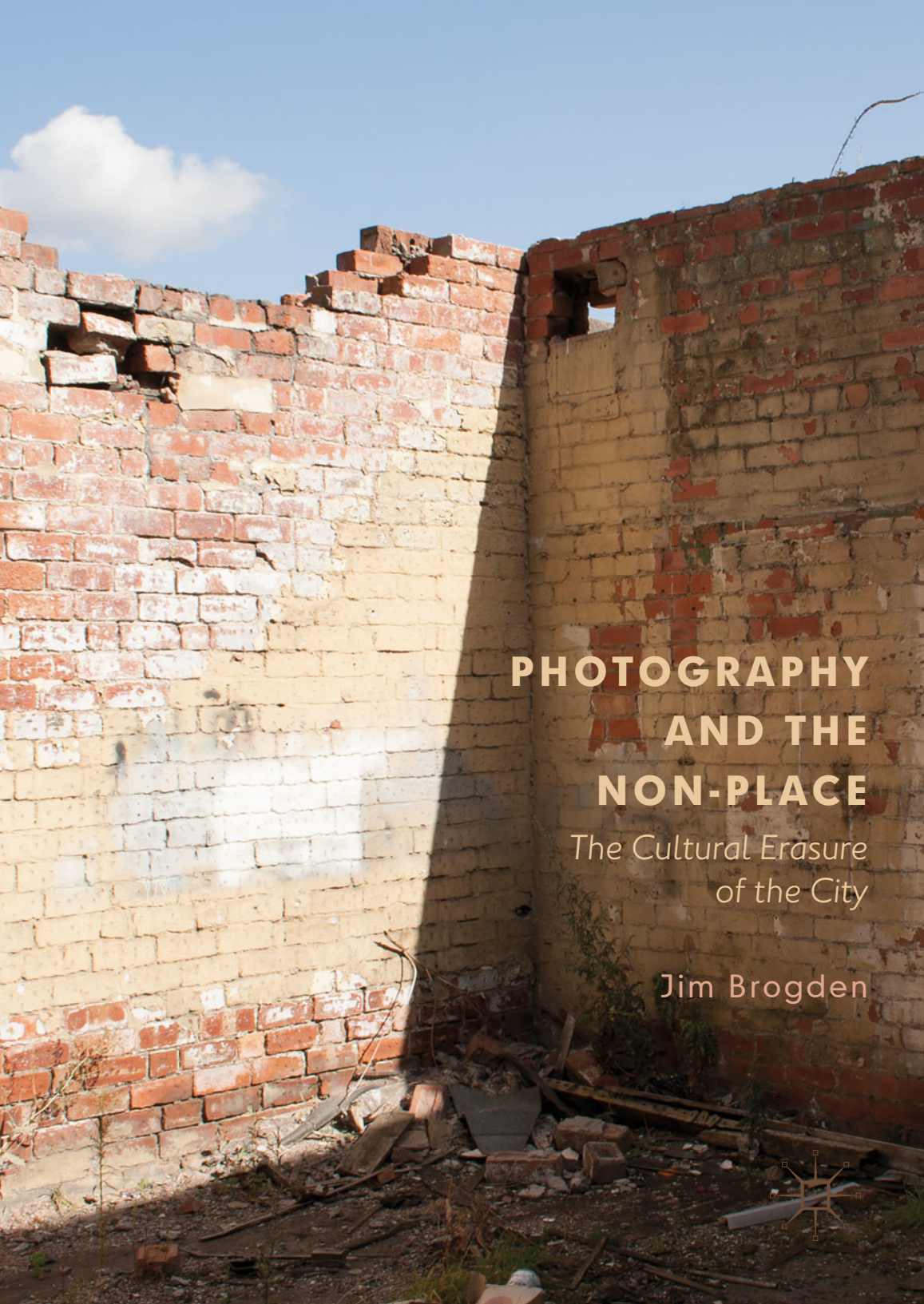

PHOTOGRAPHY AND THE NON-PLACE

The Cultural Erasure of the City

Jim Brogden

Photography and the Non-Place

"Hauntingly beautiful and powerfully resonant in its twin pursuit of photographing and theorizing the repressed 'non-places' left in the wake of late capitalism's re-ordering of urban life, Brogden's book insists on the camera's capacity for uncovering overlooked facets of reality and thus for critiquing the ideology of progress that exiles working-class life in particular, from collective memory."

—Ulrich Baer, *New York University, USA*

"In Brogden's hands, photography becomes the deposit that attention pays to the forlorn and untended wastelands of the city. Eschewing the modernist's romance with the marginal, he embraces the critical historian's eye for the forgotten and untold. This is essential reading and viewing for anyone interested in a political poetics of space."

—Ben Highmore, *University of Sussex, UK*

"Jim Brogden successfully weaves his impassioned lens on visual culture with his research-led practice, offering us an original and provocative haunting of the city. He powerfully exposes the contradictory forms—present yet absent—of place to reveal contested and forgotten histories of people, work, culture and conflict. For Brogden, place is filled with both the melancholia of loss and the optimism of renewal."

—Andrew Hoskins, *University of Glasgow, Scotland*

Jim Brogden

Photography and the Non-Place

The Cultural Erasure of the City

palgrave
macmillan

Jim Brogden
University of Leeds
Leeds, UK

ISBN 978-3-030-03918-9 ISBN 978-3-030-03919-6 (eBook)
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-03919-6

Library of Congress Control Number: 2018965230

Cover image: © Jim Brogden
Cover design by Fatima Jamadar

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by the registered company Springer Nature Switzerland AG
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

For my mother (1921–1986) and father (1923–2018). To my wife, and children for your patience.

Preface

The Chair (2009). Photograph by the author

THE CHAIR AND IT'S GOING TO RAIN, I TELL YOU IT'S GOING TO RAIN

If you want to know what the weather's going to do,
Go to this chair,
The one by the single boot and near the wall
That could be the wall
Of a house somebody abandoned yesterday
In a downpour.

Stand by the chair. Ignore its blue-as-a-sky
Blue and just concentrate
On the feel of the arms, the feel of the back;
If you can detect some dampness,
A sense of yesterday's drizzle, a hint

Of last week's crack and rumble storm
Then you know that it will rain
Later in the afternoon. If the chair is dry,
Or that more-or-less dry that abandoned furniture
Often is, then it will not rain
Later in the afternoon.
This chair is weather vane, almanac, calendar,
Letter home, message in a bottle, forecast,
Rain gauge, diary, map of a lost world, and,
Most importantly, *thing in a space*

Ian McMillan's poem (2010) serves as an evocative introduction to the subject of this book. It arose from my collaboration with Ian on an exhibition about 'abandoned places'. As McMillan (2010) states in the exhibition note, 'there's something bleakly poetic about the alterations that occur through the scattering of rubbish or the blowing of plastic bags onto fences'. I hope that there might be something suggestively poetic in the pages that follow. Through an interdisciplinary discourse, I hope that a more idiosyncratic critical lens might emerge to challenge how we conceive the contemporary urban non-place in relation to its current cultural socio-political contestation.

Non-place becomes the critical theatre, in which a deliberately eclectic range of ideas and research source materials are discussed. Some of the critical reflections that follow may appear labyrinthine, or idiosyncratic

to the reader, but the intention is to expose in explicit terms how my research methodology embraced the phenomenological experience of re-photography in a series of south Leeds non-places. And like most researchers that incorporate visual cultural studies within their work, I include an extensive range of other photographers' work within the wider landscape tradition that has informed and helped to contextualize my own criticality and photographic work. The wide-ranging allusions and copious references in this book seek to provide an insight into the unanticipated routes that primary experience can offer to research-led practice. The iterative research process, which involved returning to the same non-place sites over many years, supports a methodology that re-examines the subject 'in the field' beyond the expedient and superficial. To borrow from the anthropologist, Clifford Geertz's term "thick description", I might refer to the function of my own photographs in this book as "thick photographs", providing ample evidence in their heightened surface iconography to invite numerous theoretical discourses to ensue. Photography has always been a generous discipline, one which provides a porous aperture to discuss new ideas about people and their relationship to place. Although my own contemporary representations of non-places reproduced in this book were concentrated around the areas in south Leeds where I lived during the period 1958–1980, the exploration of the familiar and local should resonate with readers in relation to their own reflections on place, loss, and belonging. My overarching contention is that the non-place exists as a multimodal counter-monument that commemorates the unwritten and forgotten lives inscribed upon the urban landscape; an urban landscape that is constantly in flux, open to different ideological interpretation and valorizations, and without recording through photographic representation might remain elusive to the archive of remembrance. In most cases, unless the National Trust reassesses what is worth saving, photographs will remain the only surviving counter-monument to honour these non-places.

My own adoption of the term non-place seeks to broaden Augé's original definition (transit spaces, such as Paris airport concourses) to include those pockets of abandoned land which are very rarely visited, often prohibited, and marginalized by the effects of post-industrial decline since the 1970s (especially in England).

Since the mid-1980s, the non-place has become associated with the regeneration agenda ascribed to late-capitalism which, paradoxically perhaps, has resulted in such sites becoming even more elusive and resistant

to an unambiguous definition of place-making. Although the apparent largesse anticipated by the term 'regeneration' (symbiotically linked with 'gentrification') promises renewal of the urban landscape, one that has been neglected over the years, or has suffered social and economic failure, my own view, is that the regeneration process is inevitably ideological, and is implicated in the expedient cultural erasure of a previously heterogeneous working-class urban landscape. My use of the word erasure is a deliberate provocation; it means the removal of a mistake. In a wider historical context, the term alludes to crimes against humanity—the eradication of people, homes, culture, and of course, memory. Erasure functions as the companion to acts of forgetting, leading in some sense, to a complacent cultural amnesia (however temporary that might be). Based on my own lived experience in the inner-city urban landscape of south Leeds, I have witnessed the erasure and spatial homogenization of this area. The once idiosyncratic spatial relationships which had evolved in this area, including the unique juxtapositions of various institutions which held the tight community together having been removed, or out-sourced to unaccountable destinations. My own photographs in this book are a testament to the rapid transformation and deracination of this area of south Leeds from the 1960s onwards, a process which has left a diverse range of non-places. These same non-places have been erased by more recent regeneration, whilst at the same time, the re-wilding of other non-places has continued. And in this way, the subtext to this book is my own auto-ethnographic journey, to reveal what has been erased and re-emerged within this fractured, ruptured experience. It is common for people to project the past onto the present. That is the human condition. In this way, the book also proves that our formative years can have a significant bearing on the direction of our research, the search for answers based on unresolved feelings? Moreover, an unreconciled 'inner-world' that might be experienced by readers who have never visited Leeds, or the UK?

For my own part, my photographs are haunted by that which has now disappeared; redundant churches flooded from neglect during the 1960s relocation of local people, pubs, family-friendly politically affiliated social clubs, well-kept allotments alongside factories, contiguous with tightly packed back-to-back houses (complete with outside shared toilets), and make-shift recreational wastelands which emerged during the demolition period, imaginative childhood play areas, also functioning as ideal sites for bonfires on 5th November. It is worth emphasizing, at this point,

that many working-class people during the period up to the late 1960s (and beyond in some cases) did not own a camera. Therefore, there are very few archival photographs that remain of south Leeds during my formative years living there. If photographs were taken, then these were usually of family events, portraits, rare trips to the coast or countryside, not urban landscape photography. From my own experience, the white working-class were culturally conditioned not to value their own immediate environment, with the exception being the local allotment. But even so, there are very few specific photographs of urban working-class landscapes (without people) that were taken by locals. This is in marked contrast to the existing archive which shows middle-class people enjoying the suburbs close to the official countryside.

For this reason, the reader might conceive of my belated photographs as a haunted archive of an erased working-class landscape, now reverted to fragmented non-places, due in part to the erasure of a collective memory of what used to be there. In this context, I use the specificity of the term non-place as a polemical agent. To further anchor this proposition, I postulate that the opposite of non-place would be the national park—a landscape deeply embedded in national myths and narratives and, of course, one might refer to the graveyard, as the ultimate apogee of a place with meaning and a clear cultural identity.

The overarching intention of this book is to re-present a different conception of non-place and to eradicate the prefix "non", to reclaim the more valued term of place. In short, I want to present non-place as an emerging landscape without apparent design, yet a place that is of great cultural value because of its more obscure function as a refuge for a forgotten and less prescriptive urban experience. For, as Jonathan Raban exhorts, we need to 'comprehend the nature of citizenship, to make a serious imaginative assessment of that special relationship between the self and the city' (Raban 1974: 246).

I propose that non-place is familiar territory, yet at the same time, represents an anonymous part of culture; such locations are recognized in relation to their iconography of the abandoned—places which most people usually avoid. We might refer to these places (most often situated in the urban landscape) as 'ruptured' and 'exiled' urban zones, where one experiences liminality, amongst redundant post-industrial wastelands. These places are isolated by ongoing infrastructure developments. Forgotten urban sites on the verge of recovery, regeneration, gentrification, or cultural erasure.

These interstitial places (not surprisingly) are often situated near prohibited zones within the urban milieu, where access and ownership is ambiguous, or in dispute. There is a sense when walking through these non-places, that they are fugitive locations—having been created through a vicarious process of 'urban renewal'.

Interestingly, landscape architects use the term 'void' to denote the spaces in the built environment, perpetuating the symbolic notion of absence, and the need to fill, or reconcile. In this sense, the notions surrounding the non-place are contested—a place which needs filling, to be valued by culture. The label 'void' is associated with a negation; if a transaction fails to complete, one is often assured that that transaction is 'voided'—it no longer exists (so don't worry about it, forget it). In relation to my own concerns in this book regarding the potential reconceptualization of non-place, I want the reader to re-engage with these *a-voided* places.

I argue that these palimpsest non-places could be seen to function as metonyms for a collapsed working-class collective memory, showing evidence of a complacent cultural amnesia towards certain urban landscapes. In this context, my own research-led photographs reproduced in this book serve to commemorate an urban transformation that exposes an ongoing relationship with the perceived inequities of late capitalism.

In the current cultural turbulence accelerated by a mediated visual global culture, it would seem appropriate to choose the ubiquitous medium of photography to investigate the complex iconography of non-place; an investigation in which we confront the photographer as a 'hunter' of the indexical, attempting to track the meaning of this often overlooked territory—to reveal the socio-economic cultural narratives for an audience already experiencing (through various forms of social media engagement) what I would describe as 'image-fatigue'. A term I employ to describe the current state of *ennui*, in which the general audience is already subjected to an unprecedented number of sophisticated (and unsophisticated!) visual messages every day. In this sense, an important challenge for photographic practice in the age of an overly hedonistic and narcissistic style of representation lubricated by social media platforms, such as Instagram, Facebook et al., is to reclaim its criticality—its power to make people consider ideas about the world in new ways.

The research practice photographs presented throughout the book record exemplars of both emerging and more transient non-places within the late-capitalist urban landscape. Each photograph's critical intention is

to invoke an interdisciplinary dialogic encounter with the complex indexical nature of the contemporary urban landscape. A situation, in which marginal zones are often inhabited by the marginal. Through an anthropological 'lens', the photographs re-present human agency as a perverse celebration of 'chance-juxtaposition'—where evidence of quixotic intervention and departure is made manifest by 'prayer flags' of discarded plastic bags, ensnared in tree branches. Many of the photographs suggest absence, in which idiosyncratic found objects present an elegiac substitute for a feral human presence and intervention. The aesthetic intention is to represent the seemingly abject in epic simplicity.

It is in these largely forgotten places, that one senses the possibility that society may come to view the non-place as place (with meaning); a potential counter-monument to memorialize through the serendipitous re-colonization of flora and fauna, those previously disempowered inhabitants who 'made way' during the post-1960s urban reconfiguration.

For the aetiologically reticent, the non-place might be simply cherished as a quixotic landscape, uncodified, and without apparent landscape design, yet, a place that is becoming increasingly valuable in relation to its paradoxical biodiversity. Transient places that provide a unique aperture through which we might view an alternative to the increasing homogenization of the urban landscape.

Leeds, UK Jim Brogden

Reference

Raban, J. (1974). *Soft City*. London: The Harvill Press.

Acknowledgements

A special thanks to my editors at Palgrave Macmillan: Lina Aboujieb, Ellie Freedman, and to my friend and colleague, Stephen Coleman. I am also grateful to my wife, Isabella Oregland, for her inspiration, support, and love.

I also wish to thank the following friends and colleagues for their encouragement during the development of the book:

Dominique Ayrault, Anthony Carrigan (1980–2016), Ed D'Souza, Roger Fielding, Dave Hesmondalgh, Frank Kelly, Richard Gaughan, Chris Grayston, and Steve Moore.

Contents

List of Figures

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

This book presents a critical and aesthetic defence of 'non-place', as an act of cultural reclamation.[1] The intention is to challenge the more expedient perception of such places, by critically 'erasing' the prefix non, to reveal a place with meaning that might be valued in a more imaginative way.

I propose a new conception of the urban landscape non-place through my own photographic research-led practice, supported by references to other photographers' work. As a personal urban landscape research project, this will hopefully, speak to a broader research community (beyond the location of Leeds, in the north of England), to reaffirm the importance of research-led photographic practice as an incisive discursive methodology within the contested notions attached to urban landscape representation. The book investigates the significance of urban landscape representation as a form of critical mirror, to evaluate changes in contemporary society.

The book is unashamedly eclectic, in drawing from multiple conceptual traditions, which aim to investigate non-place from multiple dimensions. Drawing upon resources from philosophy, sociology, anthropology, memory studies, eco-criticism, geography, urban theory, and photographic history, the book explores the possibilities of attending to a new conception of the urban landscape through the critical conduit of non-place. The term *non-place* is borrowed from the French anthropologist, Marc Augé's book: *Non-places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity* (1995). My own adoption of the term non-place seeks to broaden Augé's original definition, from transit spaces, such as Paris airport concourses,

J. Brogden, *Photography and the Non-Place*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-03919-6_1

to include those pockets of abandoned land which are very rarely visited, often prohibited and marginalized by the effects of post-industrial decline since the 1970s (especially in England).

The term non-place inhabits this book as a deliberate provocation/invitation to the reader, to re-engage with those transitional areas of land situated in the urban landscape that are viewed as interstitial—without a clear function or meaning, compared to the more valued spaces in the city, such as public parks and memorial sites.

In general, non-places are prohibited sites, which to some degree adds to their anonymity in relation to the general public's awareness. Most people (apart from a growing interest from urban psycho-geographers and Urbex photographers) avoid these sites, with their knowledge and understanding largely based on the conventional definitions promulgated by developers with a vested interest in referring to them as: 'waste-land', 'brown field', terms often associated with the areas of derelict land left abandoned after the post-industrial decline experienced during the 1970s in the UK/USA. Moreover, the purpose of such pejorative terms is to under-value the unique qualities embodied in these disregarded and 'incidental' urban sites. This kind of negative labelling of landscape through language is challenged through the titling of my own photographs which accompany the book.

The various examples (including my own photographs) of landscape photographic practice which illustrate the book, function as critical catalysts, from which various academic discourses are explored to propose a different conception of non-place.

The book reveals the synergy between photographic research-led practice and its equivalent in writing. Each embodies the other to form the *practice*. My approach incorporates a qualitative research methodology, which uses an inductive method, and is informed by the concept of interpretivism: 'where the researcher builds abstractions, conceptions, hypotheses and theories from details' (Atieno 2009: 14).

Although the book is situated critically within the field of urban landscape photographic representation, the text includes an eclectic range of allusions from within visual culture, to promote a broader academic debate between photography and other disciplines.

