

Editorial

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Geography is gonna make a mess of me¹

That geographical locations inspire and hold orders of emotions is an ordinary belief. That we ‘feel’ something for places we call home or work and that we actively invent orders of being that emerge from sites such as ‘the beach’ and ‘the city’ is the stuff of many a memoir, edited collection and an often uncritical expectation. Diverse spaces are marked by orders of intimacy and global and national confluences that make temporal as well as affective locations of the material world that we move through or stay within. As Kay Anderson and Susan Smith wrote in ‘Emotional Geographies’, their introduction to an issue of *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* over ten years ago: ‘Non constructivist approaches

associated with being and doing, with participation and performance, with ways of knowing that depend on direct experience (including autobiography and biography) more so than reflection, abstraction, translation and representation offer encouragement, if not as yet clear strategies, for accessing the world as mediated by feeling.² The emergence of that shift was understood to have come from feminist thinking that was re-evaluating rationalist approaches to the world. Feminist thinking has also been central to much of the analysis of affective responses, to not just spaces and places but the material things within multiple global 'scapes'. A rethinking of what a more materialist approach will render is also obvious across this diverse collection, which includes a guest-edited section themed around this topic as it relates to Italy and the wider world, general essays and new writing.

It is perhaps this intensification of diverse approaches and their location within cultural studies rather than geography *per se* that sees the focus of interest coming to rest upon police buildings, remnants of nature, items in a museum collection, simulated national buildings not entirely lost in translation and trees made over (and even musealised) in human-centred productions because of the mark of a possible 'explorer' on its trunk. In other essays, the authors' foci is the suburb. For Lesley Johnson, it is an exploration of class and materiality finding in the remnants of colonial villas a 'commitment to domesticity and a social life organised around its ideals' and signs of how the middle class could achieve 'appropriate domestic patterns of intimacy and distinction'. And in their new writing piece Lisa Macdonald and Vicki Crowley track paths of barrows and dogs through a suburb's streets to claim: 'This other, one time, previous affective field is a suburb. Where a suburb is sensate, sensual, paused by their routine. Paused by their habitation.'

As Maurizio Marinelli and Francesco Ricatti suggest in their introduction to the section devoted to emotional geographies and the uncanny, it is the 'aesthetics' (in Freud's sense), the 'theory of the qualities of feelings' that matter in a particular way:

Our contention is that these qualities also have political relevance, in so far as they emphasise how migrants' bodies are positioned into social and cultural spaces where migrants produce, project, reject and negotiate different and often contradictory experiences of inclusion and exclusion.

Within such an aesthetic framework, we have then decided to test in specific geographical and historical contexts the centrality of the uncanny. The politics of location, how someone can be made to feel in a certain way not because they 'are' but because they reflect difference that may already be there (particularly in a nation state), reminds us of the material geographies of political rhetoric. We are writing this from Australia where conservative Tony Abbott has just been elected Prime Minister. During his electoral campaign he used the quaintly mechanical language of direct material engagement in space in highly emotive and effective ways. His acceptance speech included: 'The *boats* will be stopped ... The budget will be on *track* ...' And 'the *roads* of the twenty-first century will finally be underway' (our emphasis).³ Meanwhile in Germany (which is going into elections as we write this) the current President, Angela Merkel, famous for indirect quotes and less active language, promises a perspective that has been called a 'lethargocracy' driven by 'Christian values and an openness to the world'.⁴ In such ways emotions and national spaces become conjoined and anchored to an idea of a nation where something will happen or a where a space will feel like it did before.

It is an order of activity that carries a different feeling to another of Abbott's statements, 'Aboriginal people will be at the heart of a new government in word and in deed'.⁵ The heart promises to be the beating engine of the human, the centre of life but which in Australia has an uncanny echo with colonial disappointment, the 'dead' heart and the many non-Indigenous policies which have resulted in suffering not safety for those it was aimed at. Perhaps it is about orders of responsibility to place as well as people? Ann Game, Demelza Martin and Andrew Metcalfe want to push the idea of custodial belonging towards a responsibility that emerges from relation, away from 'mutual attention' to a 'relational state, a real intertwinement of person and place'—a space where: 'All are here, now, in this.' The essays in this issue challenge us to account for the effects of feeling, the force of emotions as they are experienced in orders of emplacement and produced in material encounters. They occasionally offer re-readings of key emotions as does Linnell Secomb's encounter with love where she produces a 'shattered love'.

Reviews of important new books have been collected here under the care of our new reviews editor Lee Wallace, and our outgoing reviews editor, Guy Redden. These reviews offer us erudite and engaging paths into the ever-evolving thinking of

our field. Tara Brabazon takes us through the conundrums of music, aging and a life of cultural analysis, while. Angi Buettner tellingly suggests: 'The prevailing myth is that the printing press, telegraph, phonograph, photograph, cinema, telephone, wireless, radio, TV and internet changed the world without changing the Earth; as she looks at books on media and environment. Ken Ruthven takes us carefully and elegantly through the mixed legacy of Richard Hoggart, while Paul Giles considers the impact of globalisation on literature and Ben Clarke maps some of the terrain of contemporary individualism and economic injustice. With thanks to all our contributors and reviewers, enjoy.

—NOTES

¹ Thao and the Get Down Stay Down, 'Geography', from *We Brave Bee Stings and All* (2008).

² Kay Anderson and Susan Smith, 'Editorial: Emotional Geographies', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, vol. 26, no. 1, 2001, pp. 7–10.

³ <<http://www.upstart.net.au/2013/09/08/tony-abbotts-acceptance-speech/>>

⁴ Alison Smale, 'Merkel Enters Last Leg of Re-election Bid With a Push to Draw In Youths', *New York Times*, 14 August 2013, <<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/14/world/europe/merkel-enters-last-leg-of-re-election-bid-with-a-push-to-draw-in-youths.html>>.

⁵ Tony Abbott, 'Indigenous Affairs—A Coalition Approach', Address to the Sydney Institute, 15 March 2013.