic of the

possible and the impossible death, dying alongside the dying Other without any sense of mastery or subjection, provides for a relationship with the Other that is at once constituted and suspended. In the next section we explore how this double logic of an im/possible relation with/out relation plays out in the analysis of spatiality and temporality.

IV With out: The unhinging and ex-communication of space and time

Re-thinking death with Blanchot in the previous section unsettles three key elements in the dominant understanding of space and time in geography (May and Thrift, 2001; Schatzki, 2010). First, it points towards a *maddening, ungraspable temporality* that one can never make meaningful. In a short piece devoted to the scene of a young man facing summary execution by a firing squad, Blanchot reflects on the approach of death and the difference in temporality and subjectivity that its non-arrival opens up in passing:

> There remained, however, at the moment when the shooting was only a matter of waiting, the feeling of lightness that I would not know how to translate: freed from life? the infinite opening up? Neither happiness, nor unhappiness. Nor the absence of fear and perhaps already the step beyond. I know, I imagine that this unanalyzable feeling changed what there remained for him of existence. As if the death outside of him could only henceforth collide with the death in him. "I am alive. No, you are dead." (Blanchot, 2000a: 7 and 9, translation modified)

In this narrative, the young man is addressed by his own death, revealing the bond that is both within him and outside of him, and which comes to speak for him: "No, you are dead." It signals the end that has already come without arriving, coming to pass without ever taking place: "Saved at the last minute, the young man … was forced to live that last instant again and each time to live it once more" (Blanchot, 1995a: 82). Acquiescence to material finitude reveals a temporal lapse that refuses comprehension and naming in discourse: "neither happiness, nor

unhappiness." Blanchot's conceptualization of a temporality that is at every turn confounding, over which the subject is incapable of exercising control, and which is overtly debilitating, may be a useful framework for political geographers to apprehend the experiences of people embroiled in economies and governmentalities of protracted and indeterminate *waiting* (Bissell, 2011; Moawad and Andres, 2023; Shubin and Collins, 2017; Straughan et al., 2020). For Blanchot "waiting is always a waiting for waiting, initiating in itself the beginning, suspending the ending and, within this interval, opening the interval of another waiting" [*L'attente est toujours l'attente de l'attente, reprenant en elle le commencement, suspendant la fin et, dans cet intervalle, ouvrant l'intervalle d'une autre attente*] (Blanchot, 1997: 24, translation modified). Blanchot's description of waiting as an ungraspable interruption can help to understand the interminable, uncertain, and deeply unsettling temporality characterizing experiences of waiting in refugee camps and asylum systems; not as 'empty' time, but rather a time of dispersion and repetitive suspense haunted by possibilities of sudden closure, displacement, and the impossibility of temporal progression (Gill, 2016; Weima and Minca, 2022). Furthermore, Blanchot's unworking of linear temporality is relevant to recent discussions in geography that challenge the understanding of time as the product of choice and constraint in structuring everyday lives (Ho, 2021; Holloway et al., 2019; Jarvis et al., 2011; Marcu, 2017; Schwanen and Kwan, 2012; Shubin, 2015, 2021), and in particular to critiques of the popular life-course approach grounded in the possibility of a human actor locating his/her actions in time, constructing specific life stages, and linking them across time (Collins and Shubin, 2015; Hörschelmann, 2011; Shubin and McCollum, 2021).

Blanchot's (1992: 15) refusal to incorporate linear time into models of subjective intentionality, and to "step/not [*pas*] beyond … the temporality of time," also complements the body of geographical research that emphasizes temporal ruptures, discontinuities, and dispersals in the study of chronic pain (Dawney and Huzar, 2019), vulnerability (Eriksen, 2022;

Harrison, 2008), trauma and violence (Carter-White, 2013, 2021; Doel, 2017; Ehrkamp et al., 2022; Pain, 2019; Philo, 2005; Shubin, 2021), and finitude (Romanillos, 2008, 2011). In Blanchot's terms, the opening of an ungraspable, radical temporality borne of these "wounded geographies" (Philo, 2017a: 20) proffers no affirmative meaning to-come, but is meaningful in and of itself. A Blanchot-inspired approach to such a geography resists the closure of suffering and its testimonial articulation into a pre-existing and totalizing grid of intelligibility (Carter-White, 2009, 2012, 2018; Harrison, 2010, 2022). Rather than banking on the capacity of the self to overcome the exteriority of the unknown, Blanchot's emphasis on passivity, passing, and (com)passion resonates with geographical writings expressing trauma and violence poetically, in all of their senselessness, as "a counter to … totalizing intellectual life" (Philo, 2017a: 30; McGeachan and Philo, 2023).

Second, Blanchot's disturbing temporality is more than non-linear: it exposes the present as something empty and discontinuous, and unsettles the totalizing perception of time. This is again exemplified in the undecidable encounter with death, in which the subject takes a step (*pas*), perhaps, not (*pas*) beyond. "All that would remain of time, then, would be this line to cross, always already crossed, although not crossable, and, in relation to 'me,' unsuitable. Perhaps what we would call the 'present' is only the impossibility of situating this line" (Blanchot, 1992: 12). In this quotation, what seemingly pertains to the crossing (out) of a threshold (the step/not [*pas*] beyond) evokes the incompossible meanings of both prohibiting the step beyond and transgressing that very prohibition. This is conveyed by the *pas* of not (*ne pas*) and not yet (*ne pas encore*), the *pas* of passion (*passion*) and passivity (*passif*), and also the *pas* of *faux pas*. Blanchot's crossing (out) of the *pas* is directed against all gestures of linearity, finality, teleology, and totality, leading temporal events to eschew closure by meticulously undoing themselves in the round through repetition, reversal, and paradox. (The round that undoes itself through revolution could be called the Eternal Return, the Outside, or the Open.) Blanchot's texts thus depict

a present in which, far from an enchanted world of relations and becomings, *nothing* is possible and *nothing* comes to pass (Dekeyser, 2023; Oliver, 2022). With no present to mediate between the past and the future, the active 'I' is emptied out in the passive voice of the future perfect: "*I don't know, but I have the feeling that I'm going to have known*" (Blanchot, 1992: 112, original italics). Such a discontinuous, fragmented temporality once again orients thought away from the assertive and active 'I' capable of knowing in the present.