The book embraces interdisciplinary discourse, mediated and anchored by photographic practice. In this way, a more idiosyncratic critical lens might emerge to challenge how we might conceive the urban landscape non-place. My work re-conceptualizes through the restorative

properties of photography, the cultural significance of non-place. Furthermore, the use of a deliberately allusive intertextuality seeks to elicit unexpected interdisciplinary exchanges and possibilities within the *space* of non-place.

In this context, a parallel can be made with the early twentieth-century geographer, J. K. Wright (1947), who considered the correlation between the imagination and geographic analysis. He also sought to imbue his analytical writing with a poetic intensity, a lyrical style, which would carry 'emotional connotation'.[2]

Re-defining Augé's Use of Non-place

Although I agree with Augé's general proposition that non-place is an experience of people 'passing through' to more meaningful destinations, where history itself 'is on our heels, following us like our shadows, like death', I contest his view that people feel alienated from the contemporary airport concourse (Augé 1995: 26, 27). In many ways, the example of the airport concourse space does signify the archetypal non-place: a space devoid of obvious cultural identity (save for global branding of course) in relation to meaning, collective memory, and a permanent sense of belonging, but one might challenge Augé's specific example of non-place here? For one could perceive such transit spaces as meaningful, in the sense that there is at least the human drama and interaction associated with arrival and departure? These almost primal shared feelings, divests airport concourses of their superficial anonymity, replacing it with meaning—an identifiable sense of place, however, transient that might be.

I frame my own interpretation of non-place, whilst using Augé's original term as a critical platform from which to broaden the term. Furthermore, my own photographic representations reproduced (and reflected upon) in this book are clearly differentiated, from the rather cinematic spatial case-studies referenced by Augé. Rather, I eschew representations of contemporary infrastructures (and their interior spaces), in favour of the fragmented vacant spaces that these structures both create and often hide. In this sense, I prefer to investigate the 'negative' spaces in (what was), my local urban landscape. As such, these spaces have been created inadvertently, emerging as the spatial detritus of more valued developments. And like the transit spaces that Augé describes, the collective view is that these dormant, wasteland spaces must be avoided to

achieve safe passage through the urban landscape. This is landscape as the *other*: feared, ideologically shamed, unloved, abused by investment speculation. Not surprisingly, my book shares Augé's concern with redefining non-place (negative) in relation to place (positive), and the critical notions attached to personal and collective identity, the relational, and historical (Augé 1995). Moreover, my research-led auto-ethnographic photography embraces Augé's own reflection on the role of the 'practising ethnologist', one that emphasizes the 'here and now' and reports what they are observing within the 'here' of the moment. A condition of ethnographic research that 'presupposes the existence of a direct witness to a present actuality' (Augé 1995: 8).

Since the mid-1980s in England, the non-place has become synonymous with the late-capitalist regeneration agenda which has resulted in such sites becoming even more elusive to an unambiguous definition and place-making. In this context, I use the specificity of the term non-place, as a polemical agent, to challenge how such places could be valued by culture.[3] To further anchor this proposition, the opposite of non-place would be the National Park, a landscape embedded in national myths and narratives, and of course, the graveyard—the apogee of a place with meaning and cultural identity.

The way in which my research practice has functioned in non-place has been embedded within this book as an allusive revelation of my 'inner world'. In this sense, the aim of the text is to operate as an *ekphrasis*: a vivid description of a visual work of art, more commonly applied as a rhetorical device in which one medium of art tries to relate to another medium by defining and describing its essence and form, and in so doing, relate more directly to the audience.[4] Its main role is to demonstrate how the research is embodied in both the collection of photographs, the writing, and literature research.

To provide some clarity for the reader regarding my critical methodology, I have found the analysis of the hermeneutic approach to 'representation' offered by James Duncan and David Ley (1993) extremely useful in my desire to produce a concomitant research journey between the practical-photographic work and the written text. Duncan and Ley assert that, 'the world within the text is a partial truth, a transformation of the extra-textual' (1993: 9). Moreover, their claim that the same processes 'are at work' in the reading and consumption of the 'texts'—involving the reader's own experience of the world, and the 'inter-textual' (the 'context of other texts'), has provided me with a more

coherent critical architecture from which to explicate my key aim, which is to contribute to the field of landscape photography and the ways in which non-place can be reconceived.

Auto-ethnography and the 'Non-place'

No research emerges from a *tabula rasa*—there must be some 'platform' for the departure. Some of these may appear anecdotal, but as Meaghan Morris contends:

> [Anecdotes] are orientated futuristically towards the construction of a precise, local, and social discursive context, of which the anecdote then functions as a *mise en abyme*. [For me, they] are not expressions of personal experience but allegorical expositions of a model of the way the world can be said to be working.[5]

In 1964, I was six years old living in the inner-city district of Hunslet, situated in south Leeds. I witnessed the deracination of the local, largely white working-class inhabitants, who witnessed their brick-built back-to-back houses demolished, to be offered accommodation in the more peripheral areas of the city. Older patterns of community life, created by the nearness of (often generational) work, school, church, allotments, and numerous recreational activities arranged through the affiliated working men's club, were disrupted by dispersal into new purpose-built high-rise flats and estates. As a boy, the relocation seemed to take a long time, which allowed me to experience a partially destroyed neighbourhood, containing abandoned houses, complete with flooded cellars. I developed an empathy for bricks.[6] At the same time, along with other children in the area, I developed 'muscle-memory' for walking over this landscape of forgotten bricks, remains of bonfires, burnt mattresses, discarded Ringtons tea chests, occasionally exploring abandoned churches, adrift from their absent congregations.[7]

These boyhood recollections have formed a coral of memory that has informed the discursive topography of this book.

As the footnotes and bibliographical references attest, the book invites the reader to consider discursive relationships within quite different and unexpected critical fields: from the opaque spiritual-philosophical musings of Kierkegaard, to the more populist references to contemporary films, such as *Falling Down* (1993). These allusions are not intended

for ostentatious effect, but rather, they function as an invitation to the reader to enter the inner-world of my research-led practice, both in and out of non-place. The ambition is to illuminate the synergy that existed between all aspects of the research-led practice, that will explicate how non-place might be reconceived, and valued in different ways. In this way, I wish to call attention to the experiential aspect of the practice: the physical engagement with non-place through walking (and often climbing), whilst avoiding various obstacles and security measures.

My photographs (and the work of other photographers) are situated in the text as discursive signposts, which make explicit the *embodying of research in the practice*. There is no chronological sequence in the deployment of my own photographs in the book, but where appropriate, I include photographs that I regard as key photographs within the development of the book's argumentation.

The work of other photographers is included in the book, because they share a similar preoccupation with contested and so-called inconsequential landscapes. The landscape representations reproduced in the book provide an ongoing dialogic encounter for the reader, whilst also functioning as intertextual signposts throughout the text. We might consider why certain human-altered landscapes have emerged? How do specific landscapes (especially urban) create meaning for the observer? How does culture construct these interpretations? In what sense are landscapes multimodal, in that their value can change by their re-presentation and subsequent dissemination?

What connects all the photographs reproduced in this book is the critical interrogation of landscape aesthetics, and how this question is embedded within forms of cultural valorization. This is a fundamental question: Why are certain landscapes privileged, protected, and valued above other landscapes? Is an established 'cultural aesthetic' at work here, one that represents power and vested interest? The proselytizing for a change in attitude to urban re-wilding permeates this book and is implicit in my photographs and the photographs of others. In this context, many of the photographs critically reflect on the relationship between nature and the urban landscape. The book investigates the potential benefits from the introduction of a less-managed, wilder nature into the urban landscape, as opposed to a commodified nature, a decorative decoy, functioning as a mere accessory to landscape architecture.

I highlight the interdisciplinary potential that research-led photographic practice affords, in which the domains of academic and cultural

life are exposed, and creatively collide. The time seems right to follow Benjamin's invitation to consider the new image worlds that photography has helped bring into view, as well as the unconscious dimensions of our imaged and imagined communities (Sliwinski and Smith 2017: 3).

New modes of engagement with the concept of non-place, and its representation through photographic practice as research, where 'Benjamin's "tiny spark of contingency" is not something to be discovered in words, but rather, in looking, and specifically by looking at photographs' (Sliwinski and Smith 2017: 18).

Mark Reinhardt (2017) interrogates the apparent opacity of Benjamin's concept of the 'optical unconscious':

> There is no doubting that photographs make available for inspection much that we would not otherwise see. As the neuro-psychiatrist Eric Kandel observes, "the eye does not work like a camera' and the brain filters out much information captured by our sensory organs while adding visual elements not obtained through them. (Reinhardt 2017: 176)

My critical analysis of the photographs in the book is not intended to foreclose other readings. Rather, my critical interrogation of the photographs employs an 'interpretive' approach; one that embraces eclectic allusions to other influential works within representational visual culture. The intention is to engage a readership (both academic and non-academic) in a re-conception of non-place where 'experience interprets experience, organizing it into new forms – in the case of research, into forms accessible to other people'.[9] There is an exhortation to the reader to participate in the 'transformations' within this text, an invitation to form their own interpretations.

Visual imagery is never innocent: it is always constructed through various practices, techniques, technologies, and knowledges. A critical approach to visual images is therefore needed: one that thinks about the agency of the image, considers the social practices and effects of its viewing, and reflects on the specificity of that viewing by various audiences including the academic critic (Rose 2007: 26).

Victor Burgin (1982) argues that the 'photographic text' functions like any other text: it is the site of a complex 'intertextuality', an over-lapping series of previous texts 'taken for granted' at a specific 'cultural and historical conjuncture' and 'the site of a complex 'intertextuality', an overlapping series of previous texts' (Burgin 1982: 144).

In his discussion of Diane Arbus's photograph, *Identical Twins, Roselle, New Jersey* (1967), Burgin observes that the photograph's power to communicate depends on the prevailing ideological apparatus[8]:

> the typical representation of prevailing social facts and values: that is to say, on our knowledge of the way objects transmit and transform ideology, and the ways in which photographs in their turn transform these. To appreciate such operations we must first lose any illusion about the neutrality of objects before the camera. (Burgin 1982: 41)

> They take their position, that is to say, within an ideology. By ideology we mean, in its broadest sense, a complex of propositions about the natural and social world which would be generally accepted in a given society as describing the actual, indeed necessary, nature of the world and its events. (Burgin 1982: 45, 46)

This means conceiving of non-place as the lens through which to examine the interdisciplinary potential of the urban landscape. Non-place as the dialectical confession box of globalized capital's guilt.

The synthesis of extra and inter-textual activities within this book could be engaged with as a textual equivalent to the palimpsest of non-place. The frequency of allusions in the book echoes the detritus and enigmatic landscape codes experienced in non-place. The various 'clicks' associated with the camera's function and my own photographic decisions have coalesced within an undulating prospect of references that have colonized the research enquiry, embedded in the 'practice', and through a critical reflexivity; a process that happened whilst walking to the sites, on the train, and in the studio. Reflection on the practice is of course, the practice as well—it never ends, and is imbricated with the other. This constant 'clicking', shifting between the present reality being photographed and the concomitant intertextual invitations comes close to describing the process enacted in non-place.

The 'multidimensionality of a photograph' allows it to be read in various ways and 'through various philosophical systems' (Brouws 2006: 146). We might also add that the actual performance that led to the production of the photographic artefact (analogue print or digital file), where it is encountered through myriad forms of reception (multimodality), including photobooks, exhibitions, archives, family albums (Facebook), social media platforms, and JPEG email attachments, profoundly affects its interdisciplinary and cultural interpretation:

> Moreover, is it correct to say that it is the object – the photograph – that we theorize, or is it photographic practice, which could incorporate the psychologically and ideologically informed act of taking photographs and the processes of developing, reproducing, and circulating them in society? (Kriebel 2007: 5)

This text therefore becomes a textual simulacrum of the non-place, in which an accretion of allusions and references permeate the experience of reading.

The deliberate juxtaposition of ironic title captions for each photograph encourages a polemical encounter with the work. This caption strategy has been problematic throughout the course of the study, in that certain respondents value the 'entry' into the work that the titles offer, whilst others find the imposition sometimes misleading, or foreclosing of potential interpretations. In response to the various opinions received over the course of my research, I have reproduced numerous caption titles. For example, a photograph captioned as *Dune* (2007) changed to *Sand* (2007). The more suggestive caption titles enable a broader access to the work, without foreclosing the possibility of other readings. In this sense, my photographic practice has developed to be dialogic without being propagandist. My photographs are compositionally framed to achieve a direct address with the spectator-reader, to invite a more sustained critical conversation—a debate in relation to the current notions surrounding contemporary landscape photography representation, through the re-conception of non-place.

To redefine the more straightforward definitions of what a non-place constitutes, we need to venture outside Marc Augés departure lounge of supermodernity, to a less technologically controlled environment. An experience liberated from CCTV surveillance. A more physical confrontation with weather and human agency, amidst abandoned industrial sites, now redundant spaces on the verge of recovery, regeneration or cultural erasure. Symptomatic of the 'ruptured' zones considered by Pierre Nora.[9]

According to Nora, this break in the 'cult of continuity' between history and memory, and the places of memory (*lieux de mémoire*), is explained by our move from a more 'rooted past' to an experience of the past as disconnected from a more continuous flow of history and experience. And, in the context of the late twentieth century, sites of memory often inscribed and legitimized by monuments, only exist because the

more valued *milieux de mémoire*, the established neighbourhoods in which collective memory is embedded in an authentic experience of the everyday, no longer exists. The contribution made by Nora to notions of place, finds specific resonance in the subsequent work of Augé, as he meditates on those non-places that erode any sense of Nora's 'citizen-memory'.

The non-place sites that I investigated are located where access and ownership is often ambiguous or in dispute. They can be apprehended as having been produced through a process of speculative land investment and cultural forgetting. There is a heightened sense when walking through these areas that non-place has the potential to reveal a version of England swathed in contesting notions concerning identity, loss, memory, landscape valorization, and how we arrive at a more meaningful place. In this sense, the inter-dependent relationship between the photographic practice and text is a declaration to view non-places in a different way.

It might be useful for the reader to think of the following pages as the tracks of a journey. We begin in Chapter 2 with the consideration of walking as a form of practice, through heightened reflections on place. In Chapter 3, we encounter the perspectives and representations of others who have traversed similar paths. In Chapter 4, we observe the traces of previous inscriptions which reveal the remnants of memory. In Chapter 5, we arrive at an historic fork in the road presenting us with the paradox of non-place as both cultural oblivion and reinvigorated place.

Notes

1. 'Non-place' in the text will be as: non-place. Other sources include, Nencini Francesco & Pirovano, Stefano; I Non Luoghi (The Non-Places), Silvana Editoriale, Milan, 2005. Augé, M. (1995). *Non-places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity* (trans.) John Howe, Verso. Although similar 'non-places' exist in some form within the emerging cities outside the West, most notably the Indian maidan, a more in-depth investigation of global non-places is beyond the scope of this book.
2. See J. K. Wright. Terrae Incognitae: The Place of the Imagination in Geography, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 37: pp. 1–5.
3. My use of the complex term *Culture* is informed by Bennett et al. (2005) in *New Keywords: A Revised Vocabulary of Culture and Society* explicates the complexity of the word, 'a deeply compromised idea, yet an invaluable one he cannot do without' (Clifford 1988: 10 quoted by Bennett et al. 2005). For my purposes here, I use the less contested version of culture, suggested in Williams' second sense; in which he refers to a 'particular way

of life, whether of a people, a period or a group or humanity in general' (Williams 1983 [1976]: 90).

4. *Ekphrasis* or *ecphrasis*. In ancient times, it referred to a description of any thing, person, or experience. The word comes from the Greek *ek* and *phrasis*, 'out' and 'speak' respectively, and the verb *ekphrazein*, to proclaim.
5. Meaghan Morris ('Banality in Cultural Studies', in Mellencamp, *Logics of Television*, 14–15.) quoted by Victor Burgin in *In Different Spaces: Place and Memory in Visual Culture*, Introduction, University of California Press, 1996, pp. x–xi, Preface.
6. *Trümmerfrau*, German name for the women who helped to clear the bricks and rubble devastation in the aftermath of the Second World War, within the four occupied sectors of Berlin. Obviously, this personal reflection and subsequent allusions emerges throughout the book.
7. The Rington's tea factory provided children with discarded tea chests during the 'chumping' weeks leading up to the 5th November Bonfire Night. 'Chumping' was a local verb to denote the foraging of flammable materials for the fire, and would be guarded into the night by local children, to deter other children from stealing their stack. Such stacks were often located in abandoned cellars and external toilet units along northern 'back-to-back' houses.
8. Louis Althusser (1970) defined ideology as systems of representation 'in which people live their relationship to the real conditions of their lives'. Althusser's famous term: 'ideological state apparatuses', refers to the embedding of the 'material practices of language use' (and therefore, power) in specific social institutions (Bennett et al. 2005: 177).
9. The term 'rupture' in this context is synonymous with Pierre Nora's epic examination of French national memory in: *Les Lieux de Mémoire* (Realms of Memory), Vol. 2: La Nation (Paris: Gallimard), 1986.

References

Atieno, O. P. (2009). An Analysis of the Strengths and Limitations of Qualitative and Quantative Research Paradigms, *Problems of Education in the 21st Century, 13*(1), pp.14–17.

Brouws, J. (2006). *Approaching Nowhere: Photographs by Jeff Brouws*. New York and London: W.W. Norton and Company.

Burgin, V. (Ed.). (1982). Looking at Photographs. *Thinking Photography*. MacMillan Education Limited.

Duncan, J., & Ley, D. (Eds.). (1993). Introduction. In *Place/Culture/Representation*. New York: Routledge.

Kriebel, T. S. (2007). Theories of Photography: A Short History. In J. Elkins (Ed.), *Photography Theory*. London and New York: Routledge.

Reinhardt, M. (2017). Vision's Unseen: On Sovereignty, Race, and the Optical Unconscious. In S. Sliwinski & S. M. Smith (Eds.), *Photography and the Optical Unconscious*. Durham and London: University Press.

Rose, G. (2007). *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to the Interpretations of Visual Materials* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.

Sliwinski, S., & Smith, S. M. (Eds.). (2017). *Photography and the Optical Unconscious*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Williams, R. (1976). *Keywords: A vocabulary of Culture and Society*. Fontana Press.

Wright, K. J. (1947). Terrae Incognitae: The Place of the Imagination in Geography. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers, 37,* pp.1–5.

CHAPTER 2

Walking as a Decisive Moment

This chapter discusses the importance of walking as a catalyst for imaginative critical thinking. The overarching argument proposes that the act of walking provides an important slowing-down encounter with the urban landscape, as part of an essential phenomenological element within 'lived experience'. In this sense, walking has the potential to reveal a less prescriptive apprehension of non-place. Each step coincides with the ironic reference to the potential 'click' of the camera shutter.

There Is No Decisive Moment, Only Quantum Decisions

As a provocative (yet ludic) reference to the photographer, Henri Cartier-Bresson (1952), and his burdensome axiom of the 'decisive moment' (1952), I can assure the reader that there is no 'decisive moment' in my research-led photography, only a series of quantum decisions. Although I appreciate that some photography seeks to arrest a specific moment (even though a moment's exact duration is contested by many physicists), this long-standing preoccupation with photography's unique ability to freeze motion, continues to undermine the more profound ontologies of photography, making the process a performing bear—a circus act, when compared to the gravitas attributed to the act of studio and *en plein air* painting. Moreover, we might consider Cartier-Bresson's iconic photograph, *Man Jumping Over a Puddle* (1932) an inadvertent *homage* to the temporal alchemy of *The Horse in Motion* (1878) photographic series produced by Eadweard Muybridge. To make the photograph *Man Jumping*

J. Brogden, *Photography and the Non-Place*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-03919-6_2

Over a Puddle more humane, less a victim to the special effect of photography, perhaps the man may have been captured reacting to a wet shoe?

Spatial Enunciation in Non-place

This section seeks to elevate the symbiotic performance of walking and photography, by promoting their function as a sequential experience of equally important decisions—continuous 'moments'. Here, walking is situated as a prerequisite for the peripatetic research-led photographer to discover 'unexplored' non-places. We might also view walking (especially in some American cities) as a sociopolitical act, lubricating civic disruption, whilst, in its gentle form, helping to generate ideas about the world.

The potential of walking to reinvigorate a dialogue with the city has an interesting history. Although the tradition of *flâneurism*[1] and the attitudes to the *dérive*[2] denote a more distracted 'drifting', to counter the more embedded spatial practices associated with the city; its adoption by the Surrealists provided the International Situationists with a potent practice to interrogate political space. The point that this necessarily truncated historical purview proves, is that an exploration of the city through walking in the least well-known parts of the city (even as Eugene Atget was to so poignantly reveal in his photography of the hidden recesses of Paris), has a certain heritage in the arts.[3]

The more purposeful embodiment of the *flâneur* method is echoed in the work of several artists and key critical thinkers, each of which has become synonymous with a region, city, town.

In considering the iterative walks of Van Gogh across the French landscape, we acknowledge the transformative effect of Provence on the artist's personal vision. The landscape itself invests his vision with a universalizing force, whilst stimulating an almost scientific preoccupation with the perceptual challenges posed by the Provençal light, the changes in colour and tone across terrain. We could assert here that Van Gogh's approach to his practice involved the reflexivity of walking, in the same way that his correspondence with his brother Theo allowed him an important reflexive space. Similarly, in the work of Paul Cézanne we find an equivalent act of walking to the motif.

In the work of Cézanne, the walk resembles a recurring pilgrimage to paint *Montagne Sainte-Victoire* from different locations, each successive representation prophetic of Cubism and the inexorable *dénouement* of total twentieth-century abstraction.

Both Van Gogh and Cézanne understood that walking was instrumental in the formation of their creative concepts. Each transformed the act of walking, investing it with allegorical symbolism: the 'journey into the desert' of self-discovery. In this sense, walking enabled the artists to encounter something ineffable, otherwise unreachable in the comfort of the studio, the quality of which, imbues the work of both artists, and has influenced other contemporary artists and thinkers.

According to the English contrarian writer, Iain Sinclair, reflecting on his disorientating, peripheral pilgrimage around the London M25, walking could be understood as a pedestrian rage against the pervasive inscriptions of the motor vehicle across the urban landscape. An urban reconfiguration that creates fugitive zones where 'the imagination can reach out towards ambiguity'.[4]

David Henry Thoreau wrote famously, that the shortest walk should be undertaken 'in the spirit of undying adventure', in which the walker must be 'prepared to send back our embalmed hearts only as relics to our desolate kingdoms' (1994: 2079). In relation to John Gossage's Photobook, *The Pond* (1986) an homage to the Thoreau's book, *Walden* (1854) we witness a similar celebration of the local, everyday milieu, where there is 'in fact a sort of harmony discoverable between the capabilities of the landscape within a circle of ten miles' radius, or the limits of an afternoon walk' (Thoreau 1862: 2079).[5]

Considering the imaginative potential of a certain indeterminate *flâneurism*, Thoreau declares presciently, that,

> [H]owever, there are a few old roads that may be trodden with profit, as if they led somewhere now that they are nearly disconnected […] I presume that there are one or two such roads in every town. (1862)

It is worth noting the above quote, in relation to the prefiguring of American landscape film (the 'Road movie') and photography, and of course, its influence beyond America, in disseminating the notions attached to the aestheticization of the every day, often through walking.

The small shifts in my own photography, follow the route(s) of my various walks to the numerous non-places photographed within the Leeds urban landscape. The hunter checking his traps is a relevant metaphor in describing this methodology. For if we check these 'traps' over time, then we notice a diverse range of motifs, changing their position in space, deteriorating, being repurposed, by certain forms of natural,

animal, and human agency, whilst subject to the transformations of 'times of the day', weather conditions, and broader seasonal variations.

Through the visual exploration of these non-places as a peripatetic photographer-researcher, one physically experiences the link between the motorcar and the urban landscape—a contributory factor, in my view, to the production of marginal non-place(s).

There is an autodidactic, obscurantist quality to Sinclair's writing, which is energized by an investigative, almost conspiratorial, urgency. Not surprisingly perhaps, Iain Sinclair has been accused of fetishizing the very places that he regards as authentic:

> He is aware of the charge that he's been as responsible as anyone for the fetishization of London's decrepitude, contributing to an aesthetic of urban decay that is now ubiquitous. A new complaint is that his success has drowned out other voices. (John Day September 27, 2017)

To offer some defence to this criticism, any representation, be it through prose, poetry, or visual communication, is inevitably a transformative, aestheticizing (and yes, potentially fetishizing) act. Whatever the 'real' identity of place is, this is affected and changed through the reimagined performance of re-presentation.

In Linda McDowell's book, *Capital Culture: Gender at Work in the City* (1997), London is exposed as a series of scenographic built environments, designed by 'rock star' international architects, facilitated by international corporate investment that was attracted to a corporate vision of public spaces. This envisioning of public space, a kind of spatial cleansing, seeks to blur the binary positions of work and leisure for the international professional middle classes.

For Sinclair, the increasing corporate commodification of London around the 2012 Olympics construction project, provides poignant insights into the elegiac aims of *Ghost Milk* (2011). The book's dedication highlights the erasure of important community sites: 'In memory of the huts of the manor Garden Allotments' (Sinclair 2011). In characteristic style, he provides a Joycian critical onslaught against the ineluctable homogenization of diverse, less-valued urban landscapes, and the expedient commodification of established community spaces, increasingly propelled by the corrosive effects of global capital.

Sinclair's authorial voice echoes the vivid digressions, analogous, and loquaciousness of the Lawrence Olivier music hall stand-up comedian,

Archie Rice in *The Entertainer* (1960, directed by Tony Richardson). In a bizarre way, the film prefigures many of Sinclair's own concerns, giving voice to a similar 'state of the nation' disdain for a rapidly changing, more materialistic England.

On the destruction of the Lower Lea Valley, to make way for the London 2012 Olympic Park, Sinclair assesses what has been lost:

> It had not been a good year, the devastation of the ecology of the Lower Lea Valley, with the loss of allotments, unofficial orchards behind abandoned lock-keepers' cottages, native shrubs, wildlife habitats, disturbed the balance of London. (Sinclair 2011: 167)

In contrast to the erasure of a less codified, ecologically important Lea Valley, Sinclair observes that the promoters of the London Olympics grand project eulogize the benefits of a 'regeneration of a blasted wilderness' (Sinclair 2011: 167).

Sinclair observes that through the 'tropical thicket' of Silverton, 'you could make out the silver helmets of the Thames barrier and Derek Jarman's Millennium Mills from [his film] *The Last of England* [1987]' (Sinclair 2011: 195), another cinematic reference that ruminates on the rapid decline of England. Sinclair's acknowledgement of Millennium Mills, points to the rapid gentrification of the Thames docklands since the 1970s onwards, in which itinerant artists and film-makers were forced to move out of often, rent-free redundant riverside warehouses.

On leaving Gravesend for the rebranded O2 Arena, previously known as the Millennium Dome (2000), Sinclair considers the work of W.G. Sebald and how he might have referred to this terrain: 'he [W.G. Sebald] speaks of launching a walk into the emptiness', checking out of the hospital with the 'melancholy hours ahead' (Sinclair 2011: 195). For Sinclair, Sebald's journey becomes a 'monograph of significant encounters, *non-spaces* dignified through translations' (Sinclair 2011: 195, my emphasis). Interestingly, a poet friend of Sinclair, had been a walking companion of Sebald, accompanying him to junk shops to search for postcards, which would eventually be deployed with irony, within the pages of his books. Also during this period, Sebald would take solitary excursions to explore Jewish burial grounds around London (Sinclair 2011).

The potential of this activity is discussed by Michel de Certeau in his essay 'Walking in the City', in which pedestrian 'movement can be seen

to open up individual experience to new and different ways of perceiving and designing the world'.[6] De Certeau's subsequent proposal, that walking is a form of spatial 'enunciation', and that walking through the city is similar to the routes of syntax and language, is an elegant, if rather opaque notion.[7] Yet his declaration of walking as a voice in the city, makes for an interesting relationship within the *ekphrasis* aims of this book, itself an attempt to recreate in another form, the performance of walking and photography.

In some quarters the act of walking in the city is regarded as a 'political act', a way of undermining the authority of an automotive design-led city where the pedestrian is often regarded as an inconvenience, unless of course, they are involved in recreational shopping (especially in North America). The more recent examples of positive action, reminiscent of the 1980s 'road protests' movement, and 'reclaim the streets', attests to the disenchantment felt by many in the urban landscape. In this context, my research investigation takes the form of an implicit critique of the various transformations that have taken place in the urban landscape over the last fifty years.

According to Jackson (1980), 'the road generates its own patterns of movement and settlement and work without so far producing its own kind of landscape beauty or its own sense of place' (Jackson 1980: preface viii). One could argue that round-a-bouts, motorway embankments, and parking areas, all evoke a certain genus locus. We may not experience pleasure and meaning in such places, but they each contain their own narratives of place: a moment's rest during a long journey, a breakdown recovery (or not), the frustration felt when taking a wrong exit?

Furthermore, the phrase genus locus implied 'a celebration or ritual, and the location itself acquired a special status' (Jackson 1980: 157). This reverence for place is not a temporary response, for 'it persists' and 'reminds us of previous visits'. Such places are embedded in the 'everyday world around us' (Jackson 1980: 158). Moreover, these places are easily accessed, but concomitantly distinct. Are such places anachronistic and sentimental now? How might we respond to Jackson's provocation that roads have become the last places for a meaningful encounter with nature?

> Roads no longer merely lead to places; *they are places*. And as always, they serve two important roles: as promoters of growth and dispersion, and as magnates around which new kinds of development can cluster.

> In this modern landscape, no other space has been so versatile. (Jackson 1980: 190, my emphasis)

Obviously, Jackson's observation was made some twenty-four years ago, and from a particularly American critical perspective. Emerging reconfigurations include the impact of driverless cars, drone delivery methods, and the constant reassertion of less-polluting forms of transport, provided by an integrated system based on a rail network.

The act of walking is inextricably linked with the performance of photography here. It functions both as an architectonic device within the *praxis* (expressed in the decision of where to set up the tripod), but also serves to structure the imaginative experience of place, in that it constantly reminds one of the historical narratives and fractures within the spaces walked through, and the sequence of changes which have formed these non-places in the first place.[8] Walking in this sense, is an essential part of the methodological approach, itself, a disruptive and revelatory practice.[9]

The photograph *Opening* (2009; Fig. 2.1) reveals the penetration of a conventional wire fence, whilst reminding us of other improvised entrances and exits. Yet the photograph embraces the ambiguity of the situation; are we facing an entrance or exit? Without foreclosing further readings, the invitation is deliberately ambiguous, exploring the options posed by the non-place whether to accept the invitation left by the unknown visitor, signified by the fence aperture, and so enter the site, or reject the referent to the Other, and refuse to enter 'new realms of possibility'.[10] Interestingly, the very nature of the non-place site is its elusive terrain in which we might be simultaneously entering and leaving. This spatial ambiguity is more noticeable in sites where remnants of fences still exist, and where older boundary walls have been compromised by partial demolition or re-wilding. In this sense, the photograph offers an experience on the threshold of inside and outside, both in a phenomenological and hermeneutical sense. What Ernst Bloch calls 'non-contemporaneity' is pertinent here, as the physical experience of passage and photographic performance collides with the historical past in a present flux.[11] This state of almost photographic 'rapture' (to allude to the fatal diving condition: 'the rapture of the deep'), provides a welcome hiatus; an act of severing, which becomes its own 'reality-effect', as the photographer erects the tripod to decide which view to enclose within the frame.

Fig. 2.1 *Opening*, 2009. Photograph by the author

Walking Through History

The 'cult writer' and academic, W. G. Sebald, died on the 14 December 2001. His 'autobiographical' novels present a 'literature of memory', in which he navigates the labyrinthine topographies of European destruction after the Second World War. His part fictive-life-writing is constructed through a synthesis of historical, literary, and auto-ethnographic observations, combined with a form of *faux-naïve* black-and-white photographs, that celebrate the everyday. The use of these eclectic literary tropes is underscored by the leitmotiv of the uncanny, in the brooding form of ruined remnants.

Sebald presents a diverse range of melancholic iconography: dilapidated train stations, each of which is invested with the indelible trauma of the Holocaust, and abandoned industrial sites, wrecked ships, discarded colonial objects, bombed-out buildings, decaying institutions of power, the imagery of exploited nature, under the historical umbrella of a genocidal legacy, and European imperialism (Presner 2010). The sense here is not only the materiality of ruin, but the erosion of certain narratives: narratives with gaps—voids (again).

Through his rather wistful *flâneurism*, Sebald reveals the impermanence and veracity of the grand narratives of modernity; his journey, however indeterminate, juxtaposes the emerging minutiae of the personal, to puncture, and subvert the authority of the larger brushstrokes of history. In this sense, if time (and history) do indeed flow, then Sebald wades upstream, causing resistance and agitation.

Sebald's writings have provided a welcome maverick reference, in his exploration of the 'local'; and how the local can function when one digs deeper.[12] In Sebald's haunting travel memoirs (they are difficult to categorize): *The Rings of Saturn* (1998) and *Austerlitz* (2001) the itinerary of the journey enables a more confessional investigation into the dormant folds of history and personal reverie:[13]

> I cannot say how long I walked about in that state of mind, or how I found a way out. But I do remember that suddenly I stood on a country lane, beneath a mighty oak, and the horizon was spinning all around as if I had jumped off a merry-go-round. (Sebald 2001: 172)

Sebald refers to the master tropes of ruins as representations of 'traumatic modernity'. According to Hell and Schönle (2010), *The Rings of Saturn* exposes the disquiet that ruins evoke between 'modernist minimalism' and a ruminating metaphysical reflection. The ruins exemplify the diaphor, in which the poetry of opposites exists; permanence and impermanence, fragmentation and totality, the tangible and the ineffable. In this sense, Sebald's writing navigates this often amorphous, suggestive terrain with the same indistinct, dream-like sense of destination. The same apparently dissolving destination—an always out-of-reach condition that haunts Kafka's novel, *The Castle* (1926). In these sometimes frustrating and melancholic evocations of place, it is the journey alone that offers a redemptive reflexivity to the author, rather than the arrival. Indeed, in Sebald's quest for the answers to the carnage of history and modernism, for some personal reconciliation with these disquieting narratives, precludes any arrival. In the manner of Iain Sinclair (2003), in his protracted sojourn around London, in *London Orbital: A Walk Around the M25*, both writers make the journey for all of us.

The Sebaldian journey represents a fragmented memory excursion through a ruined auto-ethnographic narrative which is often confusing to the author himself. To assuage (exorcize) his sombre recollections both personal and collective, Sebald reverts to the solace afforded by

lyrical digressions, each of which, appear to further obfuscate the intention to remember. The act of remembrance is mourned, becomes ineffable through the metonymic presence of ruins, merging forgetting into final oblivion.

Sebald's grand themes are loss, destruction, exile and return, forgetting and remembrance, which are in turn mediated through 'complex forms of narrative embedding' (Long and Whitehead 2004: 5). The author's travels function as a subtle framing device, through which other narratives coalesce. This coalescence is lubricated by Sebald's grammatical hypotaxis which functions to immerse the reader in a labyrinth of authorial digressions and obscurantism.

His themes expand to include landscape and nature; travel and walking; intertextuality and intermediality; haunting, trauma, and memory. These eclectic themes create a confluence of discourses, contexts, and debates.

Sebald's pervasive allusions to past writers and events, encourage an active intertextuality that includes the post-Freudian discourse on memory and trauma.

The deployment of Sebald's own travel photography (deliberately ironic in a 'deadpan' style) within a largely text-based novel-form, questions the role of the 'visual in memory and the construction of narrative', and furthermore, posits questions which 'are central to the discipline of visual cultural studies' (Long and Whitehead 2004: 5). Moreover, does Sebald share the same concerns as Kierkegaard (and Freud), in which repetition functions as a 'form of binding or mastery, which positions Sebald's writing as a mode of working through the past?' (Long and Whitehead 2004: 8).

For Long and Whitehead (2004) trauma has the tendency to 'rupture' memory, through severing the continuity with the past, and in this way, questions identity itself. And according to trauma theory, there is always the possibility that trauma is relived, that memories are inherited from those who have died.

Sebald's writing could be situated in this critical framework, in which the act of writing serves a healing process; to reconcile the inherited memories from a devastated German heritage? In this sense, Sebald's own identity is, according to Long and Whitehead (2004), 'profoundly imbricated in the ongoing dilemmas and debates of trauma theory and he occupies a central position in contemporary discourse' (2004: 9).

Martin Swales (2004) has observed that Sebald follows the German writers' nineteenth-century treatment of 'the phenomenal world as

a cipher through which intimations of the metaphysical reveal themselves to the attentive observer [photographer observer as well?]' (Swales 2004: 23–28).

Swales observes that Sebald's writing searches for 'some kind of signification beyond common perception' (Swales 2004: 26). That the melancholic condition becomes 'a profound form of knowing' (Swales 2004: 26). The 'metaphysical lining' (Sebald's own term) (Swales 2004: 28) is achieved through *herkunft*—a writing mode that embraces the 'sedimentation of past living that produces present forms of being' (Swales 2004: 28). In addition, this mode is enhanced, through the adoption of a rather self-conscious application of pathetic fallacy.

The strength of Sebald's writing is the insistence that we should be cognizant of our place in the natural world. In reinforcing this sense of urgency, Riordian (2004) situates Sebald's poem, 'After Nature' within an ecological dialectic, one that is inextricably linked to German culture. A concept of nature that has been dependent on historical context, and 'national-cultural factors', including a 'host of other factors' (Riordan 2004: 46). In discussing representations of nature 'we are discussing nature itself', whilst simultaneously, 'human society and our relationship with the world around us' (Riordan 2004: 47). Yet, according to Peter Coates (1998), nature only functions as a 'mental and linguistic construct'. With specific reference to photographic practice, representations of nature create its meaning—its actuality. This, according to Riordan, would contest Gernot Böhme's critique of nature as extrinsic to the human. Yet, Böhme's view is still relevant, in that, without representations, nature still functions: the recolonization of the Chernobyl zone of exclusion is a salutary reminder of that ineluctable force. Our own ontological encounter with nature—its meaning-function, is of course, profoundly affected by human representations and associated rituals, which attempt to arrest the more existential anxieties related to the human condition.

Simon Ward's critique of Sebald's self-reflexive writing identifies the importance of the ruin *leitmotiv* as a crucial element. According to Ward, both Robert Harbison, an architectural historian, and Peter Geimer, analyse the influence of the artists and aestheticians who were working in the second half of the eighteenth century, who regarded the ruin, as a *leerstelle* (empty space), which importantly, facilitated the insertion of imaginative representations (Ward 2004). This mid-eighteenth century provenance of so-called empty space, with its connotation of void and

worthlessness, still resonates in my re-conception of non-place in this text, in which place is still porous to new imaginaries?

From Ward's critical perspective, the ruin allows the reader to enter Sebald's labyrinthine work, to consider, as observed by Huyssen, the 'metaphysics of nature' (2001: 84). The sheer phenomenological presence of the ruin, reveals the omnipresence of the 'past in the present' (Ward 2004: 59).