The reformulation of temporality beyond the subject highlights the impossibility of a future that is a self-identical repetition of the finite, completed, and self-present time – conceptualized by Nietzsche as the Eternal Return: "the being of becoming … as the 'self-affirming' of becoming-active" (Deleuze, 1986: 67). The recurrent, double movement of the deferral and the return of death expressed in Blanchot's work precedes and exceeds the temporal limits of the dialectic. "The 're' of the return inscribes like the 'ex,' opening of every exteriority. … To come again would be to come to ex-centre oneself anew, to wander. Only the *nomadic* affirmation *remains*" (Blanchot, 1992: 33, original italics). In Blanchot's account of the Eternal Return there is no infinite return of the same because as soon as the infinity of circulation is introduced, the present that would be circulated is ruptured by virtue of that very circulation (Cf. Deleuze, 1994; Derrida, 1981a; Lacan, 2006; Lyotard, 1984, 1988). What re-turns and re-volves at every turn is *différance* (Derrida), *differentiation* (Deleuze), and, as we shall see in section 5, *fragmentation* (Blanchot).

The subject's self-effacement at every turn does not simply empty the present, it also ends the subject's productive ability to remember the past and project different possibilities for the 'I' into the future. As Nelson stresses in her commentary on Blanchot (1992: x), "[w]hat is terrifying about the Eternal Return is not that what I live now I will live eternally, but that there is not, and never has been, any now in which to live anything." Consequently, the expression '*I'm going to have known*' is more radically disturbing than the expression '*I don't know.*' The latter ostensibly leaves the subject's grip on knowledge and its capacity for action unshaken: '*I*

know—not'. '*I do—not*'. The former formulation, however, loosens the subject's grip on both knowledge and itself by giving itself over to passivity. Blanchot's relentless undoing of activity refuses to resolve itself through either negation or sublation, thereby leaving the terrible labour of the negative and its belaboured subject in perpetual, neutral suspense (Harrison, 2021). Thus, Blanchot's impersonal philosophy aims to correspond with precisely those conditions and events addressed in recent geographical work where the *without* of existence is heightened: vulnerability, suffering, and disaster; and where something like a 'post-phenomenology' comes to the fore (Ash and Simpson, 2016, 2018; Kincaid, 2021; Pearce, 2023; Roberts, 2019).

Third, Blanchot's writings have a perhaps surprisingly direct application to the critical study of disasters, through his evocation of a *disastrous and fragmented geography*. In Blanchot's (1995a) interpretation, the word 'disaster' stands in for forces of alterity, passivity, and impossibility, whilst also referring to what we might call 'actual' disasters, most obviously the Holocaust, but also, potentially, more 'conventional' environmental disasters (Carter-White and Doel, 2022). In an attempt to turn the disaster against itself and release it from its conventional meaning, in his book entitled *The Writing of the Disaster*, Blanchot (1995a) breaks the word apart: dis-aster; the loss of a guiding star, of a certain compass. The description of *the writing of* (or about) *the disaster* becomes the uncompromising destruction or de-scription of this activity in *the disaster of* (or that is) *writing* and ultimately the impersonal testimony or de/re-(in)scription that consists in *the writing of* (or by) *the disaster*. The disaster de-scribes (Doel, 2019a). This conceptualization of the disaster as "that which does not come, that which has put a stop to every arrival" (Blanchot, 1995a: 1), offers a theoretical ground for apprehending the profound existential crises, ontological disruption, contradiction, error, failure, and the *faux pas* of the self-effacing subject that lives through, with, and after disasters – an understudied dimension of disaster response whose importance is belatedly coming to prominence in both academic and policy spheres (Cloke et al., 2023; McKinnon and Eriksen, 2023; Mehring et al., 2023). For Blanchot, the disaster

inherently resists appropriation and finds expression outside of individual experience: "We feel that there cannot be any experience of the disaster, even if we were to understand disaster to be the ultimate experience. This is one of its features: it impoverishes all experience, withdraws from experience all authenticity" (Blanchot, 1995a: 51). A Blanchot-informed disaster geography would start from the assumption that these (non)events trouble and elude everyday language and discourse, and thus demand methodologies and ethical approaches that accept and work from this premise. Beyond such questions of representation, Blanchot's characteristically 'neutral' conceptualization of the disaster as a force of alterity that neither arrives nor ends offers a theoretical vocabulary for apprehending the embeddedness of disasters in everyday materialities, structures, and inequalities, without losing a sense of the essential strangeness that attends the upheaval of every disaster. The non-experience of disaster and associated temporalities has particular resonance for critical geographies of 'post-disaster response' given that, by definition, there *is* no 'post-' for that which has always already come to pass (Bonilla, 2020; Sou and Howarth, 2023; Williams, 2012). Experiencing the force of 'nothingness' is what Blanchot offers to these and other wounded geographies (cf. Harvey, 2010). In the next section we will consider how this '*not* knowing' (incapacity, passivity) as distinct from '*knowing* not' might come to be written, and then, finally, how it might inform a geography at last worthy of the name.

V The disaster of geographical writing

Geography – *geographia*, γεωγραφία, *earth writing* – has always been concerned with writing; with how the world is written, whether at the hands of the gods, or at the hands of earth-surface processes, or else at the hands of humans, or even at the hands of professional geographers. One need only think of the *in-scription* and *de-scription* of the Earth's surface through glaciation, weathering, erosion, or else through the 'creative destruction' of capitalist modernization and urbanization (Berman, 1983), or even its carving up by the latticework of longitude and latitude, to appreciate that earth writing is a

'more-than-human' undertaking. Even the oceans and the atmosphere have been endlessly written and re-written (Hamblyn, 2001; Martin, 2016; Mentz, 2020). The space of geography qua earth writing is not a book page or a computer screen, but the world itself, within which the graphical hand of humanity is radically decentred. The world is not 'like' a text, which would make earth 'writing' a mere metaphor and the world itself something other than textual. The world is a text, signed and countersigned by a myriad of authors, hardly any of whom would pass for being human. The geographical interest in the so-called 'Anthropocene' is perhaps the most obvious example (Castree, 2014; Latour, 2018; Lewis and Maslin, 2018).

Writing geography, then, is not confined to the *interiority* of a book, a map, a diagram, an account, a model, etc., but rather is opened up to the *exteriority* of the world writ large. Conversely, a book, a map, a diagram, an account, a model, etc. are not otherworldly (i.e. other than the world, not of the world). Each is folded *into* the world. Each is a fold *of* the world, and folded *by* the world. The world is an unfinished text in the process of being written, and therefore always in a certain sense under-written and over-written, never at one with itself. The space of geography qua earth writing is destined to remain forever open and a work in progress.