Sebald's exploration of the enigmatic Orfordness site (an island in every sense, save for a tenuous beach connection in the north as it joins Aldeburgh) in *The Rings of Saturn*, exposes the other-worldly qualities of place, which served in the twentieth century as a top-secret location for military science, notably the development of radar, that most invisible technology of presence.[14] The entire site of Orfordness is often inaccessible during the winter months, due to encroaching sea levels. With this knowledge, one recognizes that any landing is temporary, where one is always a visitor, not a resident. This place, with its erstwhile clandestine military installations, presents a ruined island as a paradoxical sanctuary for nature, complete with designated pathway routes to avoid unexploded ordnance below the shingle ecology. Orfordness's eerie aesthetic appeals to Sebald's melancholic search for the forgotten histories inscribed in similarly fragile surfaces:

> It was as if I were passing through an undiscovered country, and I still remember that I felt, at the same time, both utterly liberated and despondent. I had not a single thought in my head. With each step that I took, the emptiness within the emptiness without grew ever greater and the silence more profound. (Sebald 1998 [1995]: 234)

Sebald's eventual departure from Orfordness is disrupted by a vision of 'sails of the long-vanished windmills turning heavily in the wind' (1998: 237); an elegiac mood evoked by the movement of sails.

Ward suggests that Sebald appears to project into the 'extraterritorial ruined space that is also the space of the imagination' (Ward 2004: 61), where Sebald recognizes, that 'memory fails us', and that too 'many buildings have fallen down, too much rubble has been heaped up, the moraines and deposits are insuperable' (Sebald *RS*: 177/211 cited by Ward 2004: 61).

Sebald's character in *The Rings of Saturn* (echoing perhaps, Kierkegaard's disenchanted Constantine revisiting Berlin) attempts to recover his past life in Berlin, but accepts that when he recalls his visit in

1947, all he can remember is a 'desolate place', devoid of people, 'only bricks, millions of bricks' (Sebald *RS*: 179).

According to Ward, what is exposed in this recollection of Berlin's destruction, is that the 'authenticity of the act of remembrance is called into question' (2004: 62), whilst the past is intangible, bifurcated within a ruined culture. Here, the ruin is emblematic of the relationship between the human desire to form material (the 'will of the spirit'—'der Wille des Geistes'), and the natural process of decay, 'the necessity of nature' (*die Notwendig keit der Natur*).[15]

George Simmel's ruminations on the meaning of the ruin, seems to inform Sebald's approach to ruins, most notably in relation to the seductive allure of the ruined object through its organic subjugation; a natural process which reconfigures the work of man as 'a product of nature' (Simmel 1959 [1919]: 125–33). Moreover, Sebald's often vivid observations of the seemingly mundane, make manifest Simmel's claim, that each phenomenological encounter has the potential to reveal universal insights to the keen observer, in which 'the total meaning of the world as a whole radiates from every single point' (Simmel 1968 [1879]: 68–80). Yet not surprisingly for Sebald, this nuanced sovereign perspective is disrupted by a preoccupation with obscurantist detail. A digression that causes his own self-inflicted bewilderment.

Employing the metaphor of erosion, Beck emphasizes the fragility of intellectual constants, and axiomatic structures:

> In human affairs similarly, philosophical and social theories seek to represent generalities that might contain the contingency of experience […] yet just as a culture is busy celebrating its triumph over the unknown, the tide invariably comes in a gain. (Beck 2004: 75)

Sebald's *The Rings of Saturn* embraces this figurative erosion, with its inexorable destruction of established representations of the world, without considering the other process involved in erosion: the redistribution of material to other locations. In the literal sense, eroded material is distributed by sea currents, to form new coastal features. Sebald's interpretation of historical and cultural erosion ignores where this dislodged 'material' might be reconstituted, what new conceptual/political features may emerge, such as the emergence of the New Right across Europe for example? For Sebald, the metaphor of erosion corresponds to the eventual oblivion of all personal and collective memory. Beck describes

Sebald's response to history as a narrative of 'universal decomposition' (2004: 76).

The known world is Kafkaesque, always unattainable through representations; a tenuous gesture to salvage what is about to be forgotten, even though Sebald continues the reification of the local. An endeavour that might give rise to 'considerations of global and cosmic scale' (Beck 2004: 76).

Beck considers Sebald's emphatic refutation of the entire Enlightenment project: one which resonates poignantly in these 'truth decay', Trumpian times:

> [Sebald's] aim is to challenge Enlightenment rationality, and the imperial and capitalist projects it legitimised, through the creation of a counter-system, a mirror world that reflects back the deformed 'truth' of historical experience. (Beck 2004: 77)

Sebald's immersive texts create systems of thought, however illogical and digressive. They enable the non-verifiable, associational, and intuitive to exist concomitantly, within the 'representational traces' of an exhausted process that makes manifest 'the granulated evidence of realities now vanished forever' (Beck 2004: 77). *The Rings of Saturn* presents a 'mode of meta-commentary that produces order with a view to dismantling it from the inside' (Beck 2004: 81).

Presner situates Sebald as the privileged writer 'inside the nation', conscious of 'turning the European tradition on itself'. In achieving this, Sebald explores the coast of Suffolk, in England, itself, freighted with an 'imperial imaginary' (Presner 2010).

The Rings of Saturn (subtitled in German as an 'English Pilgrimage') locates a stretch of the Suffolk coastline as the backdrop to Sebald's idiosyncratic cultural geography. The book is part travel narrative meditation on the 'post- colonial philosophy of history, taking the ruins of the British Empire as the specific site for examining the dialectic of modernity' (Presner 2010: 195). Although it may be a footnote in relation to Sebald's discursive ambitions in (*RS*), the choice of the Suffolk coastline is not incidental. This area of English coastline is vulnerable to extreme erosion. The erstwhile port of Dunwich (favoured as a summer writing retreat by Henry James) provides a vivid testament to the powerful erasure of the North Sea; its church now resides a mile out to sea.

The notion of progress remaining the hallmark of modernity, took root when 'the expectations that reached out for the future became detached from all that previous experience had to offer'.

Presner questions the narrowness of Koselleck's approach here, in avoiding the contributions made by geographical and spatial dimensions (Presner 2010: 196).

According to Presner, Sebald's reference to the Antwerp railway station is an 'overdetermined locus' signifying the 'hopes and catastrophes of modernity' (2010: 197).[16]

Like Hegel's the *Philosophy of History* (1837), Sebald's (*RS*) is organized geographically and highlights the 'relationship between Europe and the colonial sphere, in its historical narrative of modernity' (Presner 2010: 202). Sebald's pilgrimage is inconsequential, as it follows a thirty-mile area of coastline from Somerton to Orfordness in Suffolk. During the walk, he encounters various ruins, emptiness, erosion, and the demise of local shipbuilding. For Sebald, there is no 'historical overview', only a promenade amongst the liminal remnants. Sequential observations in which his rather forlorn reverie tries to 'connect them –in a most unsystematic way – to the violence of modernity' (Presner 2010: 205). We experience the same disorientating, compressed, peripatetic journey through Suffolk. And as argued by Presner, Sebald constructs a markedly 'anti-Hegelian thrust' to the application of the travel narrative form, which, according to John Beck eschews a 'telos of understanding'.

Sebald's journey becomes a palimpsest itself, across which the geographies of other places and times imbricate, disrupt, to blur the present:

> Not only will Suffolk become connected to Belgium, various German cities, and the "dark continent" via the massacres in the Congo and the scramble for Africa, but it will become connected to the Dutch East Indies via the sugar dynasties […] and many other places in the imperial imaginary. (Presner 2010: 203)

This provides Sebald's textual world with a kind of spatial counterpoint present in Ernst Bloch's 'simultaneity of the non-simultaneous' (*gleichzeitigkeit des ungleichzeitigen*).[17]

The act of walking lubricates this conflation of the current observations with a connectedness to the non-contemporaneous geographies in which Sebald is attempting to retrieve the many different geographies coexisting with and 'historically impacted in the Suffolk coast' (Presner

2010: 204). The construction of a 'layered temporality' acknowledges that Sebald's narrator 'never leaves England; instead, he walks along the shore of the origin, the places of departure for an empire that at one time reached out, embraced, and conquered much of the earth' (Presner 2010: 204).

As Presner (2010) argues, Sebald eschews Hegel's 'world spirit', by surrendering to the phenomenological vulnerability of the emplaced narrator, one who attempts to excavate in the Benjamin sense, the 'noncontiguous geographies' of the Suffolk coastline.

In his exploration of the non-contiguous, Sebald preserves the 'historiographic complexity' and manifestation of a dialectic modernity (Presner 2010). Consequently, the temporal field is colonized by 'multiple, non-simultaneous histories' that are reflected upon as if 'they were simultaneous'—a critical position echoed in the non-contemporaneity of Ernst Bloch.

Although the German subtitle does emphasize the notion of the 'pilgrimage', this culturally 'loaded' term might imply that Sebald has a definite itinerary, for the pilgrim usually departs for the site of veneration? In this context, Sebald's somewhat intuitive pilgrimage becomes his own *Heart of Darkness* voyage across the dark continent of cultural memory:

> It seems I am trying to tell you a dream–making a vain attempt, because no relation of a dream can convey the dream-sensation, that commingling of absurdity, surprise, and bewilderment in a tremor of struggling revolt, that notion of being captured by the incredible which is the very essence of dreams…no, it is impossible; it is impossible to convey the life-sensation of any given epoch of one's existence–that which makes its truth, its meaning–its subtle and penetrating essence. It is impossible. We live, as we dream—alone. (Conrad 1899 [1990]: 23)

Sebald shares similar concerns with the contemporary English writer-walker, Iain Sinclair. Sinclair's own pilgrimage circumnavigating the M25 in *London Orbital: A Walk Around the M25* (2003), reveals the same Sebaldian desire to both arrest and salvage the knowledge embedded in landscape(s), before it disappears from cultural memory. Both writers exploit textual digressions to replicate their own confusion and melancholic despair experienced throughout the journey. The syntax disruption, and the adoption of nouns as verbs in some cases, reflects the incongruity that Sinclair encounters in the present's annihilation of the

past. In both writers, walking facilitates random encounters and insights. One might describe their preference for obscurantist detail, as footnotes invited onto the main page.

For Sebald, colonial geographies provide a disorientating reverie, a persuasive felt counter-narrative, to the eroding certainties of that most anachronistic of English coastal settings—Suffolk, with its largely white, non-pluralistic/multicultural demographic.

There are of course many other artists and commentators (some discussed later) who have directly used the idea of the journey in their work: the British Land Art movement, notably, Richard Long and Hamish Fulton, who both (inadvertently perhaps) contributed more to a concept of landscape art photography than 'land art' sculpture, through their recording of often isolated land art pieces in what could be termed 'conceptual photography'. This recording of the outside art event/sculpture has been enhanced by Andy Goldsworthy in his consummate documentation of ephemeral organic sculptures (and in terms of art book sales—has become a best-seller).

Returning to the Site

I do not propose to redefine a new hybrid theoretical model based on a conflation of the two concepts of Jacques Lacan's *The Real*, and Soren Kierkegaard's notion of *Repetition*.[18] Rather, I speculate that my research-led photographic practice does impact on these two concepts, however rudimentary that might be, in relation to the iterative performance of the photographer, the regular exposure of certain sites to critical reflection and, therefore, unexpected philosophical enquiries. Moreover, the question is, does a consistent return to the site/motif through photography's production of the 'reality effect', enable a penetration of Lacan's *tripartite symbolic order*, to a heightened awareness of the Real? Notorious for its critical opacity, Lacan's notion of The Real underwent various revisions throughout his career, but for our purposes here, we might consider the concept's paradoxical nature, its unattainable sense of 'absolute being'—that final part of the tripartite symbolic order which is forever beyond the individual, due to the impenetrable mesh of symbolic signification. As Sean Homer (2005) asserts, 'the [R]eal is the unknown that exists at the limit of this socio-symbolic universe and is in constant tension with it'. From 1964 onwards, the Real is 'transformed in Lacan's thinking', to mean that

which is 'unsymbolizable'. In this sense, the Real represents 'that which is beyond the symbolic and the imaginary and acts as a limit to both' (Homer 2005: 83).

Is an iterative photographic investigation of non-place sites able to divest itself of cultural awareness, to shed the burden of the *symbolic* by such repetition? In a purely phenomenological sense, are we able to sever the cord of cultural conditioning by an immersion in the instrumentality of photographic performance?

My own photographs chart the iterative return to specific sites: several photographs feature a return to the same site-specific motif, shown in the following photographs: *Cottage* (2007; Fig. 2.2), *Cottage in summer* (2009; Fig. 2.3), and *Cottage in winter* (2011; Fig. 2.4). Each of these photographs documents the striking visual transformation of the small isolated brick structure. The caption titles are ironic and resonate within a specifically English idea of the idyllic escape (from the urban) to the bucolic countryside. The obvious detachment of this dilapidated structure probes the cultural values associated with such aspiration, whilst also commenting on the ongoing English obsession with home renovation

Fig. 2.2 *Cottage*, 2007. Photograph by the author

Fig. 2.3 *Cottage in summer*, 2009. Photograph by the author

Fig. 2.4 *Cottage in winter*, 2011. Photograph by the author

and adding value to the home. In more oblique terms, the caption title of *Cottage* both critiques, and alludes to the ubiquity of the 'second home' as a weekend/holiday sanctuary from the urban experience. What is noticeable in the visual information recorded by revisiting this site over several years, is the material change in the building's structure and surfaces. Each photograph testifies to the reclaiming of this small parcel of urban landscape by the ineluctable unchecked process of re-wilding.

Kierkegaard's *Repetition* was published on the same day as *Fear and Trembling* (1843). *Repetition*, a confessed 'venture in experimenting psychology' is narrated by the fictive pseudonym, Constantin Constantius; it remains one of Kierkegaard's most perplexing works. The author's concept of *repetition* is notoriously hard to apprehend. He tells us oxymoronically, that *repetition* is recollecting forward. That it is the interest of metaphysics, but also that on which metaphysics founders. The notion of *repetition* is associated with repentance, a process of atonement, whilst also identified with eternity.

Interestingly, in the field of neuroscience, the work of Henson (2003) has observed a reduction in neural activity when the brain is subjected to repeated stimuli, resulting in 'repetition suppression' (Henson 2003: 53–81). Obviously, if one diminishes neural activation through a repetitive action, or encounter with the same place, perhaps this 'suppression' may be compensated by an increase in the affective domain, a felt, intuitive response to stimuli, extrinsic to conventional brain geographies? And furthermore, even though we might return to the same place (Berlin, Leeds, or elsewhere) in a behavioural mode of repetition, the stimuli will have changed in subtle ways: these might include changes in weather and temperature, lighting conditions, the soundscape, new inscriptions, and of course, our own emotional and somatic disposition.

According to Edward F. Mooney (1998), in his chapter 'Repetition: Getting the World Back', if we are to disentangle the various strands in repetition's *imbroglio* of meanings, first and foremost, we must recognize that 'repetition is a form of meaning-acquisition bound up with the double movement of giving up and receiving back the world' (Mooney 1998: 11). This willingness to let go, 'giving up' (surrendering) as a form of acceptance, is bound up in the self-destructive need to recover what is lost.

If we consider repetition in relation to the notion of return, there is the promise of some form of reconciliation with, or redemption from trauma, be it personal or collective. Return offers an encounter with an

unresolved experience from the past, which may have previously haunted the individual in the so-called present. In this way, the return, helps (to borrow a sports massage expression) 'burn-off' the pain, or in the context of selfhood, removes any confusing self-mythologizing, or over-sentimentality for the place of return. As we all may recognize, a return to a childhood haunt can often dismantle our long-held imaginary of the specific place, by realigning our recollection of spatial relationships, our own scale within the place, and our changed adult feelings for the place. It is for this reason that Constantine's forlorn excursion to the Berlin of his youth, still speaks to the contemporary audience, who shares that longing.

My own efforts to confront the notion of repetition, and in a less ambitious sense, Lacan's impregnable *Real*, was to return to the various sites within my non-places photographic series in Leeds, and more recently, in Lille, France. How might we consider the sequence of photographs entitled *Cottage*, etc., taken during the period 2009–2011, and how might these various seasonal representations inform an encounter with the *Real*—and help us to apprehend the true reality of this specific place? Does a series of temporal still images make a more profound aesthetic statement, or provide an answer in relation to the impenetrability of Lacan and Kierkegaard's critiques? The photographic penetration of the *Real* is not possible here, as it depends too much on the unstable notion attached to Barthes's *punctum* to penetrate Lacan's tripartite symbolic order apogee.[19] I discuss the *punctum* in greater detail in Chapter 4, but to offer some resolution here: to experience Lacan's notion of *Real*, one must venture into an ineffable, felt abandonment of the intellectual, eschewing any direct apperception, to embrace an embodied phenomenology. A personal place of meaning-one that 'pricks' us. As Roy Baddy (Rutger Hauer) states, with slight exasperation to Benjamin, in Ridley Scott's visionary film, *Blade Runner* (1982): 'we're not computers, Sebastian, we're physical'.

Nevertheless, to salvage something from this philosophical detour, we might consider that the urban landscape photographic act in non-place, could be seen to guide us to a less familiar experience of place? Through the notion of return, a heightened encounter with place is achieved, rather than a facile avoidance of such urban places. If (in the West) we regard the current hegemony (reality) as espousing the global market, in tandem with the desire to experience 'long-haul' holidays to previously remote and exotic destinations, then the opportunities afforded by an

excursion to the very opposite, in the form of non-place, may puncture, or disorientate, someone's reality, readjust their conception of place, and how it functions? Moreover, do these theoretical *cul-de-sacs* (or gaps in the fence), assist in the re-conception and revalorization of non-places? In this respect, it might be enough to recognize that the less codified spaces within our urban landscape might have the phenomenological potential to elicit unanticipated philosophical collisions.

And if this rather perfunctory enquiry can learn anything from Kierkegaard's (Constantin Constantius's) return to Berlin, then it is the knowledge that there is no going back, to recapture an idealized past:

> So I arrived in Berlin. I hurried at once to my old lodgings to ascertain whether a repetition is possible. […] The recollection of these things was an important factor in my taking the journey. […] But here, alas, again no repetition was possible. (Kierkegaard 1983 [1843]: 150–152)

In this respect, it might be better to savour the experience as memory, however unstable, from the invasion of the present, one in which the past does indeed, remain a 'foreign country', where they 'do things differently', an indelible sense of regret which has been culturally anchored by L.P. Hartley in the novel *The Go-Between* (1953).[20]

The research benefit associated with a sustained return to the initial experience, often eliciting unexpected 'intuitive insights', is espoused by the philosopher, and Professor of Art Education in Helsinki, Juha Varto (2002):

> In artistic activity and research, we can regularly observe how the recurring returning to the original experience – through remembering, returning to the scene, looking around in the mind's eye and walking round in fantasy – *every time* brings something new to that which one had already interpreted. (Varto 2002: 55)

According to Henry Bergson (1944), repetition can only be experienced in the abstract:

> what is repeated is some aspect that our senses, and especially our intellect have singled out from reality, just because our action, upon which all effort of our intellect is directed, can move only among repetitions. Thus, concentrated on that which repeats, solely preoccupied in welding the same

> to the same, intellect turns away from the vision of time. It dislikes what is fluid, and solidifies everything it touches. (Bergson 1944: 52–53, my emphasis)

Could we infer from Bergson that an antipathy towards fluidity, is a reaction against the uncontrollable experience and the aleatory interference caused by memory?

Through the ritual of returning, one may experience a transformative moment, in which one is compelled to confront personal and social hauntings. The return in this situation is the desire to exorcize such preoccupations.

In the work of Marianne Hirsch (1977)[21] and Andrea Liss (1998)[22] the term 'postmemory' is deployed, a process by which often traumatic events are mediated, 'burnt-off' (in some meditation practices), through other people's representations. Both Hirsch and Liss place great value on evidential photographic representations associated with the Holocaust, family, and personal narratives, to locate some sense of understanding.

Till (2005) problematizes the act of returning to the site as a performative repetition which only serves to temporally assuage the concerns of the specific moment. This inevitable shift in the self over time is exposed in Till's reflexivity, in which the consistency of the authorial voice is revealed as somewhat tenuous:

> My voice changes in this book in ways that reflect my shifting positionalities (as geographer, ethnographer, and humanities scholar) […] in the different times and places in which I lived, researched, and wrote this book. (Till 2005: 23)

The feeling of a 'strange familiarity' (a Freudian *unheimlich*) is associated with forms of return and repetition. A similar feeling described by Julien Gracq (1961) as the 'feeling of casting off, rather than that of the destination' (Gracq 1961: 61)

Establishing Presence

Contemporary cultural geography is often referred to as 'new cultural geography', a discipline that harnesses a more diverse range of investigative tools and potential critical perspectives as it realigns itself with a rapid global reconfiguration. Interestingly (in relation to our broader

discussion in this book), James Duncan (1994) supports the unique possibilities of photography as a potent tool in the interdisciplinary 'toolbox':

> Photography has also played a large role in twentieth-century ethnological representation. What better way to assert the primacy of the visual, produce a 'true' representation of the place in question and establish presence than through the use of photography? (Duncan 1994: 43)

This is not surprising, if we recognize the historical deployment of photography in the nineteenth-century exploration of the great American frontier landscape, and nearer to home (in some sense), the various Arctic and Antarctic expeditions supported by the Royal Geographic Society, provide some of the most memorable archival evidence of the photograph as a documentary record. In echoing this exploratory spirit, Luc Delahaye's Photobook: *Winterreisse* (2000) provides an intersubjective acknowledgement to Schubert's own song cycle: *Winterreisse* (1827). Delahaye's Photobook manages to synthesize geographic specificity with a compassionate anthropology; in the form of a visual essay (without words) set in a reconfigured post-*Glasnost* Russia.[23] The surprisingly sumptuous colour photographs contrast with the plight of newly displaced people, represented as causal victims of a too-rapid embrace of global capitalism.

One is also reminded of China's recent embrace of global capitalism and the sudden collision between older spatial structures and rapid new infrastructure developments. In relation to China's rapid transformation, I discussed the possibility of pockets of non-places left dormant, or emerging through China's urban transformations with Flemming Christiansen, during his tenure as the Director of Chinese Studies at the University of Leeds, in 2007. In a somewhat surprised tone, Christiansen assured me that such sites (non-places) do not 'exist in these states in China, because people would be living in these areas', or the sites 'would have been cleared within a week'. In China, there was no concept of letting areas 'go back to nature' in the way depicted in my non-places photographs.

The potential relationship between photography and a more spatialized practice is explored by Henri Lefebvre (1991) in *The Production of Space*, which argues that the role of photography is to locate 'implicit and un-stated oppositions', where we 'experience a political

economy of space' in which the processes of centralization and monopolization that underwrite capitalist competition, produce direct and indirect spatial effects which transform lives at 'micro and macro levels' (Lefebvre 1991: 65).

In their classic essay 'Epistemological Orientations', David Ley and Marwyn Samuels (1978) provide a convincing outline in relation to the aims of humanistic geography:

> [A] humanistic geography is concerned to restore and make explicit the relation between knowledge and human interests. All social constructions, be they cities or geographical knowledge, reflect the values of a society and an epoch. (1978: 21)

What do we understand humanistic geographers to be *concerned* with specifically? For Ley and Samuels, these concerns would include: environmental perception, mental maps, everyday geographies, and landscape iconography. And furthermore, according to Adams et al., the work of Ley and Samuels extended into an aspirational conflation of geography and philosophy, as:

> Common to many of their research agendas were some central questions: What is the nature of human experience? How do place, landscape, and space define and provide the context for this experience? How do humans make the world into a home? (Adams et al. 2001: xv)

In considering 'human experience' in relation to place, we are reminded of the influence of Edmund Husserl on many humanistic geographers. Husserl's phenomenological work is distinguished by his innovative, yet slightly oxymoronic emphasis on a 'philosophical science', a coalescence that celebrated the act of 'being-in-the-world' (Adams et al. 2001).

Yet some humanistic geographers' investigations emphasized the politics of place in relation to 'place-making'. They were also concerned with the environmental degradation of the domestic and so-called everyday spaces.

This rather prescient value placed on the apparently inconsequential in our immediate surroundings provides a crucial link to my own aims: to champion a new conception of non-places. These aims are further bolstered by the phenomenological work of Edward Relph (1985), in which he exhorts a reconnection with the experiential:

> One of the first aims of a phenomenology of geography should be to retrieve these [everyday] experiences from the academic netherworld and to return them to everyone by reawakening a sense of wonder about the earth and its places. (Relph 1985: 16)

During the twenty-first century, the tradition of humanistic geography continued to explore the relationship between landscape, place, and human experiences, whilst acknowledging with social sciences, that there were no universal concepts. This epistemological acceptance precipitated a realignment of the humanist geographers' critical position, one which embraced the less anthropocentric terms of: cultural geographer, and critical humanist geographer, with its own adoption of a semiotic-informed ethnographic method, which seeks 'to examine how signs, symbols, gestures, utterances, and local knowledges convey cultural meanings and create places' (Adams et al. 2001: xvi). To further reinforce this broader interdisciplinary approach, to form new intellectual alliances, geography embraces the open eclecticism of the humanities field, one that is 'passionately pluralist in approach' and agreeable to 'divergent viewpoints, and nowhere is this synthetic interest felt more profoundly than in the study of place' (Adams et al. 2001: xviii).

In the work of anthropologist, Margaret Rodman (1992), there is an acknowledgement that anthropologists can learn from the 'current thinking about place in geography', where 'places are not inert containers' but are 'politicized, culturally relative, historically specific, local and multiple constructions' (Rodman 1992: 640–656).

In the broader critical debate that included geography, Michel Foucault reflected on the marginalized position of space in the dialectical landscape, as 'a devaluation of space' that had 'prevailed for generations', in which '[s]pace was treated as dead, the fixed undialectical, the immobile' and if one 'started to talk in terms of space that meant one was hostile to time' (Foucault 1980: 63–77).

Kenneth Olwig (2001: 93) cites Yi-Fu Tuan's reflection on the relationship between place and the role of the humanistic geographer:

> the analysis of location is subsumed under the geographer's concept and analysis of space. Place, however, has more substance than the word location suggests: it is a unique entity, a "special ensemble" (Lukerman, 1964: 170); it has history and meaning. Place incarnates the experiences and aspirations of a people. Place is not only a fact to be explained in the

> broader frame of space, but it is also a reality to be clarified and understood from the perspectives of the people who have given it meaning. (Tuan 1974: 236)

Of course, there are other transformations open to photography in its interrogation of space, not least the possibility of the transcendental.

Is it still possible to speak of the Sublime in the context of global communications, new capitalism, and the increasingly ubiquitous panoptic strategies employed by both the public and private sector? If we interrogate the body of photographic work within this book, is there evidence of some re-engagement, an ironic dialogue with the Post-Romantic, New-Sublime?

In the photographs, *Wire* (2010) and *Delivery* (2007) (further discussed in Chapter 4) we witness a return to the same location, in which a familiar shopping trolley is shown overturned, leaving its cargo of multicoloured cables strewn underneath a blossoming hawthorn tree. In this context, the delivery in question, functions (is framed also) to suggest a ritualistic offering, a new kind of paganism perhaps? The contemporary referent of cables, shopping trolley, and concrete constructed perimeter fence post, are all that sever the depicted scene from an implicit simulacrum of a Post-Romantic, New-Sublime landscape. In this context, both photographs invite a melancholic meditation on photography's capacity to communicate an already receding present, a past, whilst also allowing the viewer to speculate on the future through their own projection; what event took place here? Who deposited these cables? Have they just left the scene? Are they standing just outside the frame? For what purpose have these various cables being left here under this specific tree? Will the protagonist return to the theatre of this scene?

Part of this photographic strategy is to use the landscape conventions from other art historical periods; the two photographs evidence the deliberate use of compositional framing tropes often associated with the Romantic period (1800–1850). A movement in painting which placed the human figure in a central role within the landscape, in which the spectator could empathize with. Other contemporary photographers whose work has been informed by the notions attached to Romanticism and the Sublime, include (in different ways) Hiroshi Sugimoto and Rineke Dijkstra.

In Dijkstra's direct, frontal photographs of early adolescent boys and girls (wearing trunks and swimming suits) standing against the backdrop

of the sea, we witness the figure in the landscape tropes which preoccupied Caspar David Friedrich: the transience of human presence in contrast to the immensity of the eternal ocean. A vivid example of Dijkstra's series can be found in the photograph *Hel, Poland, August 12, 1998* (1998). And obviously, the absent 'figure' in my urban landscape photographs is suggested by the presence of the photographer and tripod (who must have been there). The notion of presence is crucial to the work of Sugimoto, most notably in his 'Seascapes' photographic series, begun in 1980. To establish visual unity across the series Sugimoto adopted the same horizon line for all the seascapes, irrespective of lighting or changing weather conditions. More importantly, what Sugimoto achieves throughout his series is an aesthetic conflation of the disinterested observer (informed by a 'deadpan' style of framing) with a knowing re-appropriation of the expansive, epic landscape trope of Romanticism and the Sublime—the sea. Furthermore, the ludic conceit which permeates the Seascapes series, is that the spectator must trust the photographs' title captions, for there is no discernible geographical feature in sight to differentiate or situate each sea represented in the series. If we compare the two photographs: *Caribbean Sea, Jamaica* (1980), with *Sea of Japan, Rebund Island* (1996), we notice that the sea conditions and monochrome tonalities, and scale of framing are very similar. In this sense, both photographs rely on the title captions location description to inform us. Sugimoto's intention is to present views which are impossible to revisit for the spectator. In contemplating Sugimoto's 'Seascapes', we apprehend the incomprehensibility of the sea, as something photography can truly represent. The sea will always mock any attempt to frame its vastness.

Romanticism evoked such ineffable awe, shock, whilst highlighting the transformative potential of hitherto neglected and disturbing landscapes (for wilderness read non-places). The psycho-aesthetic revolution introduced by Romanticism, is alluded to in many of my photographs, to differentiate the iconography of non-place from pejorative representations in the media; more commonly referred to as 'wasteland(s)', or dormant/available development land. By utilizing, ironically sometimes, the conventions of Romantic landscape painting, there is the possibility of 'wrong-footing' the spectator, in that we are confused by finding the seemingly abject scene beautiful?

In the celebrated challenge to the established 'grand narratives' of art history, Robert Rosenblum (1978) contemplates the radical painting of Caspar David Friedrich:

> Monk by the Sea, a picture whose seeming emptiness bewildered spectators […] suddenly corresponds to an experience familiar to the spectator in the modern world […] confronted by the overwhelming, incomprehensible immensity of the universe […] whereby the artist, projected into the lonely monk, explores his own relationship to the great unknowables. (Rosenblum 1978: 10–14)

In this context, the use of a head-high tripod in my own practice may function as a surrogate figure, although the spectator's apprehension of the scene (their own inevitable projection), might make them forget that I am present.

The photograph *Avenue in Summer* (2009; Fig. 2.5), presents another example of a return to a familiar location, but invokes different questions of the image. Where does the avenue go? Is it really an avenue? Why not a street? Where are the promenading people? The photograph is colonized by the title caption, in which a linguistic sign, promises a more joyful promenade than is evident through the visual sign system. The visual dichotomy of the two zones depicted in the *Avenue in Summer* (2009) photograph each reveal a different period.

Fig. 2.5 *Avenue in summer*, 2009. Photograph by the author

The road surface suggests a testimonial to the longevity of physical materials: the Yorkshire stone cobbles still present on the right-hand side of the frame, whilst the somewhat expedient tarmac surfacing on the left-hand side signifies a more contemporary surface, and is already showing signs of nature's penetration.

Within the broader context of my own representations of non-places archive from 2008 onwards, the receding black rectangle of the tarmac emerges as a central leitmotiv of the dark inscription, redolent of the shadow looming from behind the young female figure in Edvard Munch's painting, *Puberty* (1895), in the burnt area (a temporal signifier) stating that all inscriptions, however destructive, will be erased by nature in time.

This phenomenon reaches back to the spirit of Romanticism, where the ordinary place was transformed into the extraordinary through the power of representation. And as the world experiences diminishing resources, overpopulation, and increased pressure on land, perhaps a new Sublime is to be found in the ordinary places left behind?

Richard Mabey's excursions from some thirty-five years ago, now appear prophetic.[24] The inevitability of walking as the lubricant of the creative process is acknowledged by his 'disciple', Iain Sinclair, in his introduction to the reprint of *The Unofficial Countryside*: 'writing by walking, and walking again to gather up the will to write' (2010: 9). Their mutual methodological approach to landscape is echoed by Sinclair, in which Mabey resembles a 'covert infiltrator', making 'an engaged pass at the ugly bits, the dirty folds in the map' (2010: 9).

> Mabey logs the tough fecundity of the margin, where wild nature spurns the advertised reservation and obliterates the laminated notice-boards of sanctioned history. (Sinclair, Introduction 2010: 10)

The desire to honour the urban liminal landscape is simultaneously explored in J. G. Ballard's novel, *Crash* (1973), at once, a dystopian, mechanistic, and erotic reimagining of the English hinterlands of anonymous infrastructures, slip roads, pre-fabricated ('big box') warehouses, and multi-storey car parks. Interestingly, both Mabey and Ballard published seminal texts in the same year (1973), which were oracular for different reasons: in Ballard, we witness the deployment of the inconsequential non-place within the 'ecology of petrol' (Sinclair 2010: 12), ruptured through the narrative of an erotic ennui, one which anticipates

the excesses of Internet user-generated content, exemplified in the fetishistic, and idiosyncratic clips 'available' on YouTube et al. In contrast, to Mabey's gentle observations of nature's recolonization in unexpected locations. Writing in the author's note to the new edition of *The Unofficial Countryside* (2010), Mabey reflects on the significant changes since its original publication in 1973, in which the wild land around London has seen the removal of gravel pits, now replaced by National Car Parks, the destruction of the East End's 'tangle of wet and wilderness' by the 2012 London Olympics project (Mabey 2010: 17).

On a canal walk, Mabey reminds us that we undervalue the most inconsequential of locations: 'yet how rarely we look to this kind of landscape for some contact with natural things' (Mabey 2010 [1973]: 18).[25] Again, we are perhaps reminded of Wordsworth's disappointment with human behaviour, in his sonnet, *The World is Too Much Much With Us* (1802)[26]:

> The world is too much with us; late and soon,
> Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers; -
> Little we see in Nature that is ours:
> We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon![27]

Parkour Performance Across Non-place

The activity of parkour can be traced back to the late 1980s in France. Its development in the urban milieu emerged from an imaginative reconfiguration of military obstacle training. I first encountered this unique combination of running, gymnastic disruption of the urban experience, whilst exploring one of President François Mitterrand's '*grand projet*', *La Defense*, in Paris, during 1988. Although one must recognize, that the active participants of parkour may not have reflected on their performance in the historical context of either *flâneurism*, the Situationist International (1957–1972), or the spatial dialectics of de Certeau and Lefebvre, where the sedate act of walking was celebrated, as a fluid disruption of conventional urban navigation, embedded in the routine patterns of commuters, and shoppers. Bill Marshall (2014) understands the playful correlation between the disruptive, radical performance of walking, situated in the *flâneurism* of de Certeau, suggesting the substitution of 'walker' for that of the *traceur*, who '[t]ransforms every spatial

signifier into something else' and thus 'creates a discontinuity, either by choosing among the signifiers of the spatial language or by altering them by the use he makes of them' (De Certeau 2000: 107, quoted by Marshall 2014: 60).

The same delight, in puncturing the quotidian, is provided by the intervention of Flash-mob happenings, which temporarily remind citizens of pleasurable collectivity. Both Parkour and Flash-mob performances confer a transient creative, yet at the same time, a resistant gesture (unless filmed for YouTube of course) within unexpected urban locations, be they anonymous, aleatory, or established public spaces, such as train station concourses, or city squares.[28] What is made manifest, is the radical desire to reclaim public space in creative ways. For young people, specifically, this somatic exhibitionism could be inferred, as a creative form of protest. The ephemeral nature of these events could reflect the feelings of an alienated youth, excluded from the property market, whilst being subjected to the vicissitudes of the so-called gig-economy, and compounded by 'zero-hours' contracts.

Following in the footsteps of the French sociologist, Marcel Mauss (1872–1950) and his celebrated essay: Techniques of the Body (1934), in which he was the first to situate the act of walking within comparative ethnological inquiry (Mauss 1979 [1934]), Pierre Bourdieu (1977) presented his Habitus theory, an investigation into the symbiotic relationship between practice and physical dispositions (body techniques). Bourdieu situated the *Habitus* in the space of the 'body's active engagement in its surroundings, in the practical mastery of everyday tasks involving characteristic postures and gestures, or a particular body Hexis' (Bourdieu 1977: 87, quoted in Ingold and Vergunst, 2008: 2).

For Ingold and Vergunst (2008) walking is an act of sociality:

> We walk because we are social beings, we are also social beings because we walk. That walking is social may seem obvious, although it is all the more remarkable, in this light, that social scientists have devoted so little attention to it […] that social life is walked is to make a far stronger claim, namely for the rooting of the social in the actual ground of lived experience. (Ingold and Vergunst 2008: 2)

De Certeau adopts an intimate consideration of street movement, in which the pedestrian performs indeterminate routes through the urban *milieu*, eschewing the navigational devices of plans, maps, embracing a tactical, yet improvisatory form of spatial practice.

Notes

1. *Flâneurism*—The term *flâneur* comes from the French masculine noun *flâneur*, which has the basic meanings of 'stroller', 'loung-er', 'saunterer', from the French verb *flâner*—'to stroll'. Charles Baudelaire derived a meaning of *flâneur*—that of 'a person who walks the city, in order to experience it'. The notion of the *flâneur* has accumulated significant meaning as a referent for understanding 'urban phenomena and modernity'.
2. *Dérive* a French noun used by Guy Debord to mean 'drift', and incorporated by the theorists of Situationism to mean 'locomotion without a goal'. The idea owes much to Surrealism and the confrontation with the marvellous. It prefigures the more contemporary term 'psycho-geography' and its modern proponents of Iain Sinclair (even though he resists the label), and the late W.G. Sebald, although these two seem to adopt a more purposeful form of walking.
3. Eugène Atget (1857–1927) A remarkable inventory of seemingly prosaic Parisian spaces, often devoid of people. The motifs of stairs, steps, windows, alleyways, windows, doors, resonate within the canon of twentieth-century art photography. See Geoff Dyer's entertaining insights into the photography of Atget, in *The Ongoing Moment*, Little Brown, 2005, p. 115.
4. Sinclair, I. (2003). *London Orbital: A Walk Around the M25*, London: Penguin Books, p. 49.
5. Thoreau's essay on 'Walking' developed from his journal entries made form 1851, which provided him with material for his two lectures: *Walking* and *The Wild*, first delivered in 1851 and 1852. The 'Walking' essay lamented the encroachment of private ownership upon the wilderness, which resonates in John Gossage's Photobook *The Pond* (1985), a direct homage to Thoreau's *Walden* (1854).
6. de Certeau, M. (2002). 'Walking in the City', in *The Practice of Everyday Life*, University of California Press, p. 40.
7. Ibid., p. 98.
8. Over the course of the project, walking (and deciding where to walk), has been a creative research act. In general (and for obvious safety reasons vis à vis my photographic equipment), the walks and concomitant photography have taken place between 9.00 a.m. and 2.00 p.m.; a period in the day which contributes to the sharp depth-of-field evident in many of my photographs.
9. Founded in Paris in 1957, used both artistic and practical activity to 'unleash a free and spontaneous' and disruptive creativity in the realm of the everyday. Their main critique was to subvert the 'society of the spectacle' in which citizens become mere actors.