Blanchot can help us to advance further into the space of geography qua earth writing, and there are three steps for us to take that are especially audacious for geographers. The first step is to appreciate that geography qua writing creatively destroys through "the detour of inscription (which is always a description)" (Blanchot, 1995a: 38). What comes to the fore in such a space is not only violence (cutting, incision, excision, decision), but also self-effacement, which leaves everything undone, unworking, and inoperative. Writing is painful. It is painful not only because of the 'mortal play of words,' which wounds and ultimately kills everything that language touches (writing is a series of death sentences), including the one who writes (Derrida, 2011b, 2020), but also because this mortal play amounts to less than nothing. The former will be familiar to anyone versed in structuralism and poststructuralism, and the latter to anyone versed in

dialectics and deconstruction. The following quotation from Blanchot powerfully conveys the violence and self-effacement that are accomplished through writing. "I think of the calling of the names in the camps. Naming carries the mortal play of the word. The arbitrariness of the name, the anonymous that precedes it or accompanies it, the impersonality of nomination bursts forth in the manner of *something terrible* in this situation in which language plays its murderous role" (Blanchot, 1992: 38, original italics).

The space of geography qua earth writing is irreducibly violent and ultimately void. It consists of nothing but death sentences. Accordingly, the second step that Blanchot allows us to take with respect to geography qua earth writing is a different sense of the purpose of writing geography. Ordinarily, one is led to believe that the vocation of writing is preservation and conservation, exemplified by the hermetically sealed archive that would eternally protect its entombed contents (meaning, reference, sense, etc.) from the ravages of time (decomposition, disintegration, dissemination, etc.). Instead, Blanchot brings loss, lack, and destruction to the fore. He is one of the key writers to have unleashed the full force of the prefixes 'de-', 'dis-' (meaning is always at least double, most likely multiple), and 'ex-' (meaning outwith or outside discourse and language). Blanchot's insistence on redoubling and dissymmetry, and his affirmation of exhaustive and exhausting *neutrality* as a force that leaves everything in suspense, offers conceptual resources to further discussions in negative geographies that step beyond the double bind of assertion and negation, and refuse the possibility of recuperation of negativity by a dialectical machination (Bissell et al., 2021). "Writing is not destined to leave traces, but to erase, by traces, all traces, to disappear in the fragmentary space of writing, … to destroy, to destroy invisibly, without the uproar of destruction" (Blanchot, 1992: 50). Hereinafter, the space of geography qua earth writing is fragmentary, leaving dust, cinders, and ash in its wake (Blanchot, 1995b; Derrida, 2014). Many geographers will be familiar with a certain notion of fragmentary writing through the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1983, 1984, 1988), which they used to inform concepts such as assemblage, multiplicity,

rhizome, and machine (Roberts, 2019). Like these theorists, Blanchot emphasizes the *process* of fragmentation, of dis-aster, of un-doing, in-capacity, and im-passivity. However, whereas Deleuze and Guattari make of this fragmented process a transversal *becoming*, Blanchot *thinks through* the cracks, splinters, and disjointure of what the fragments fragment: "fragmentation is the pulling to pieces (the tearing) of that which never has preexisted (really or ideally) as a whole, nor can it ever be reassembled in any future presence whatever" (Blanchot, 1995a: 60).

As a truly dis-astrous constellation, fragmentary writing no longer guides us, but rather comes *between* us – *between* you and I, *between* the one and the Other, and even *between* me, myself, and I. Our very medium of communication ex-communicates us; *it* even ex-communicates one's self (Baudrillard, 1988, 1990; Lacan, 2006). "'I think' led to the indubitable certainty of the 'I' and its existence; 'I speak,' on the other hand, distances, disperses, effaces that existence and lets only its empty emplacement appear," says Blanchot (in Foucault and Blanchot, 1987: 13). Consequently, Blanchot's work has much to offer psychoanalytic and postmodern geographers (e.g. the collective unconscious, machinic unconscious, prison-house of language, etc; see also Lapworth, 2023), but what we want to focus on here is how the space of geography qua earth writing gets *carried away* along a line of flight. Geographers will again be familiar with this Deleuze and Guattari (1983) refrain: AND … AND … AND …, which traces such a line of flight through a constellation of signifying and asignifying chains while assembling a qualitative multiplicity along the way: becoming, transversality, schizoanalysis (Deleuze and Guattari, 1986; Guattari, 2011, 2013, 2015; Jellis et al., 2019). As we shall see below, Blanchot's fragmentary writing further punctuates this line of flight by opening and unfolding its reversible 'interruption of the incessant' in the neutral space of what comes to pass. Derrida (2011a: 17) provisionally dubbed this weird interruption without interruption "*la marche d'un pas*, the (dis)approach of a no/pace." The interruption *of* the incessant is incessancy interrupted [discontinuity], but it is also the incessant *as*

interruption, an interruption of interruption [continuity], and it is even the interruption that arises *from* incessancy, *by way of* incessancy, *as* incessancy, *for* incessancy, and vice versa.

The third step that Blanchot allows us to take in the space of geography qua earth writing is much more obviously geographical in the everyday sense of the word. It takes flight from the 'detour' that always already dis-places writing and perpetually leads it astray. To write is to err, from Latin *errare*, to stray. "Writing carries away, tears away, through the plural dispersion of its practice, every horizon as well as every foundation" (Blanchot, 1992: 56). Blanchot's writing evokes the familiar Derridean notions of *différance* and dissemination, which ceaselessly differ and defer, such that every step along a signifying chain is also a misstep and a step adrift. "*Faux-pas* of error, errancy, or mistake [*faute*] are not to be committed (*faut-pas*, must not)" (Derrida, 2011a: 38). As we saw in section 4, Blanchot expresses this involution and revolution through the Eternal Return, which extends and distends every position *else*wards and *else*when. The interminable detour of writing next to nothing turns out to be pivotal. By passing through this detour everything comes to turn, re-turn, and re-volve. This is where we always find (and lose) ourselves: taking place, appearing disappearing, alone together, going to come and coming to go, unhinged and de-ranged (Simonsen, 2012). Blanchot (1993: 25) recalls that "the verb 'to find' [*trouver*] does not first of all mean 'to find' in the sense of a practical or scientific result," but rather "to turn, to take a turn about, to go around. … To find, to search for, to turn, to go around: yes, these are words indicating movement, but always circular." Through the detour of writing, thought eternally re-turns to errancy and vagrancy.

To cut a long detour short, writing ex-communicates through the violence of inscription, de-scription, and circum-scription. "To err is probably this: to go outside the space of the encounter" (Blanchot, 1993: 27). For no matter how close two things may be, even to the point of absolute proximity, there remains an infinite distance and unfathomable abyss between them (Wylie, 2017). Blanchot's way of writing offers an

"entirely different logic" (Baudrillard, 1990: 103) of earth writing that would in-scribe, de-scribe, and circum-scribe every position through errant steps, each of which would take place by taking place elsewhere and elsewhen. In the space of geography qua earth writing, each fragment entails a 'stationary trip' that is propelled by the 'ricochet' of what mediates it, differing and deferring it in the process. Straying from dialectical machinations, Blanchot appeals to that which is *neither* negative *nor* affirmative, *neither* posed *nor* opposed, *neither* negated *nor* sublated – the neuter: "the *neither-nor* that is beyond all dialectic, of course, but also beyond the negative grammar that the word neuter, *ne uter* [*not either*], seems to indicate" (Derrida, 2000: 90, original italics). "This does not mean that it signifies nothing," writes Blanchot (1993: 386), but rather that it "opens another power in language, one that is alien to the power of illuminating (or obscuring), of comprehension (or misapprehension)." This other power (or power of the Other) is the power of what *remains* when all is said and done, when everything has been brought to term, whether in the positive or negative register: totalized, finalized, neutralized, cancelled. The neuter is "an excluded *middle*," says Levinas (quoted in Hill, 1997: 181, original italics), the space *between* through which the one and the Other take flight. It is the 'nameless name' (error term, errant term, *faux pas*) for what remains in excess once everything has been drawn and withdrawn: ex-cess, with-out. The neutral remains with-out (op)position: dis-located, dis-placed, and un-grasped (Derrida, 1981b). Althusser, Beckett, and Deleuze all offer a beautiful example of such neutrality: *it* hails, *it* speaks, *it* rains.

In other words, the troubling neutrality of the space of geography qua earth writing ensures that everything remains open, in play, and in suspense. Writing attests to the incompletion of what would otherwise all be said and done. There is always more to come. In a certain sense, then, these three steps (*pas*) amount to nothing – or next to nothing – but in so far as they take place – or come to *pass* – they also betray a certain *passion*, *compassion*, and *passivity* (Burdon, 2022; Derrida, 2000, 2011a).

VI By way of conclusion: A geography worthy of the name

Inspired by Blanchot, this paper brings into question the faulty terms and binary oppositions that continue to be used to write geography with imprecision and misdirection. First, words elude us, words escape us. Writing struggles in vain to master and discipline them. Something resists writing, which is also to say: writing resists being taken as written. Second, reading will make off and make out with these words, putting them to work elsewhere and otherwise. Reading is at liberty (compelled, even) to read into this dribble of ink and morse-like play of shades sense and sensations that will forever remain obscure. Something resists reading, which is also to say: reading resists being taken as read. Writing and reading are destined to remain estranged from this derailed and de-ranged word – 'geography' – and this collective estrangement is all the more ironic because this ill-disciplined word – 'geography' – is itself writing by another name: *geographia, γεωγραφία, earth writing*. This is geography's 'post-structuralist' predicament, to coin a well-worn phrase, that has been thoroughly documented both within and without the discipline (Doel, 2019b; Doel and Clarke, 2019; Dosse, 1997; Olsson, 1991, 2007, 2020).

Now, it was never this paper's intention to rehearse the *predicament* of a faulty writing and a faulty reading here, but rather to consider whether an ineluctably faulty and errant writing can nevertheless become *worthy of the name* geography, the unenviable task we outlined in the introduction. This is a search for a '*certain*', ambiguous and (in)determinate, geography, where, in Derridean terms, the very 'certainty' is under suspicion, and always entails a possibility of erasure through deconstruction (Mieszkowski, 2011: 208). It is inspired by Derrida's motif of 'worthy of the name' that enacts the application of the "'necessarily-possibly-not' argument or operator" (Bennington, 2014: 117). In Blanchot's terms, this argument or operator is the *faux pas* and *faut pas* that steps/not beyond in order to take flight in the errant space of the fragment and the neuter. An X worthy of the name is an X that has been *treated* rather than *corrected*, and the treatment consists of an undecidable refolding and unfolding that leaves a

dislocated trace in its wake (*pas*, no/step). The common name for this treatment is 'deconstruction', which has been working its way through geography like a virus for at least three decades (Abrahamsson, 2018; Abrahamsson and Gren, 2012; Cloke and Johnston, 2005; Doel, 1999; Olsson, 1991), leaving in its wake geographical terms that could become worthy of the name. Such terms remain unsettled, undecidable, and disturbed by the aporia of their 'necessarily-possibly-not' condition. This is evident, for example, in the tendency to suspend key yet faulty concepts from scare quotes or else to express them under erasure.

Under the attraction of Blanchot's troubling neuter, we return to our earlier fragmentary promise to follow the broken words in a disoriented space in search of a geography that is constantly put into crisis by its own instability. We return to Olsson's *Abysmal* (2007) that offered geographers a new set of instruments and maps with which to navigate the disastrous passage through this intractable predicament. These included a Saussurean-inspired compass, whose cardinal directions are permutations of the signifier and signified, each of which points to one of four 'Terræ Incognitæ' beyond the reach of language that Olsson dubbed 'Mindscape', 'Rockscape', 'Blindland', and 'Deafland'. Suffice to say that Blanchot offers us another compass (another *pas*), whose cardinal directions are the 'Outside', the 'Neutral', the 'Disaster', and the 'Return' – the "names of thought, when it lets itself come undone and, by writing, fragment" (Blanchot, 1995a: 57). When all is said and done, then, a geography 'worthy of the name' would circumnavigate the errant space of geography qua earth writing by way of this unhinged and de-ranged compass that lets everything fragment, drift, and take flight.

After Blanchot, the space of geography qua earth writing will only ever appear disappearing, described as it is in-scribed. "Effaced before being written. … All our writing … would be this: the anxious search for what was never written in the present, but in a past to come" (Blanchot, 1993: 17). Alone. Together. Stirring still. Geography continues to be under-written, over-written, and re-written for a vanishing yet to come. Such is the only progress that a geography 'worthy of the name' will ever come to

know as it continues to take place via the step/not beyond. Beckett (2009: 81) put it perfectly in *Worstward Ho*: "On."