10. Turner, V. (1967). 'Betwixt and Between: The Liminal Period in Rites de Passage', in *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual*, London: Cornell University Press, p. 95.
11. Ernst Bloch, in his essay 'Summary Transition: Non-Contemporaneity and Obligation to Its Dialectic', 1932, identified various strands of time, both archaic and contemporary, that coexisted alongside each other conflated in an untimely manner. 'Not all people exist in the same Now', he poignantly states. This state relates to my ludic simile of the 'drowning man', the ability within the human condition to live in different moments, and that this state affects my own allusive artistic practice.
12. Sebald, G. W. (1998). *The Rings of Saturn*, London: The Harvill Press.
13. Sebald, G. W. (2001). *Austerlitz*, London: Hamish Hamilton.
14. When one takes the National Trust rowing boat across the short stretch of estuary to Orfordness, the art historical allusions to the trope of the island are pervasive. For my own part, the Arnold Böchlin painting, *Isle of the Dead* (1883), seems to echo my own, and perhaps Sebald's experience of entering another realm. It is worth mentioning for music lovers, that the stretches of shingle are very near to the beaches at Aldeburgh. These same shingle beaches inspired Benjamin Britten's opera *Peter Grimes* (first performed 7 June 1945), and Britten's inimitable evocation of the sea, in *Four Interludes from Peter Grimes*. I experienced a similar 'structure of feeling', documenting Dungeness, situated on the south Kent coast. A destination made popular, by the diaries and creative work of the English polymath, Derek Jarman, especially his film, *The Garden* (1990), and his book, *Derek Jarman's Garden* (1995).
15. See George Simmel's essay 'The Ruin' (1919). See also Simmel, G. (1959 [1919]). 'The Ruin', in *George Simmel, 1858–1918: A Collection of Essays with Translations and a Bibliography* (ed.) K. H. Wolfe and (trans.) D. Kettler, Columbus: Ohio State University Press, pp. 125–133. Simmel, G. (1968). *The Conflict in Modern Culture and Other Essays*, New York: Teachers College Press, p. 18. See Koselleck, R. (1985). *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time* (trans.) Keith Tribe, Cambridge: MIT Press, p. 268. *Companion* (eds.) J. J. Long and A. Whitehead, Seattle: University of Washington Press.
16. Presner notes his own work in: *Mobile Modernity: Germans, Jews, Trains*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2007. In this publication he maps German-Jewish intellectual history onto the railway system, a cultural geography that examines the various iterations of the dialectics of modernity. The author echoes Sebald's own reflection on the culpability of the railway network in relation to the Nazi logistics of the Holocaust.
17. See Bloch, E. (1977). *Gesamtausgabe* (Erbschaft Dieser Zeit, Vol. 4), Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, p. 125.

18. See Mooney, F. E. (2009). *Soren Kierkegaard: Repetition and Philosophical Crumbs* (trans.) M. G. Piety, Oxford University Press. Also, Kierkegaard, S. (1983 [1843]). *Fear and Trembling: Repetition* (eds. and trans.) Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, Princeton University Press.
19. Barthes uses the simile of the *punctum* to describe the unintentional 'prick' of the photograph, its ability to elicit a personal response from an individual viewer, which was beyond the initial purpose of the photographer. The botanical definition of *punctum vegeatatis* provides a poignant reminder of re-colonization, by describing the first point of a plant's budding.
20. A ludic reference to L. P. Hartley's famous quote regarding the past: 'The past is a foreign country: they do things differently there', taken from his wistful novel, *The Go-Between* (1953), p. 1.
21. See Hirsch, M. (1977). *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative, and Postmemory*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
22. See Liss, A. (1998). *Trespassing Through Shadows: Memory, Photography, and the Holocaust*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
23. A potential allusion to Schubert's song cycle *Winterreise* (c. 1827) incorporates the poems of Wilhelm Müller, who died that year, at the age of 32.
24. Mabey, R. (2010 [1973]). *The Unofficial Countryside*, Little Toller Books: Dovecote Press.
25. See definition of 'nature' in Raymond Williams (1988). *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, London: Fontana, p. 219. Williams reminds us that 'nature' is the 'most complex word in the language' (1988: 219). See also, *New Keywords: A Revised Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (2005) by Bennett et al., and Coates, P. (1998). *Nature: Western Attitudes Since Ancient Times*, Cambridge: Polity. See also Tuan, Y.-F. (1971). 'Geography, Phenomenology, and the Study of Human Nature', *The Canadian Geographer* 15: pp. 181–192.
26. Wordsworth. The World is too much with us (1802).
27. William Wordsworth's sonnet was composed in 1802, and first published in *Poems, In Two Volumes* (1807). The 14 lines in iambic pentameter deplore the effects of the First Industrial Revolution.
28. It is worth noting, in relation to Flash mob dance routines, the possible influence of film musicals, such as *West Side Story* (1961), directed by Robert Wise and Jerome Robbins, and music by Leonard Bernstein.

References

Adams, P. C., Hoelscher, S., & Till, K. E. (Eds.) (2001). *Textures of Place: Exploring Humanistic Geographies*. University of Minnesota Press.

Ballard, J. G. (1973). *Crash*. Jonathan Cape.

Beck, J. (2004). Reading Room: Erosion and Sedimentation in Sebald's Suffolk. In J. J. Long & A. Whitehead (Eds.), *W. G. Sebald: A Critical Companion* (p. 82). Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Bergson, H. (1944). *Creative Evolution* (A. Mitchell, Trans.). New York, NY: The Modern Library.

Bourdieu, P. (1977). *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Cambridge University Press.

Cartier-Bresson, H. (1952). *The Decisive Moment*. New York: Simon and Schuster, Paris: Editions Verve.

Coates, P. (1998). *Nature: Western Attitudes Since Ancient Times*. Cambridge: Polity.

Conrad, J. (1899 [1990]). *Heart of Darkness*. New York: Dover Thrift Editions.

De Certeau, M. (2000). Walking in the City. In G. Ward (Ed.), *The Certeau Reader*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Duncan, J. (1994). Sites of Representation. In J. Duncan & D. Ley (Eds.), *Place / Culture / Representation*. London: Routledge.

Ingold, T., & Vergunst, J. L. (Eds.) (2008). *Ways of Walking: Ethnography and Practice on Foot*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Foucault, M. (1980). Questions on Geography: Interviews: The Editors of the Journal Hérodote. In C. Gordon (Ed.), *Michel Foucault: Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings*, 1972–1977 (pp. 63–77). Brighton, UK: Harvester Press [trans. Orig. 1976].

Gracq, J. (1961). *Préférences* (p. 61). Paris: Corti.

Hell, J., & Schönle, A. (Eds.) (2010). *Ruins of Modernity*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Henson, R. N. (2003). Neuroimaging Studies of Priming. *Progress in Neurobiology, 70*(1), 53–81.

Homer, S. (2005). *Jacques Lacan* (Routledge Critical Thinkers). London and New York: Routledge.

Huyssen, A. (2001). *Zeitschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Linguistik*. Springer.

Jackson, B. J. (1980). *The Necessity for Ruins*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press.

Kierkegaard, S. (1983 [1843]). *Fear and Trembling: Repetition*. (H. V. Hong & E. H. Hong, Eds. and Trans.). Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Kierkegaard, S. (2009 [1844]). *Repetition and Philosophical Crumbs*. (M. G. Piety, Trans.). Oxford University Press.

Lefebvre, H. (1991). *The Production of Space*. (D. Nicholson-Smith, Trans.). Oxford: Blackwell.

Ley, D., & Samuels, M. (1978). Epistemological Orientations. In *Humanistic Geography*. London and New York: Routledge.

Long, J. J., & Whitehead, A. (Eds.) (2004). *W. G. Sebald—A Critical Companion*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Marshall, B. (2014). Parkour and the Still Image. In H. S. Donald & C. Lindner (Eds.), *Inert Cities: Globalisation, Mobility and Suspension in Visual Culture*. London: I.B. Taurus.

Mauss, M. (1979 [1934]). "Body Techniques". The Techniques of the Body. *Sociology and Psychology: Essays*, 97–123. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

McDowell, L. (1997). *Capital Culture: Gender at Work in the City*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Mooney, F. E. (1998). '*Repetition*: Getting the world back', *The Cambridge Companion to Kierkegaard* (H. V. Hong & E. H. Hong, Eds. and Trans.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Olwig, K. R. (2001). Landscape as a Contested Topos of Place, Community, and Self. In P. C. Adams, S. Hoelscher, & K. E. Till (Eds.), *Textures of Place: Exploring Humanist Geographies*. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press.

Presner, T. S. (2010). Hegel's Philosophy of World History via Sebald's Imaginary of Ruins: A Contrapuntal Critique of the "New Space" of Modernity. In J. Hell & A. Schönle (Eds.), *Ruins of Modernity*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Relph, E. (1985). The Geographical Experiences and Being-in-the-World: The Phenomenological Origins of Geography. In R. Mugerauer & D. Seamon (Eds.), *Dwelling, Place, and Environment: Towards a Phenomenology of Person and World*. Springer.

Riordan, C. (2004). Ecocentrism in Sebald's *After Nature*. In J. J. Long & A. Whitehead (Eds.), *W. G. Sebald—A Critical Companion*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Rodman, M. C. (1992). Empowering Place: Multilocality and Multivocality. *American Anthropologist, 94,* 640–656.

Rosenblum, R. (1978). *Modern Painting and the Northern Romantic Tradition: Friedrich to Rothko*. London: Thames and Hudson.

Simmel, G. (1959 [1919]). 'The Ruin', in George Simmel, *Georg Simmel 1858–1918: A Collection of Essays with Translations and a Bibliography* (K. H. Wolfe & D. Kettler, Eds. and Trans.). Columbus: Ohio State University Press, pp. 125–133.

Simmel, G. (1968 [1879]). Sociological Aesthetics. In K. P. Etzkorn (Ed. and Trans.), *Georg Simmel, The Conflict in Modern Culture and Other Essays*. (pp. 68–80) New York.

Sinclair, I. (2010). Introduction. *The Unofficial Countryside* (Richard Mabey). Little Toller Books.

Sinclair, I. (2011). *Ghost Milk: Calling Time on the Grand Project*. London: Penguin Books.

Swales, M. (2004). Theoretical Reflections on the Work of W. G. Sebald. In J. J. Long & A. Whitehead (Eds.), *W. G. Sebald—A Critcal Companion*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Thoreau, H. D. (1994 [1862]). Walking. In Lauter, P. (Ed.), *The Heath Anthology of American Literature* (Vol. 1, 2nd ed., pp. 2079–2100). Lexington: Heath.

Till, K. E. (2005). *The New Berlin: Memory, Politics, Place*. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press.

Tuan, Y. (1974). Space and Place: Humanistic Perspective. *Philosophy in Geography*, 387–427. Springer.

Varto, J. (2002). Investigating Bringing-Forth. In S. Kiljunen & M. Hannula (Eds.), *Artistic Research*. Helsinki: Academy of Fine Arts.

Ward, S. (2004). Ruins and Poetics in the Works of W. G. Sebald. In J. J. Long & A. Whitehead (Eds.), *W. G. Sebald—A Critical Companion*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

CHAPTER 3

Representations of the Urban Landscape

It is necessary at this point to qualify my use of the term *landscape* and, more particularly, to develop a sense of landscape's dual function as *diaphor*. Kenneth Olwig (2008: 158) cites Yi-Fu Tuan's explication of the concept of 'diaphor', observing that the tension created by the term landscape is derived from its potential dual function within a politicized space: serving both as an economic domain for people, especially those involved in working the land and inhabit landscape as a resource, in contrast to its more transformative affect, administered through aesthetics and 'place making', providing non-utilitarian scenery through various forms of representational practices. Such culturally embedded forms of practice might include painting, writing, cinema, and photography.[1]

On the etymological roots of the term 'landscape', Yi-Fu Tuan asserts that:

> In its native Dutch [spelling of], "landschap" designated such commonplaces as a "collection of farms or fields […]" Only when it was transplanted to England toward the end of the sixteenth century did the word shed its earthbound roots and acquire the precious meaning of art. Landscape came to mean a *prospect* seen from a specific standpoint. Then it was the artistic representation of that prospect'. (Tuan 1974: 133, my emphasis)

An acknowledgement of this contested term suggests that an entire study could be devoted to the various etymological adventures of *landscape* and its subsequent interpretations. But for my purposes within

J. Brogden, *Photography and the Non-Place*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-03919-6_3

this book, I have made a critical allegiance with the definition provided by Denis Cosgrove (1988) in the book, *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*:

> [*Landscape*] denotes the external world mediated through subjective human experience […] Landscape is not merely the world we see, it is a *construction*, a composition of that world. Landscape is a way of seeing the world. (Cosgrove 1988: 13, my emphasis)

The Neutrality of Pixels

The medium of digital photography has its intrinsic associations; its democratising quality, often attributed to the widespread ownership of various digital visual recording devices (varying in mega-pixels of course), to the ubiquity of dissemination through a diverse range of media channels; which might include websites, social networking sites, and mobile phone transfer. In many ways, the mobile phone is a digital camera (and movie camera) pretending to be a phone. Nevertheless, the digital medium can still be found in more conventional use: in advertising/print and the art gallery system (offline and online).

The continuing debate surrounding digital photography versus analogue photography (wet photography) is largely concerned with a nostalgic attachment to the auratic status of the image, well documented in the writings of Walter Benjamin, in which he reflects on the erosion of the original artefact's aura through mass reproduction. A concern for the authenticity of the hand-produced art object was effectively subverted by the mechanised consumer aesthetic of Andy Warhol, and more recently by the monumental kitsch of Jeff Koons.

The lament for the loss of photographic 'craft' (involved in analogue processing/printing), its mysterious alchemy, is beautifully identified in the documentary film *Finding Vivian Maier* (2014), directed by John Maloof. In the documentary, Maloof's voice-over reminds the audience that you only get one chance to process and develop the roll of film. In relation to this analogue chemical drama, the digital process is in many ways dry and risk-free, save for the potential corruption of files and computer hacking. Nevertheless, black-and-white-signed limited edition photographic prints (on archival acid-free paper) remain more desirable to the collector, unless the digitally produced 'photo-work' is by a photographer/artist with the prestigious reputation of Andreas Gursky.

The analogue produced print maintains the historical legacy of photography's nineteenth and twentieth-century traditions: the fetish relationship that exists between the maker and the hand-produced artefact—the object-hood of the photographic print. If the analogue print is the textual equivalent of the handwritten love letter, complete with its invested historical patina, then the digital print (if indeed the file is printed in the first place) functions as the democratized text message. There is also a more dystopian aspect to the digital revolution and digital photography, identified by the artist/writer, Trevor Paglen, in his online essay: 'Invisible Images (Your Pictures are Looking At You)', published on December 8, 2016, in *The New Inquiry*. According to Paglen, what is disturbing and what is often disregarded by various photographers (of every kind) is recognising that digital images are 'fundamentally machine-readable'. They can only be seen by people in certain situations and for 'short periods of time'. The retreat of the visible digital image is important here, as it reverts to its 'immaterial machine form', unlike the printed photograph in the family album for example, or displayed on the living room wall. When we switch off the mobile phone, or the computer/tablet screen, the displayed image disappears. In contrast, the undeveloped roll of film remains invisible to both human and machine, until it goes through the chemical process. Paglen is concerned that the digital images are machine-readable without a human subject having to be present. The implications are Orwellian: 'the automation of vision on an enormous scale', combined with potential abuse of access to this digital information on 'dramatically larger and smaller scales'. The digital realm has weaponized both private and public 'next-generation surveillance' (Paglen 2016). The evidence indicates a society that is moving ever-closer to the dystopian vision represented in the film *Minority Report* (2002) directed by Steven Spielberg—a place of pre-crime arrests, pervasive personalized advertising messages, consumer recommendations based on digital recognition body/retinal scans. Even the apparent comradery of the 'sharing' platforms of Instagram and Facebook, the so-called human-to-human visual culture, is readily harvested for personal profile information. When you upload personal information and photographs to Facebook, you are unknowingly contributing to a powerful artificial intelligence system that can collate and identify people, 'recognise places and objects', access, and evaluate lifestyle evidence, based on intersectional indicators and even the net-worth of individuals (Paglen 2016). The recent findings against Facebook, in relation

to the Cambridge Analytica scandal, have highlighted many of Paglen's prescient misgivings. To combat this insidious intrusion of the digital sphere, Paglen (2016) recommends the creation of digital 'safe houses', to elude and subvert the 'optimizations and predations of a machined landscape'.

But does the apparent accessibility of digital photography enable a different representation of the urban landscape to ensue? Does the apparent 'collapse' of the digital image/print, if one looks too close at the pixel structure surface, empathise with the fragility of the non-place—its transience? For my own purposes, the detailed screen and printed surface resolution (400 dpi) combine with a vivid saturation of hue and tonal contrast, to resist any nostalgic readings of the non-place iconography. This creative strategy of heightened photographic naturalism goes against the roving function of stereoscopic human vision, one that perceives the environment through discrete head movements and glances. The somewhat disquieting quality of my photographs might be explained by their surface totality, where there is no 'safe-haven' for the spectator to reside; each pictorial zone competes for attention within the visual hierarchy. There may well be a solitary motif that occupies the frame, but the surrounding context is also accentuated by sharp focus and a high modernist compositional flatness. In general, the photographs formal values eschew the cyclopean tendency to exaggerate perspective recession. Therefore, the space represented is often closed off. A visual intention to emphasise the present situation in these non-places, rather than the residual past. Moreover, this visual strategy mirrors the concept of an accelerated history promulgated by Augé, in that the present moment is a hyper-moment, in which there is no recourse to dwell on the recent past.

In defence of digital photography, one might consider the inherent *embourgeoisement* of other media—characterized by the class-based values attributed to easel painting. In comparison, digital photography (being a relatively recent technological development) manages to retain a more neutral cultural position, one less burdened by 'cultural baggage?'[2]

The investigative tool of photography, largely based on its extensive documentary heritage established during the late nineteenth century and still thriving today, is still an appropriate method by which *data*—the evidence—is brought back for subsequent interpretations. There is no other medium as compelling as photography in capturing (embalming) the 'what has been'. The funereal resonance of the photographic

act through the pressing of the shutter, a metaphorical throwing of the wreath overboard to the moment gone forever. The unique ability of the photograph to embed photons of light reflected from the immediate past. A paradoxical trace of now.

Due to the transience of non-place, photography provides part of a discourse, a form of arrest, to facilitate subsequent research reflection and analysis, whilst it could be seen to transform these very findings through the theoretical labyrinth of representation itself. One is reminded of Wittgenstein's axiom, of each photograph (thing) having the potential to modify 'the whole logical world, the whole of logical space, so to speak'.[3] The Wittgenstein quote is significant, in relation to the peripatetic photographic act in the urban landscape. The shifts previously alluded to, and the incremental 'clicks' (praxis and theoretical) which together constitute the unified practice, whilst having the potential to modify the direction of the practice. As a precursor to *chaos theory*, Wittgenstein's point is important as it states that even the most specific micro-event (a non-place in Leeds) could have the potential to be transformative, that meanings are not immutable, fixed. According to Michael Fried (2008: 347), in his book, *Why Photography Matters as Art as Never Before*, photography could claim to function as an 'ontological medium', in which the viewer is urged to consider each photograph's polysemous surface, one that embodies a conceptual matrix.[4]

This is photographic practice as embodied knowledge: a practice that has the potential to be reinterpreted through subsequent critical contexts to create 'structures of feeling'. This seminal concept by Raymond Williams (1954) provides an important critical anchor, to evoke through digital photographic representation, a sense of a culture during a specific period.

Highmore (2017) provides a vivid reengagement with Williams's concept in *Cultural Feelings: Mood, Mediation and Cultural Politics*, which differentiates his own contemporary exploration of 'moods and feelings' that do not reside as internal states 'experienced by individualized sovereign subjects' (Highmore 2017: 1).[5] Rather, Highmore's concern is with the historical qualities of moods and feelings, that hitherto have been generally ignored, that deserve greater critical attention (Highmore 2017).

With some caution, Highmore deploys 'feeling', rather than the culturally loaded term 'affect', to conjoin feeling with the even vaguer term 'mood'. In this sense, Highmore eschews the interpretation of feelings, as both '*personal*' and '*biographical*'.[6]

According to Highmore, if we situate feelings outside the confinement of the purely auto-ethnographic, we can then begin to critique their ineffable qualities within a wider collective and social experiential framework, in which the 'emotional aspects of experience' permeates the quotidian, to facilitate more intense moments (Highmore 2017: 2). Importantly for Highmore, the 'tracking' of these 'patterns of feelings' at a national level is often achieved through the analysis of diverse cultural texts, such as 'films, novels and music' (Highmore 2017: 2). Interestingly, in view of our previous references to commodification, Highmore is less concerned with the attachment of feelings to material culture, although one could claim, that films and novels might be subject to some form of commodification—some material transaction? But essentially, I would agree with Highmore's argument, that it is difficult to 'own' a creative outcome, unless of course, you are the producer of that outcome. However, Highmore's critique is mainly concerned with the manifestation of moods and feelings in the public realm, as opposed to private space. In this sense, the atmosphere created by these cultural feelings constitutes the 'chemical' solution of the social (Highmore 2017: 2). Highmore argues that these collective moods are embedded implicitly, within cultural forms, such as music genres, institutional protocols, and conventions, which might include official heritage routes and navigational systems, which we discussed in relation to walking as performance/research.

Moreover, the production of these wider cultural feelings is not aleatory; their conception and delivery is the result of specific work. Furthermore, if we consider the role of the landscape photographer within this dialectic, he or she (myself included) is actively involved in 'mood work', often augmented, in the multimodal sense, by other roles, such as 'citizens, daughters, prisoners, consumers, parents, careers', teachers, and voters, a social network, which implicates us in relation to other concomitant hierarchies of power. The presence of the historical moment, which Highmore imbues with 'its deictic character', is located within 'mood and feeling' (Highmore 2017: 3).

In bringing forth evidence from a less-codified urban landscape, within which a form of human agency is 'off-grid', relatively free from inner-city surveillance systems the clear message is that these photographs use the critical 'lubricant' of non-place to reveal what was happening between 2005 and 2011 in Leeds, in specific urban sites. The photographs still record (under certain conditions of course)

primary experience: a range of iterative encounters, evidenced through research-led photographic practice. If, indeed, the practice contains this cultural experience, then the option of the archive could be seen to provide the most obvious repository for this 'knowledge' from 'lived experience?' The medium's suitability as an archival resource has an established 'track-record', although Foucault (1972: 128) expressed misgivings.[7] His concerns have become increasing prophetic for our own period, in which 'archived' information (both public and private) is not inviolable, and is all too vulnerable to unauthorized misuse, and open to interpretations that were not envisaged by the original author—photographer—researcher. This realisation (in respect of landscape representation) is part of the elusive production of knowledge, an awareness that the contribution to the broader field of urban landscape photography is always in flux, open to future interpretations.

The 'State of England'

The investigative trope of the 'state of the nation' follows in the tradition that includes Daniel Defoe's account of *A tour thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain* (1724–1726), in which the author of *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) provides a matter-of-fact account of visits to various places in the UK, during a period when there were no accessible geographic reference works. Defoe's detailed investigation has become an invaluable source-work for anyone researching the state of England, Scotland, and Wales, in the few decades before the Industrial Revolution in the eighteenth century.[8]

A more recent continuation of the investigative journey is evident in the book: *Real England: The Battle Against the Bland* (2008), by Paul Kingsworth, an elegiac book, that captures the final resistance against the damage caused by rampant globalisation in an increasingly corporate landscape. Adopting the radical spirit of Iain Sinclair, Kingsworth presents a sustained manifesto 'against homogenisation'.

Indeed, my investigation of non-places is an extension of the notional revelatory journey—to investigate the condition of England during a specific period in history.

In considering the potential re-conception and value of non-places, one could reflect upon a set of similar circumstances facing other cities in the UK and beyond. The exploration of sites that reveal some sociopolitical

truth is epitomised in England by the cult-chronicler of the late-capitalist hinterland, the writer Iain Sinclair.[9] As Sinclair (2010: 7) himself recognises, in his introduction to Richard Mabey's *The Unofficial Countryside* (2010 [1973]), he pays tribute to Mabey, as the precursor to many of the more contemporary examinations of the liminal urban landscape, and the ever-expanding genre of psycho-geographical meditations: 'Mabey identified so neatly the transitional quality of unwritten places' (Sinclair 2010: 7).

According to Simon Grimble (2003: 175), writing in *Deterritorialisations…Revisioning Landscape and Politics*, Sinclair rekindles the tradition of the 'moral' journey—to assess the current condition of the nation, through 'a tradition of non-fiction writing' that 'often takes the shape of a journey to find prospect, a view over the condition of England which will show how the part is related to the whole' (Grimble 2003: 175).

In much of Sinclair's writing (which echoes some of the earlier reflections on de Certeau and the relationship between language and the act of walking), the over-abundance of quotidian description is at once a celebration of the contemporary everyday enmeshed in the residue of a shrinking past, yet also, a soliloquy of revulsion for modern life. He confesses for us all. Sinclair's writing is a form of personal archaeology, in which his goal is a more authentic experience of place, liberated from the all too constant application of trans-global business and business park aesthetic. Like the small dog who must confront the larger dog through his own fear, Sinclair inhabits the liminal terrain which he concomitantly loathes and desires. These edge zones provide some consolation for Sinclair, as fleeting ribbons of memory, that tether his hope for a more local and idiosyncratic urban future, declaring with a pioneering spirit that 'walking; moving across a retreating townscape, stitches it all together: the illicit cocktail of bodily exhaustion and a raging carbon monoxide high' (Sinclair 1997: 4).

More recently, in a review of his book, *Last London*, by Jon Day in the *Guardian*, September 30, 2017, Sinclair has been accused of fetishizing the very places that he regards as authentic. Day argues that Sinclair 'is aware of the charge that he's been as responsible as anyone for the fetishizing of London's decrepitude, contributing to an aesthetic of urban decay that is now ubiquitous' (Day 2017) In defence, I argue that Sinclair is subject to the effects of the representational process itself, a process (be it visual, or written text), that cannot avoid transformation of the original motif (place), in which the so-called authentic is inevitably reimagined through *re-presentation*.

The historical fetishizing of place is too numerous of course: evident in the London of Charles Dickens, the Dorset (Wessex) of Thomas Hardy, and the melancholic ambiance of Paris depicted in the photographs of Eugene Atgét.

In many ways, Sinclair is a 'role-model' for researchers' of place, through his persistent explorations of the more marginal urban landscapes, ones that vividly reveal the tensions within the constricted urban *milieu* of England.

Non-place Through the Lens of Visual Culture

In the photograph *Two Fences* (2009; Fig. 3.1), the older wire fence might suggest a contestation of space, ownership, and inevitably, a statement about access. The tight juxtaposition of the two fences reveals the incursion of new capitalism, surpassing an older industrial model, less preoccupied with security. The rigid steel fence situated behind the original protects an equally anonymous structure whose function is equally impenetrable.

Fig. 3.1 *Two Fences*, 2009. Photograph by the author

The 'pull' of the *Two Fences* (2009) photograph, with its inherent iconographic conversations with other American photographers of fences, emerges from the proximity of the two fences, the tension created through this squeezing of space, proclaiming the difference between new and old.[10] What remains outside this unequal contest is the enigma of the space that each fence seeks to secure. The formal properties of this photograph employ a restricted field of view to dramatize the connotative potential of the sloping concrete fence post on the right side of the frame. The intention here is to juxtapose a less explicit boundary marker being usurped by a new declaration of ownership, a form and style of exclusion perhaps that is symptomatic of a more mendacious England, one of gated communities. An audited landscape. Paradoxically less accountable, anonymous, and increasingly homogenous.

Similarly, the photograph *Brown Field* (2007; Fig. 3.2) provides another example of this more generic classification of space: a form of landscape eugenics. In this context, the pejorative term 'brown field' signifies a nomenclature hijacked for ideological reasons. A re-naming process (re-branding) that reinforces the power of language to both eradicate

Fig. 3.2 *Brown Field*, 2007. Photograph by the author

and bestow value. For example, in the context of UK nuclear power, the Brönteseque-sounding Windscale nuclear reprocessing site in Cumbria had its name changed to the less emotive sounding, Sellafield, in 1981.

The caption title *Brown Field* (2007) also functions as a synecdoche for available land—an economic resource. The direct opposite of 'green field'—an area to be protected against overdevelopment and the encroachment of suburbia.

The photograph was taken in the early spring of 2007 and shows the first buds appearing on the solitary tree, against a far horizon of recently constructed pre-fabricated units. How can this scene be labelled a 'brown field' when we can clearly see a flourishing tree?

One lesson that this may teach us is to look what happens if we leave places alone: rapid re-colonisation ensues, a situation that is happening throughout England to varying degrees. But the *Brown Field* (2007) photograph also alludes to the more general iconicity of the tree in Western art, as well as parallels with the commemorative trees planted in the aftermath of the First World War, by families visiting the battlegrounds of Normandy.[11] A gesture prescient, in its relation to the development of the ecological movement throughout the twentieth-century, whilst anticipating also, a more radical form of 'guerrilla' gardening'. But the more deliberative act of planting trees resonates more powerfully within the *Seven thousand oaks project* 1982, coordinated by the German artist Joseph Beuys. Sadly, the oaks' project was eventually completed by his son, as a tribute to his dead father.[12]

For Jackson (1994), the desire to plant trees is attached to a range of core human emotions, ones that eschew any economic gain. In this sense, trees 'celebrate the home, the need for beauty' and signify 'our existence' (Jackson 1994: 102).

In German culture and history, the symbol of the tree has been closely enmeshed within the notions surrounding the primeval forest (*Urwald*). The reverence for a 'pure' Germanic nature (landscape) is inextricably linked to the *völkisch* forest.

The landscape architect, Willy Lange, created a memorial grove of oaks, known as the Heldenhain, to commemorate a soldier who died in the First World War.[13] Lange advocated the 'planting of an oak for every fallen soldier' (Coates 1998: 167).

A more sinister borrowing of the oak metonym is evidenced in the German SS use of the oak leaf as its emblem, whilst at the same time, Nazi Germany led Europe in the 'creation of nature reserves', involving

the introduction of 'progressive forestry' techniques, somewhat prescient in relation to the contemporary concern for the planet's health and biodiversity (Coates 1998: 167). With bizarre contrast, we might assess the UK war effort, which resulted in the destruction of extensive copses and hedgerows, with the intention of maximizing agricultural efficiency and output, whereas the Nazis sought to protect their natural assets.[14] Yet, we should also remember, the extent to which the Nazis also used the forest as a clandestine backdrop to their atrocities.

The 'Let's Dig' commemorative direct action, undertaken on the Gestapo Terrain in 1985, by the Active Museum and the Berlin History Workshop, to honour the resistance fighters who opposed the Nazis, sought to recover traces (*spurren*) from the past.[15] The aim of this physical intervention was to prevent the site from being hidden by the inevitable re-wilding. The drama of digging by hand, without the use of mechanical diggers, became highly symbolic and a performative form of honouring the victims of the Nazi atrocities. On the larger 'stage' of landscape, the digging of the zone seeks to investigate the ontology of landscape, its symbiotic relationship to a so-called linear narrative history, and social inscriptions. Digging is here depicted as an opening of the 'wound' of memory and truth, without the healing of forgetting, or worst-revisionism. The disruption of the landscape as axiomatic text precludes more complacent readings of the Gestapo Terrain.[16] Here, physical labour becomes synonymous with forensic exhumation and redemptive archaeology. The wound must remain open, the national pain endured, whilst memory work attempts to provide a reconciliatory scar. The scar should always be visible, as a warning.

It is worth noting that mounds of rubble[17] feature as a recurring visual motif in my own photographic practice concerning non-places, and is discussed in relation to the *Candlestick Point* (1989) series of photographs produced by Lewis Baltz (discussed later in this chapter).

Till, citing an article written by Hazelton in the *New York Times* (1992: 33), re-presents the thoughts of one Israel visitor to the mounds of rubble in the Topography of Terror:

> A feeling, somehow […] an unpleasant frisson that comes from standing on a place where you know what happened but see little sign of it left. You sense that the stones of this rubble somehow hold the moans and screams of decades ago. (Hazelton [1992] quoted in Till 2005: 117)

We might consider Joseph Beuys's arboreal contribution, in relation to the landscapes of trauma work undertaken by Ulrich Baer (2005). Baer's analysis of concentration camp landscape sites feature in his book, *Spectral Evidence: The Photography of Trauma*. These incidental landscapes show trees inadvertently hiding sites of ineffable trauma, seemingly indifferent to their complicity in the process of execution, in which 'their literal, nonsymbolic presence the trees are evidence not of death and destruction but of the denial and concealment of its occurrence' (Baer 2005: 78). The 'banality' of landscape (to borrow from Arendt).

Baer (2005) refers to the New York photographer, Mikael Levin, and the re-tracing of his father's wartime experiences in Europe during the Second World War.[18] Mikael Levin looks at how the echoes and values of everyday scenes resonate in a larger historical context. Working in photography and film, his projects often intersect with his family history with the general movements and major events of the twentieth century. Through such works, his images explore the representation of time, place, memory, commonality, and beauty. It is not incidental that Levin's title caption for his photograph reproduced here is *Untitled* (from *War Story*) (1995; Fig. 3.3). One might infer from both the absence of a distinguishing caption title and the impenetrable darkness of the central interior space, that any attempt to re-name what happened in this space must remain ineffable. The dark aperture revealed by the open door in Levin's photograph (also a familiar trope in horror films) revisits a sombre episode in photography's history; reminding the spectator of the same shed referent which featured in Eric Schwab's April 1945 news photograph of piled up emaciated corpses in a Buchenwald storage shed. According to Baer, the 'dark opening in Mikael Levin's image also points to a lasting deadness that has remained undeveloped and that we still have not understood' (Baer 2005: 119). Levin's photograph (perhaps inadvertently?) offers some consolation to both visitor and spectator of the photograph through its essential abstraction into three vertical tonal panels. A formal arrangement found in religious triptych paintings and the sombre examples of American abstract painting, most evident in the work of Mark Rothko (*Black on Maroon*, 1958), Robert Motherwell (*110*, 1971), and Franz Kline (*Meryon*, 1961). Levin's aestheticization of a place of horror leaves the spectator with the secondary horror of historical recognition, even though the piled corpses have been long removed from this dark interior.

Fig. 3.3 *Untitled* (from *War Story*), 1997. Mikael Levin

In an interview with Christopher Phillips (2000) for the *Common Places* (2000) exhibition catalogue essay, 'The Untidy Intimacy of Places', Levin explains that when he 'was photographing *War Story*, especially in the cities', he was 'noticing how the impact of the war was often expressed more in the absence of things than anything else'. As a result, he says, 'I now wanted to try to work with more subtle traces, to show how everyday scenes in themselves express memory and identity' (Levin 2000, interview with Christopher Philips).

Levin's recent photographic work continues the investigation of seemingly inconsequential landscapes. The photograph *Untitled* (from *Mine Sublime*) (2016; Fig. 3.4) is situated near Cheorwon, the South Korean side of the Demilitarized Zone, separating it from North Korea. This is an area noted for its dense network of military fortifications, set amongst extensive and carefully cultivated rice paddies. Minefields dot

Fig. 3.4 *Untitled* (from *Mine Sublime*), 2016. Mikael Levin

the landscape. This photograph reveals the paradoxical visual beauty and complexity of demarcated strands of barbwire: plots of land stand out for their dense overgrowth of vegetation, untouched since the devastating war that tore apart this countryside over 60 years ago.

In the Romantic landscape, the Sublime was closely identified with vistas of virgin nature that provoke a sense of beauty coupled with terror. There is little terror left in the modern, tamed, and sculpted landscape, except perhaps as represented by such minefields. These vestiges of war, necessarily undisturbed, offer the possibility of an ecology restored, of a new form of pure, virgin nature.

Contextualising Research-Led Practice in Non-place

One might still postulate that even in a world with countless images, be they analogue or digital, the mesmerising function of the photograph persists. The photograph points, demanding: 'look at this!'

In relation to my own research-led *praxis*, each photograph eschews any pictorial zone which is out of focus. The aim has been to achieve a depth-of-field clarity from the foreground to the far distance. The purpose of this extensive depth-of-field was to establish a heightened photographic naturalism, one which would make a claim for the digital photograph's index.[19] A validation of the event; that it took place, and that such places do exist. And during a conversation in 2010 with the landscape painting historian David Hill, he playfully remarked that the 'digital photograph always starts with a date and time encoded', providing further evidence that the event took place.[20]

Whilst acknowledging (to a certain extent) William Mitchell's digital prognosis, in *The Reconfigured Eye: Visual Truth in the Post-Photographic Era* (1992), in which he postulates that the digital image is a 'meta-image', a construction of squares, capable of modification, whilst also serving as a pathway 'elsewhere'. For my own part, the analogue versus digital argument seems largely redundant now, for several reasons: I would argue that there has never been a golden age of indexical truth in photography. Photography's claim to evidential authority has always been questionable. Some fundamental questions remove any currency from the debate: for how does someone, something, get to occupy the frame in the first place? Who invites them, if at all? And if a person is represented in the frame then where is their position in that frame, and at what scale? These are just some basic questions concerning the *authority* of the frame, without even considering the dynamics of privilege and power associated with the photographer's role, and the added complexity of distribution, and multimodality. Perhaps an example from landscape photography, which, of course, is my main preoccupation in this book, would provide clarification and help ground this discussion: a vivid example of this 'evidential' problem is situated in the controversial late nineteenth-century American documentary photographs, including trophy portraits of acquiescent indigenous Native Americans, in which the apparent 'imperialism' of the frame is made culpable, in a form of deliberate myth-making. In stark contrast however, during this same period, the documentary photographs associated with the American frontier surveying expeditions (railway expansion, etc.) deliberately avoid any representation of Native Americans in the so-called great American West; the intention is to use photography (the new technology of the period) as a promotional tool, to persuade white investors to commit, in an empty, pristine wilderness, available for commercial expansion and

exploitation. It is here that the early pioneers of American landscape photography bring into question the authority of the frame, and are themselves implicated in a form of visual/cultural genocide of those same Native Americans, by making them invisible through the visible. All these factors question photography's claim to truth.

We must always consider the critical presence of the photographer, with all its attendant complexities of power, privilege, without forgetting the context and dissemination of those representations. It would be useful at this juncture, to reflect on my own research-led photographic practice in the light of some of the indexical arguments facing photographic representations.