Declaration of conflicting interests

Funding

ORCID iDs

Richard Carter-White https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9231-9315
Marcus A Doel https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8892-2709
Sergei V Shubin https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5554-816X

References

AAAG (2004) Forum on Tobler's first law of Geography. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 94(2): 269–310.

Abrahamsson C (2018) *Topoi/Graphein: Mapping the Middle in Spatial Thought*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.

Abrahamsson C and Gren M (eds) (2012) *GO: On the Geographies of Gunnar Olsson*. Farnham: Ashgate.

Amin A (2004) Regions unbound: towards a new politics of place. *Geografiska Annaler Series B* 86(1): 33–44.

Anderson B (2010) Preemption, precaution, preparedness: anticipatory action and future geographies. *Progress in Human Geography* 34(6): 777–798.

Anderson B and Harrison P (eds) (2016) *Taking-Place: Non-Representational Theories and Geography*. London: Routledge.

Anderson B, Kearnes M, McFarlane C, et al. (2012) On assemblages and geography. *Dialogues in Human Geography* 2(2): 171–189.

Andrews GJ (2019) Health geographies II: the posthuman turn. *Progress in Human Geography* 43(6): 1109–1119.

Ash J and Simpson P (2016) Geography and post-phenomenology. *Progress in Human Geography* 40(1): 48–66.

Ash J and Simpson P (2018) Postphenomenology and method: styles for thinking the (non)human. *Geo-Humanities* 5(1): 139–156.

Badiou A (2005) *Being and Event*. London: Continuum

Barnett C (2005) Ways of relating: hospitality and the acknowledgement of otherness. *Progress in Human Geography* 29(1): 5–21.

Baudrillard J (1988) *The Ecstasy of Communication*. New York: Semiotext(e).

Baudrillard J (1990) *Seduction*. London: Macmillan.

Beckett S (2009) *Company, Ill Seen Ill Said, Worstward Ho, Stirrings Still*. London: Faber & Faber.

Bennington G (2014) Derrida's archive. *Theory, Culture and Society* 31(7/8): 111–119.

Berman M (1983) *All That Is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity*. London: Verso.

Bident C (2018) *Maurice Blanchot: A Critical Biography*. New York: Fordham University Press.

Billinge M, Gregory D and Martin R (eds) (1984) *Recollections of a Revolution: Geography as Spatial Science*. London: Macmillan.

Bissell D (2011) Thinking habits for uncertain subjects: movement, stillness, susceptibility. *Environment and Planning A* 43(11): 2649–2665.

Bissell D (2023) Negative urbanism: unknowability, illegibility and ambivalence in the platform city. *City* 27(1–2): 56–75. doi: 10.1080/13604813.2022.2145633

Bissell D, Rose M and Harrison P (eds) (2021) *Negative Geographies: Exploring the Politics of Limits*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.

Blanchot M (1981) *The Gaze of Orpheus and Other Literary Essays*. Barrytown, NY: Station Hill.

Blanchot M (1982) *The Space of Literature*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.

Blanchot M (1992) *The Step Not Beyond*. Albany, NY: SUNY.

Blanchot M (1993) *The Infinite Conversation*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Blanchot M (1995a) *The Writing of the Disaster*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.

Blanchot M (1995b) *The Work of Fire*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Blanchot M (1997) *Awaiting Oblivion*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.

Blanchot M (1999) *Blanchot Reader: Fiction and Literary Essays*. Barrytown, NY: Station Hill.

Blanchot M (2000a) *The Instant of My Death* (*With J Derrida, Demeure: Fiction and Testimony*). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Blanchot M (2000b) *The Unavowable Community*. Barrytown, NY: Station Hill.

Bonilla Y (2020) The coloniality of disaster: race, empire, and the temporal logics of emergency in Puerto Rico, USA. *Political Geography* 78: 102181.

Boyd CP and Straughan E (2023) Posthuman landscapes. *Cultural Geographies* 30(1): 151–156.

Brown K and Dilley R (2012) Ways of knowing for 'response-ability' in more-than-human encounters: the role of anticipatory knowledges in outdoor access with dogs. *Area* 44(1): 37–45.

Burdon G (2022) On being affected: desire, passion, and the question of *conatus* after Spinoza and Deleuze. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 47(3): 682–694.

Canoy NA (2022) 'How shall I say love…': reimagining a non-relational geopolitics of love in the time of COVID-19. *Global Public Health* 17(10): 2460–2467.

Carter-White R (2009) Auschwitz, ethics, and testimony: exposure to the disaster. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 27(4): 682–699.

Carter-White R (2012) Primo Levi and the genre of testimony. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 37(2): 287–300.

Carter-White R (2013) Towards a spatial historiography of the Holocaust: resistance, film, and the prisoner uprising at Sobibor death camp. *Political Geography* 33: 21–30.

Carter-White R (2018) Communities of violence in the Nazi death camps. In: Katz I, Martin D and Minca C (eds) *Camps Revisited: Multifaceted Spatialities of a Modern Political Technology*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 177–195.

Carter-White R (2021) Come and see: witnessing and negation in the mobile killing units of Nazi Germany. In: Bissell D, Rose M and Harrison P (eds) *Negative Geographies: Exploring the Politics of Limits*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 234–260.

Carter-White R and Doel MA (2022) The signature of the disaster: witness-ness in death camp and tsunami survivor testimony. *Transactions Institute of British Geographers* 47(2): 455–469.

Castree N (2014) The anthropocene and geography: I, II, and III. *Geography Compass* 8(7): 436–476.

Chandler D and Pugh J (2022) Interstitial and abyssal geographies. *Political Geography* 98(2022) 102672.

Chandler D and Pugh J (2023) Abyssal geography. *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography* 44: 199–214.

Cloke P and Johnston R (eds) (2005) *Spaces of Geographical Thought: Deconstructing Human Geography's Binaries*. London: Sage.

Cloke P, Conradson D, Pawson E, et al. (2023) *The Post-Earthquake City: Disaster and Recovery in Christchurch*, New Zealand, London: Routledge.

Collins FL and Shubin S (2015) Migrant times beyond the life course: the temporalities of foreign English teachers in South Korea. *Geoforum* 62: 96–104.

Critchley S (1993) *Il y a* — A dying stronger than death (Blanchot with Levinas). *Oxford Literary Review* 15(1): 81–132.

Dawney L and Huzar TJ (2019) Introduction: the legacies and limits of the body in pain. *Body and Society* 25(3): 3–21.

Dawney L and Jellis T (2024) Endurance, exhaustion and the lure of redemption. *Cultural Geographies* 31(4): 153–166. doi: 10.1177/14744740231191535

Dekeyser T (2023) Worldless futures: on the allure of 'worlds to come'. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 48(2): 338–350.

Dekeyser T and Jellis T (2021) Besides affirmationism? On geography and negativity. *Area* 53(2): 318–325.

Dekeyser T, Secor A, Rose M, et al. (2022) Negativity: space, politics and affects. *Cultural Geographies* 29(1): 5–21.

Deleuze G (1986) *Nietzsche and Philosophy*. London: Athlone.

Deleuze G (1994) *Difference and Repetition*. London: Athlone.

Deleuze G and Guattari F (1983) *Rhizome*. New York: Semiotext(e).

Deleuze G and Guattari F (1984) *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. London: Athlone.

Deleuze G and Guattari F (1986) *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*. Minneapolis, MN: Minnesota University Press.

Deleuze G and Guattari F (1988) *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. London: Athlone.

Derrida J (1978) From restricted to general economy: a Hegelianism without reserve. In: Derrida J *Writing and Difference*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 251–277.

Derrida J (1981a) *Dissemination*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Derrida J (1981b) *Positions*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Derrida J (1990) Some statements and truisms about neologisms, newisms, postisms, parasitisms, and other small seismisms. In: Carroll D (ed) *The States of 'Theory': History, Art, and Critical Discourse*. New York: Columbia University Press, 63–94.

Derrida J (1991) 'Eating well,' or the calculation of the subject: an interview with Jacques Derrida. In: Cadava E, Connor P and Nancy J-L (eds) *Who Comes After the Subject?* Abingdon: Routledge, 96–119.

Derrida J (1993) *Aporias*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Derrida J (1994) *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International*. London: Routledge.

Derrida J (2000) *Demeure: Fiction and Testimony (With M Blanchot, The Instant of My Death)*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Derrida J (2011a) *Parages*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Derrida J (2011b) *The Beast and the Sovereign*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, Volume 2.

Derrida J (2014) *Cinders*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Derrida J (2015) To forgive: the unforgivable and the imprescriptible. In: de Vries H and Schott N (eds) *Love and Forgiveness for a More Just World*. NY: Columbia University press, 144–181.

Derrida J (2020) *Life Death*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Doel MA (1999) *Poststructuralist Geographies: The Diabolical Art of Spatial Science*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Doel MA (2006) Dialectical materialism: stranger than friction. In: Castree N and Gregory D (eds) *David Harvey: A Critical Reader*. Oxford: Blackwell, 55–79.

Doel MA (2008) Dialectics revisited. Reality discharged. *Environment and Planning A* 40: 2631–2640.

Doel MA (2017) *Geographies of Violence: Killing Space, Killing Time*. London: Sage.

Doel MA (2019a) Rewriting the disaster: body-bagged earthworks, post-mortem landscapes, and the

de-scription of Fukushima. *GeoHumanities* 5(1): 237–266.

Doel MA (2019b) The swamp of signs. In: Lukinbeal C, Sharpe L, Sommerlad E, et al. (eds) *Media's Mapping Impulse*. Mainz: Johannes Gutenberg-University, 43–63.

Doel MA (2023) The unhinged hinge: pegged out, pinned down, and folded away. *Literary Geographies* 9(2): 279–284. Available at: https://literarygeographies.net/index.php/LitGeogs/article/view/394.

Doel MA and Clarke DB (2019) Through a net darkly: spatial expression from glossematics to schizoanalysis. In: Jellis T, Gerlach J and Dewsbury JD (eds) *Why Guattari? A Liberation of Politics, Ecologies, and Cartography*. Abingdon: Routledge, 19–33.

Dosse F (1997) *History of Structuralism. 2 Volumes*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Ehrkamp P, Loyd JM and Secor AJ (2022) Trauma as displacement: observations from refugee resettlement. *Annals of the American Association of Geographers* 112(3): 715–722.

Elder GH, Kirkpatrick JM and Crosnoe R (2004) The emergence and development of life course theory. In: Mortimer JT and Shanahan MJ (eds) *Handbook of the Life Course*. New York: Springer, 3–19.

Elwood S, Lawson V and Sheppard E (2017) Geographical relational poverty studies. *Progress in Human Geography* 41(6): 745–765.

Eriksen SH (2022) Is my vulnerability so different from yours? A call for compassionate climate change research. *Progress in Human Geography* 46(6): 1279–1297.

Foucault M and Blanchot M (1987) *Maurice Blanchot: The Thought from Outside and Michel Foucault as I Imagine Him*. New York: Zone.

Fynsk C (2013) *Last Steps: Maurice Blanchot's Exilic Writing*. New York: Fordham University Press.

Gibson-Graham JK (2008) Diverse economies: performative practices for 'other worlds. *Progress in Human Geography* 32(5): 613–632.

Gill N (2016) *Nothing Personal? Geographies of Governing and Activism in the British Asylum System*. London: Wiley-Blackwell.

Ginn F (2017) Posthumanism. In: Richardson D, et al. (eds) *The International Encyclopedia of Geography: People, the Earth, Environment and Technology*. Wiley Online Library. DOI: 10.1002/9781118786352.wbieg0414.

Golledge R, Couclelis H and Gould P (eds) (1988) *A Ground for Common Search*. Santa Barbara, CA: Santa Barbara Geographical Press.

Gould P and Olsson G (eds) (1982) *A Search for Common Ground*. London: Pion.

Guattari F (2011) *The Machinic Unconscious: Essays in Schizoanalysis*. Los Angeles, CA: Semiotext(e).

Guattari F (2013) *Schizoanalytic Cartographies*. London: Bloomsbury.

Guattari F (2015) *Lines of Flight: For Another World of Possibilities*. London: Bloomsbury.

Haase U and Large W (2001) *Maurice Blanchot*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Häkli J and Kallio KP (2014) Subject, action and polis: theorizing political agency. *Progress in Human Geography* 38(2): 181–200.

Hamblyn R (2001) *The Invention of Clouds: How an Amateur Meteorologist Forged the Language of the Skies*. London: Picador.

Harrison P (2007) *How shall I say it ...?*' Relating the non-relational. *Environment and Planning A* 39(3): 590–608.

Harrison P (2008) Corporeal remains: vulnerability, proximity, and living on after the end of the world. *Environment and Planning A* 40(2): 423–445.

Harrison P (2010) Testimony and the truth of the other. In: Anderson B and Harrison P (eds) *Taking-Place: Non-representational Theories and Geography*. Farnham: Ashgate, 161–179.

Harrison P (2021) A love whereof non- shall speak: reflections on naming; of 'non-representational theory'. In: Bissell D, Rose M and Harrison P (eds) *Negative Geographies: Exploring the Politics of Limits*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 67–91.

Harrison P (2022) Strange witness: Rachel Whiteread's art of the immemorial. *Scottish Geographical Journal* 138(3–4): 321–346.

Harvey R (2010) *Witnessness: Beckett, Dante, Levi and the Foundations of Responsibility*. London: Continuum.

Heller-Roazen D (2017) *No One's Ways: An Essay on Infinite Naming*. New York: Zone.

Hill L (1997) *Blanchot: Extreme Contemporary*. London: Routledge.

Hill L (2010) *Radical Indecision: Barthes, Blanchot, Derrida, and the Future of Criticism*. Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University.

Hill L (2012) *Maurice Blanchot and Fragmentary Writing*. London: Continuum.

Ho EL-Y (2021) Social geography I: time and temporality. *Progress in Human Geography* 45(6): 1668–1677.

Holloway SL, Holt L and Mills S (2019) Questions of agency: capacity, subjectivity, spatiality and temporality. *Progress in Human Geography* 43(3): 458–477.

Hrschelmann K (2011) Theorising life transitions: geographical perspectives. *Area* 43(4): 378–383.

Howitt R (2022) Ethics as first method: reframing geographies at an (other) ending-of-the-world as co-motion. *Environment and Planning F: Philosophy, Theory, Models, Methods and Practice* 1(1): 82–92.

Isaacs JR (2020) More-than-human geographies. In: Richardson D, et al. (eds) *The International Encyclopedia of Geography: People, the Earth, Environment and Technology*. Wiley Online Library. DOI: 10.1002/9781118786352.wbieg2041.

Jarvis H, Pain R and Pooley C (2011) Multiple scales of time-space and lifecourse. *Environment and Planning A* 43(3): 519–524.

Jellis T, Gerlach J and Dewsbury JD (2019) *Why Guattari? A Liberation of Politics, Ecologies, and Cartography*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Johnson DE (2015) As if, as such: on Derrida, Husserl, and Literature. *Research in Phenomenology* 45: 386–411.

Joronen M and Rose M (2021) Vulnerability and its politics: precarity and the woundedness of power. *Progress in Human Geography* 45(6): 1402–1418.

Khatab R, Salzani C, Sestigiani S, et al. (eds) (2005) *Blanchot, the Obscure (Colloquy: Text, Theory, Critique Issue 10)*. Melbourne: Monash University.

Kincaid E (2021) Is post-phenomenology a critical geography? Subjectivity and difference in post-phenomenological geographies. *Progress in Human Geography* 45(2): 298–316.

Kingsbury P and Secor AJ (eds) (2021) *A Place More Void*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.

Lacan J (2006) *Écrits*. New York: Norton.

Lacan J (2014) *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book X: Anxiety*. Cambridge: Polity.

Landua-Donnelly F and Pohl L (2023) Towards a post-foundational geography: spaces of negativity, contingency, and antagonism. *Progress in Human Geography* 47(4): 481–499.

Langlois C (ed) (2018) *Understanding Blanchot, Understanding Modernism*. London: Bloomsbury.

Lapworth A (2023) Thinking the unconscious beyond the psychoanalytic subject: Simondon, Murakami, and the transductive forces of the transindividual. *Social and Cultural Geography* 24(9): 1501–1518.

Latour B (2018) *Down to Earth: Politics in the New Climatic Regime*. Cambridge: Polity.

Lewis SL and Maslin MA (2018) *The Human Planet: How We Created the Anthropocene*. London: Pelican.

Lingis A (1994) *The Community of Those Who Have Nothing in Common*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Lyotard J-F (1984) *Driftworks*. New York: Semiotext(e).

Lyotard J-F (1988) *Peregrinations: Law, Form, Event*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Lyotard J-F (1990) *Duchamp's Trans/formers*. Venice, CA: Lapis.

Malpas J (2012) Putting space in place: philosophical topography and relational geography. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 30(2): 226–242.

Marcu S (2017) *Tears of time*: a Lefebvrian rhythmanalysis approach to explore the mobility experiences of young Eastern Europeans in Spain. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 42(3): 405–416.

Martin C (2016) *Shipping Container*. London: Bloomsbury.

Massey D (2005) *For Space*. London: Sage.

May J and Thrift NJ (2001) *Timespace: Geographies of Temporality*. London: Routledge.

McCann E and Ward K (2010) Relationality/territoriality: toward a conceptualization of cities in the world. *Geoforum* 41(2): 175–184.

McCormack D (2012) Geography and abstraction: towards an affirmative critique. *Progress in Human Geography* 36(6): 715–734.

McGeachan C and Philo C (2023) 'Hanging around in their brokenness': on mental ill-health geography, asylums and camps, artworks and salvage. *Annals of the American Association of Geographers* 113(5): 1224–1242.

McKinnon S and Eriksen C (2023) Engaging with the home-in-ruins: memory, temporality and the unmaking of home after fire. *Social and Cultural Geography* 24(2): 311–326.

McNay L (2000) *Gender and Agency: Reconfiguring the Subject in Feminist and Social Theory*. Cambridge: Polity.

Mehring P, Geoghegan H, Cloke HL, et al. (2023) The F word: the experiential construction of flooding in England. *Emotion, Space and Society* 48: 100966.

Melamed YY (2012) 'Omnis determinatio est negation': determination, negation, and self-negation in Spinoza,

Kant, and Hegel. In: Förster E and Melamed Y (eds) *Spinoza and German Idealism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 175–196.

Mentz S (2020) *Ocean*. London: Bloomsbury.

Miele M and Bear C (2022) Geography and posthumanism. In: Herbrechter S, et al. (eds) *Palgrave Handbook of Critical Posthumanism*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 61–63.

Mieszkowski J (2011) *Ich, ach, auch*: certain also-ran languages of Jacques Derrida. *The Oxford Literary Review* 33(2): 207–230.

Minca C, Carter-White R and Giaccaria P (2021) Geography and the coming community. In: Tambassi T and Tanca M (eds) *The Philosophy of Geography*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 167–189.

Moawad P and Andres L (2023) Refugees in abject spaces, protracted 'waiting' and spatialities of abjection during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Social and Cultural Geography* 24(3–4): 467–483.

Murdoch J (2006) *Post-Structuralist Geography: A Guide to Relational Space*. London: Sage.

Mutter S (2023) Distribution, dis-sumption and dis-appointment: the negative geographies of city logistics. *Progress in Human Geography* 47(1): 160–177.

Nancy JL (1991) *The Inoperative Community*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Nancy JL (2016) *The Disavowed Community*. New York: Fordham University Press.

Oliver C (2022) 'Significant nothingness' in geographical fieldwork. *Geoforum* 134: 82–85.

Olsson G (1980) *Birds in Egg/Eggs in Bird*. London: Pion.

Olsson G (1991) *Lines of Power/Limits of Language*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Olsson G (2007) *Abysmal: A Critique of Cartographic Reason*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Olsson G (2020) *Arkography: A Grand Tour Through the Taken-for-Granted*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.

Pain R (2019) Chronic urban trauma: the slow violence of housing dispossession. *Urban Studies* 56(2): 385–400.

Pearce L (2023) Finding one place in another: post/phenomenology, memory and *déjà vu*. *Social and Cultural Geography* 24(2): 195–211.

Philo C (2005) The geographies that wound. *Population, Space and Place* 11(6): 441–454.

Philo C (2017a) Squeezing, bleaching, and the victims' fate: wounds, geography, poetry, micrology. *GeoHumanities* 3(1): 20–40.

Philo C (2017b) Less-than-human geographies. *Political Geography* 60: 256–258.

Popke EJ (2003) Poststructuralist ethics: subjectivity, responsibility and the space of community. *Progress in Human Geography* 27(3): 298–316.

Pugh J (2016) The relational turn in island geographies: bringing together island, sea and ship relations and the case of the Landship. *Social and Cultural Geography* 17(8): 1040–1059.

Pugh J (2023) The lure of an unavailable world: the shifting stakes of contemporary critique. *Area* 55(3): 356–363.

Rimbaud JN (2005) *Complete Works, Selected Letters*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Roberts T (2019) Resituating post-phenomenological geographies: Deleuze, relations and the limits of objects. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 44(3): 542–554.

Romanillos JL (2008) 'Outside, it is snowing': experience and finitude in the nonrepresentational landscapes of Alain Robbe-Grillet. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 26(5): 795–822.

Romanillos JL (2011) Geography, death and finitude. *Environment and Planning A* 43(11): 2533–2553.

Romanillos JL (2015) Mortal questions: geographies on the other side of life. *Progress in Human Geography* 39(5): 560–579.

Rose M, Bissell D and Harrison P (2021) Negative geographies. In: Bissell D, Rose M, and Harrison P (eds). *Negative Geographies: Exploring the Politics of Limits*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1–38.

Schatzki TR (2010) *The Timespace of Human Activity: On Performance, Society, and History as Indeterminate Teleological Events*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.

Schwanen T and Kwan M-P (2012) Guest editorial: critical space–time geographies. *Environment and Planning A* 44(9): 2043–2048.

Shubin S (2015) Migration timespaces: a Heideggerian approach to understanding the mobile being of Eastern Europeans in Scotland. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 40(3): 350–361.

Shubin S (2021) 'Mind the gap': responding to the indeterminable in migration. *Dialogues in Human Geography* 11(1): 64–68.

Shubin S (2022) Transnationalism and time: beyond the self, unity and relation. In: Yeoh BSA and Collins F (eds) *Handbook of Transnationalism*. London: Edward Elgar, 60–76.

Shubin S and Collins F (2017) The temporal complexity of international student mobilities. In: Mavroudi E, Christou A and Page B (eds) *Timespace and International Migration*. London: Edward Elgar, 17–32.

Shubin S and McCollum D (2021) Migrant subjectivities and temporal flexibility of East-Central European labour migration to the United Kingdom. *Population, Space and Place* 27: 1–11. doi: 10.1002/psp.2508

Shubin S and Sowgat T (2019) Contested experiences and potential justice at the limit of the law for poor urban children in Bangladesh. *Children's Geographies* 18(5): 516–528.

Simonsen K (2012) In quest of a new humanism: embodiment, experience and phenomenology as critical geography. *Progress in Human Geography* 37(1): 10–26.

Smith D (2015) An event worthy of the name, a name worthy of the event. *Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 29(3): 387–394.

Sou G and Howarth K (2023) Waiting during disasters: negotiating the spatio-temporalities of resilience and recovery. *Geographical Research* 61(2): 273–284.

Stern R (2016) 'Determination is negation': the adventures of a doctrine from Spinoza to Hegel to the British Idealists. *Hegel Bulletin* 37(1): 29–52.

Straughan E, Bissell D and Gorman-Murray A (2020) The politics of stuckness: waiting lives in mobile worlds. *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space* 38(4): 636–655.

Thrift N (2004) Intensities of feeling: towards a spatial politics of affect. *Geografiska Annaler, Series B* 86(1): 57–78.

Tobler WR (1970) A computer movie simulating urban growth in the Detroit region. *Economic Geography* 46: 234–240.

Tschakert P (2022) More-than-human solidarity and multispecies justice in the climate crisis. *Environmental Politics* 31(2): 277–296.

Wakefield S, Chandler D and Grove K (2022) The asymmetrical anthropocene: resilience and the limits of posthumanism. *Cultural Geographies* 29(3): 389–404.

Weima Y and Minca C (2022) Closing camps. *Progress in Human Geography* 46(2): 261–281.

Williams S (2012) Rendering the untimely event of disaster ever present. *Landscape Review* 14: 86–96.

Wylie J (2017) The distant: thinking toward renewed senses of landscape and distance. *Environment, Space, Place* 9(1): 1–20.

Wylie J (2021) Dislocation: disorientation: disappearance: distance. In: Bissell D, Rose M and Harrison P (eds) *Negative Geographies: Exploring the Politics of Limits*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 189–205.

Yeung HWC (2005) Rethinking relational economic geography. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 30(1): 37–51.

Žižek S (2013) *Less Than Nothing: Hegel and the Shadow of Dialectical Materialism*. London: Verso.