My full-colour digital photographs intend to avoid the omnipresent cultural valorisation that is frequently associated with 'wet' black-and-white fine art/documentary photography, with its perceived (in some quarters) preoccupation with craft and print quality; a situation compounded by the conceptual interference caused by the exclusivity of the collectable limited edition analogue print. In contrast, the ubiquity of the digital photograph by all accounts seems to resist conventional printing, due to photographers' procrastination, rather than an antithetical attitude to a printed version.[21] Moreover, my own photographs in this book represent a series of non-places that include some iconographic index to a largely late nineteenth-century/early twentieth-century industrial heritage, whose related visual tropes are firmly embedded culturally in the form of black-and-white documentary-style photography. By using colour, I have tried to avoid any connotations with traditional documentary photography, to liberate my photographs from any explicit attachment to a north of England urban heritage nostalgia, and sentimentality. The intention is to encourage the audience to engage with the full colour of reality (the world is not monochrome), without the reassuring pictorial unification offered by the black-and-white 'zonal system', associated with the photographic enhancement developed by Ansel Adams.[22]

Unexpected Contextual Conversations

For ludic purposes, I employ the metaphor of the drowning man, allegedly seeing the kaleidoscope of his life unfurling in the throes of drowning, to describe the experience of working within the ocean of art history and visual culture. At times perplexing, in which each artist/practitioner is undoubtedly influenced by a form of aesthetic osmosis: the eclecticism

of practice, which (in my case) both embraces and rejects from a Euro-American cultural canon. I am aware that my photographic work in this book reveals the influence of other photographers/artists/filmmakers/within an extensive definition of visual culture. There is nothing surprising by this disclosure, but what does this declaration mean in relation to the aims of my research-led practice, and the value of my own criticality in this respect?

In his essay 'Artistic Research in Fine Arts', Satu Kiljunen (2002) asserts that research-led practice should be situated within the broader historical context of art:

> The need to construct theories, to analyse and express one's own thinking in relation to tradition, philosophy and visual problems of art, is an inherent element in the tradition of art. With these sentiments in mind, I would hope that the subsequent analysis of works that have informed the study will serve to further embed my practice within a broader lineage of visual practitioners who have contributed to our understanding of landscape representation. (2002: 21)

To provide critical insights into my own research-led photographic practice, I include several of my own photographs of non-places in this book, in addition to visual work from other artists and photographers, who help contextualise my allusive strategies within the interdisciplinary dialectics of the urban landscape. My choice of references from visual culture might (in some academic quarters) appear desultory, or to a lesser extent—idiosyncratic. Nevertheless, the subsequent melange provides an honest selection of direct influences that have critically affected the development of this book. I emphasise these influential cultural texts, to speak to other academic research-led practice colleagues and students, who are themselves, finding new ways to embed visual practice within research.

For my own part, the exploration of the urban landscape, through the critical conduit of non-place, has been significantly informed by the canon of North American photography. This would include the work of Paul Strand, Dorothea Lange, Walker Evans, Edward Weston, Robert Frank, William Eggleston, Hiroshi Sugimoto, Stephen Shore, Robert Adams, Lewis Baltz, and more collectively, the other photographers who participated in the seminal 1975 exhibition: *New Topographics: Photographs of a Man-Altered Landscape*, at George Eastman House, the Centre for Creative Photography, and curated by William Jenkins.[23]

Although the anecdotes which refer to the formation of the *New Topographics* show seem typical of a mid-1970s *Easy Rider* 'vibe', the show's impact still endures and continues to exert a pervasive influence on subsequent representations of the built environment. The participating photographers' work, often re-working the same motifs of doors, vacant spaces, windows, deserted gas stations, motels, and business infrastructures, seems to have been culturally absorbed within photographic consciousness; such is their ubiquity in various manifestations and frequent visual quotations within a more popular export of American culture. Most evident in advertising, and the 'soft power' of the American film industry.

Before we examine elements within the *New Topographics* show, it is important to note those precursors who provided the iconographic platform for such radical pictorial excursions in which the human was absent (most of the time).

This American motif which combines absence and a suspension of time, best described as an anticipatory mood, a referent of waiting, is embodied in the work of the painter Edward Hopper. This quality of absent reflection, epitomised in Hopper's paintings, has exerted a pervasive influence across American visual culture, and it is this, rather residual melancholic stillness, that permeates the *New Topographics* show. Hopper's decision to represent an ordinary, perhaps more marginal aspect of American culture, was an inspiration for the visual artists/photographers/film-makers (and writers) that followed.

Although we witness the occasional figure in Hopper's paintings, in many ways, they function as formal compositional devices within a largely narrative (sub)urban landscape: one conveying isolation, the separateness felt within the human condition. We encounter figures in quintessential American situations: petrol stations, diners, and lonely apartments.

To assuage this overwhelming sense of contemporary alienation, Hopper attempts to reconcile this existential condition through the unifying qualities of strong directional light. This pervasive light suggests a transformative moment in the figure's predicament. A painting that encapsulates this quality of light, stillness, and absence, is Hopper's iconic *Early Sunday Morning* (1930; http://collection.whitney.org/object/46345).

The title caption *Early Sunday Morning* (1930) is important in forming our interpretation of the scene; for we are not surprised to witness

a deserted street on a Sunday morning. The entire scene alludes to a series of subsequent American motifs, found in films such as: *High Noon* (1952) (directed by Fred Zinnemann) and *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967) (directed by Arthur Penn). The films pay a visual *homage* to Hopper's paintings, evident in the prolonged static shot to create cinematic tension. A creative trope taken to its dramatic *dénouement* in the 'spaghetti western' films of Sergio Leone, notably, *A Fistful of Dollars* (1964). The intense stillness in this film is enhanced by graphic close-ups of the main protagonists, intercut with middle distance shots of buildings, and arid landscapes in strong light.

Hopper's visual sensibility, combined with his unique pursuit of the everyday American scene, appears to have influenced another precursor of the *New Topographics* show (1975), Ed. Ruscha. The iconographic similarities between the two artists can be seen in their prophetic embrace of American popular culture. Both artists reify the seemingly mundane aspects of urban life. The Hopper motif of the gasoline station is aesthetically repurposed by Ruscha in his book *Twentysix Gasoline Stations* (1962; Fig. 3.5). A sequential Photobook, produced along the classic Route 66 travelling from Oklahoma to Los Angeles. With deadpan irony, Ruscha's Photobook inscribes each photograph with a caption and location: a self-conscious objective ('disinterested') style of framing that echoes the industrial remnants typologies of the Bechers in Germany. The minimal caption title information represents an intentionally indifferent aesthetic gaze at such a commercial utilitarian subject matter. Yet, if we look closely at Ruscha's photograph *Phillips 66* Flagstaff, Arizona (1962) from the *Twentysix Gasoline Stations* (pp. 14–15). Photobook, there emerges an implicit critique of the rapidly emerging imposition of commercially driven structures on the American landscape; a cultural conflict embodied in the juxtaposition of the old-fashioned vehicle parked below the 'Phillips 66' signage tower. We now recognise Ruscha's dispassionate aesthetic as prophetic, in relation to the deliberately detached style of the *New Topographics* (1975) photographers who followed.

Moreover, Ruscha's sequential recording of the everyday American landscape continued in 1966, with another 'drive-by' Photobook project: *Every Building on the Sunset Strip*. Using a Nikon camera attached to the rear of a pickup truck, Ruscha documented every house on the strip, which he then pasted into their correct position in his studio, inserting house numbers where appropriate. The creative reverberations

Fig. 3.5 *Twentysix Gasoline Stations*, pp. 14, 15, *Phillips 66*, Flagstaff, Arizona, 1962. Ed. Ruscha (© Ed. Ruscha. Courtesy the artist and Gagosian)

from Ruscha's work during this period are evident in the exploration of authentic 'vernacular' locations, often encountered in post-1960s' art-house movies, both in American and in Europe. An example of this creative inter-subjectivity between Ruscha's vernacular iconography and film is the 'road-movie' *Five Easy Pieces* (1970), directed by Bob Rafelson. A film that uses the road trip as a redemptive experience. More recently, the journey through an authentic New Jersey was used as the opening television title sequence for Mafia-inspired drama the *Sopranos* (1999).

We can also trace this preoccupation with the so-called urban 'underbelly' of American culture in the creative road trip, a way of

working that celebrates spontaneity, and the aleatory. Photographers who epitomized this documentary method, espousing a direct experience with an America out-there, would include Walker Evans and Robert Frank. Their search for an authentic representation of a less-well-known America shared common groundwork with the literary 'on the road' urges of the American Beat generation of writers, such as Allen Ginsberg (1926–1997) and Jack Kerouac (1922–1969). We might regard Kerouac's *On the Road* (1957) as American literature's companion piece to Ruscha's gasoline stations.

The legacy of Ruscha's nowhere iconography is the all too familiar post-1960s American aesthetic critique of the ever-expanding urban landscape. A visual framing of the *other* America, one that eschews the epic vistas of the American landscape, through detached ocular *ennui*. Yet, the more profound meaning embedded in these new idiosyncratic representations is an implicit contestation of an emerging, and much harsher commercially driven new frontier; a new vision, that had yet to be reconciled within post-1960s America.

In the spirit of their American contemporaries, the various journeys undertaken by the German photographers, Bernd, and Hilla Becher were a prerequisite in the production of their industrial photo-work typologies. It is difficult to discuss the industrial ruins of Germany, without alluding to the work of Bernd and Hilla Becher. Known in photography circles, as simply the 'Bechers'. They have produced influential photographic typologies defined by a unique reification and aestheticizing of obsolete industrial structures (although the Bechers' might contest that they unduly aestheticize these structures). These consistent archives of black-and-white photographs are distinguished by a neutral choice of grey (cloudless) *en plein air* lighting conditions. The same approach to exacting lighting requirements is matched by an equally systematic framing of redundant industrial structures. The Bechers' creative process tries to obviate any latent Romanticism which might attach itself to the representation of the subject.[5] In this way, their photographs mirror a flat-pack industrial process, in which the recorded iconography is intended to be subservient to the translation of pure visual information. This specificity imbues the photographs with the objectivity of multi-elevational engineering plans. Yet, as we recognise from the intentionality of the documentary photography undertaken for the Farm Security Administration (1935–1944), to provide a non-subjective pictorial record of rural poverty in America, there is no guarantee that

photographs retain their original aims. In this sense, the Bechers' own photographs could be read through the compassionate lens afforded to the FSA archive? Although there are no people in the Bechers' work, the full-frontal address in their photography lends their work a quality of anthropocentric tenderness. In that, the structures now exposed to clinical observation convey the existential isolation common to the human condition. And in the broader context of twentieth-century German history and trauma, the Bechers' lepidopterist approach to the forming of their photographic archive (of specimens?) could be interpreted through the much darker lens of certain Nazi typologies.

The Bechers' photo-works share a similar approach championed in the Photobooks of Ruscha. And together, these photographers prefigure the objective attitude evinced by many of the *New Topographics* (1975) photographers. The main difference in the Bechers' *typologies* compared with their younger American counterparts is the Bechers' preoccupation with photography's unique ability to 'salvage'—to archive transient post-industrial structures. To achieve this archive, they employed their 'trademark' approach to neutral lighting, with a consistent framing of each subject—the remnants of a less technological industrial past. As Michael Mack (1999) asserts:

> The Bechers' own work has played a significant role in the developing industrial preservation movement, and their teaching at the Düsseldorf Art Academy has instilled in the generation of artists now dominating European art a subtle sensibility to the excavation of man-made landscapes. (Mack 1999: 10)[24]

In this context, the Bechers provide an almost forensic examination of the structure's 'DNA', to preserve it through the photograph as artefact for future resurrection.[25] In contrast, the subjects and style of the *New Topographics* photographers maintain a direct critical address through the intentionality of their framing, yet we feel that their criticality exudes a more contemporary irony, even suggesting a banal aversion to the encounter. Some of the original criticism directed at the *New Topographics* show (from various visitors) was related to its somewhat casual nihilism; an experience made worse for some visitors, by the absence of human presence. The contrast was significant, in relation to the previous generation of photographers' who had honoured the poor tenant farmers through their work for the FSA between 1935 and 1943.[26]

In the FSA work of Russell Lee and Walker Evans, we witness a creative departure from the original FSA 'brief'; both photographers manage to provide the required documentary evidence, whilst their photographs were enhanced by a clarity of vision that prefigured the direct compositional address evident in the *New Topographics* work. Furthermore, both Evans and Lee represented the dignity of their human subjects, even in their abject situation: poverty fails to erode the pride of those depicted, a defiance, captured even in the more 'staged' shots.

In the photographs of Walker Evans, we confront a more communal America. An agricultural community in which individuals still appear embedded, and connected to the land, however tenuous. The apparent rootedness of their address in the photographs defies the paradoxical reality of the forced migration of the many tenant farmers, depicted in John Steinbeck's novel, *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939).

This sense of generational connectedness to place seems inconceivable in the new America documented in the *New Topographics* show. Even the older buildings that remain in the *New Topographics* show communicate transience: including 'down-market' motels, whilst the new buildings suggest an anonymous imposition on the landscape, through suburban, ribbon-development, alongside the prophetic business park. In contrast, the buildings in Evan's photographs, however fragile their materiality might imply, present a more organic development, within their immediate locations. These weather-beaten structures display surfaces like human skin that reveal their accretion of local narratives. The facades dilapidated show advertising posters in various states of legibility. Through our contemporary perspective, these photographs reveal the *sui generis* of place, a compelling local identity. The overall effect is that we, the audience, believe that people lived here, and stayed, depending on socio-economic circumstances of course. This evocation of belonging in an authentic place, in which some familial, generational investment has been made, is exemplified in the memorable photograph by Russell Lee, of a *FSA client and his sons; Caruthersville, Missouri* (1938; Fig. 3.6).

In this stolid photograph, a father and his sons seem to have been anchored within the frame, like immovable fence posts, that may have once designated the boundary of their farm. The figures appear immutable—monuments to a vanishing relationship to the working American landscape.

Although with less overt compassion for the plight of American dispossessed, Lewis Baltz offers a cooler resistance to the transformation

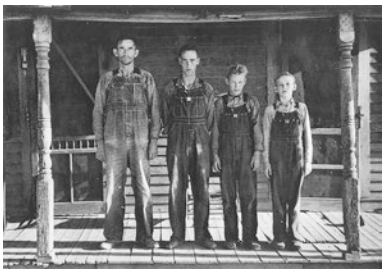

Fig. 3.6 *FSA client and his sons; Caruthersville, Missouri*, 1938. Russell Lee

of the mid-1970's American urban landscape. The impenetrability of Baltz's work during this period can be explained by his borrowing of a minimalist aesthetic, concomitantly available in the avant-garde American minimalism during the period 1960–1970, and represented by visual artists, such as Donald Judd and Sol LeWitt. Baltz deploys the veil of minimalism to resist any straightforward interpretation of the scene represented. According to Brit Salvenson (2009), Baltz had conducted 'socioeconomic analysis of the development in Orange and Santa Clara counties', yet his subsequent photographs remained 'uninformative, like the buildings themselves'.[27] The images which confront us in Baltz's photographic series, *The New Industrial Parks near Irvine, California* (1974), produced for the Castelli Graphics publication in 1974, seek to emphasise the anonymity of this new architectural phenomenon—a deliberate gesture (perhaps) to break with the more compassionate investigation of American life shown in the expansive 'celebration' undertaken by the FSA photographers. Baltz's photograph, *South Wall, Unoccupied Industrial Structure, 16812 Milliken, Irvine* (1974; Fig. 3.7), hides its function. The meanings that we might infer from this photograph remain prophetic in relation to our own time. We recognize the increasing ubiquity of anonymous out-sourced distribution centres, synonymous with Amazon warehouses, call centres (some international), private security run prisons, and places of rendition. Baltz directs our gaze from left to right, across a mid-tone grey facade, punctuated by the vertical presence of a solitary tree sapling, itself, relying on substantial support in this most manufactured of environments. The viewer can only speculate on the future function of this pre-fabricated building, devoid of human presence, where an immaculate distribution of inter-locking abstract spaces complete with achromatic tones provides the only aesthetic solace, the beauty of the morgue.

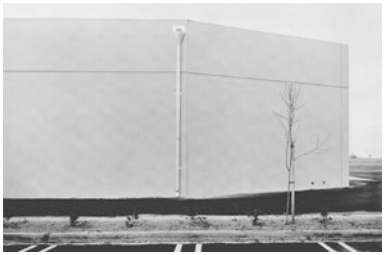

Fig. 3.7 *South Wall, unoccupied industrial structure, 16812 Milliken, Irvine*, 1974. Lewis Baltz (© Lewis Baltz Estate Gallery Luisotti, Santa Monica)

The contribution made by Robert Adams within the 1975 *New Topographics* show is in some sense, less abstruse than Baltz. Instead, we encounter a series of photographs which present an explicit critique of the rampant real estate development taking place across the front range of the Colorado Rocky Mountains. In his seminal Photobook, *The New West: Landscapes Along the Colorado Front Range* (1974), Adams provides an ironic epitaph to the loss of a more expansive and wild American West, one that had nearly disappeared:

> Many living by the Front Range today would understand those sentiments. Though the mountains are no longer wild, they still dwarf us and thereby give us courage to look at our mistakes - expressways, Tyrolean villages, and jeep roads. Such things shame us, but they cannot outlast the rock; in sunlight they are even, for a moment, like trees.[28]

Although compositionally refined, with a direct beauty, the black-and-white photographs of Robert Adams traverse the 'front wall' of the Colorado Rocky Mountains to reveal a moral aesthetic contest between a newer commercial infrastructure and an older land still resistant to any subjugation. The underlying topography of the old West persists against the newer forms of mobile homes. This temporary accommodation is represented as a defilement of the landscape. The wagon-style arrangement of the mobile homes further alludes to an earlier pioneering spirit which appears to ridicule the original explorers and settlers of the frontier. Adams makes sure in his photograph *Mobile homes, Jeffereson County, Colorado* (1973), that the viewer is reminded of a more permanent feature—by the inclusion of a classic landscape motif in the background.

In the Adams photograph *Along Interstate 25* (1974; Fig. 3.8), there is the suggestion of a desert dune, complete with an isolated clump of brush. It is only when our eye surveys the extent of this tilted horizon, that we

Fig. 3.8 *Along Interstate 25*, 1974. Robert Adams (Photographs © Robert Adams Website © Yale University Art Gallery. All rights reserved)

notice the more obvious man-made intrusion of the metal protection barrier. The image is at once an *homage* to the archive of late nineteenth-century American landscape survey photography, that often featured (allegedly) unexplored, uninhabited landscapes. Adams invites the viewer to speculate on the possibilities of the terrain over, and beyond the landscaped ridge. A visual tension is created by Adams here, one that disrupts the viewer's desire for a more expansive landscape, by the photograph's rigid square format, presenting an uneasy and limiting spectacle; the unease continues through the formal dichotomy of the photograph. This in effect serves to distribute the two central motifs, one of which might suggest a wilder, less sterile landscape: the solitary white cloud situated in the top left-hand section signifies the remaining symbol of the old West, as our gaze lowers, to consider the rather forlorn central scrub, barely surviving on the tilted sculpted embankment. The black-and-white photograph (artificially) unifies these two triangular elements of land and sky, yet, through the emphasis on surface differences, the scraped texture of the embankment denuded of vegetation, we apprehend the *faux*-epic vision of the old West, one that has been tamed by an automotive aesthetic.

In this series of photographs, Adams traces the rapid transformation of the American landscape and is critical of its consequences:

> Here no expediency is forbidden. A new house is bulldozed to make room for a trailer agency; sidewalks are lost when the street is widened; shrubs die in the smog and are replaced with gravel. Read the eschatological chaos of signs.[29]

In America, zoning codes were devised by engineering firms, then packaged and sold to municipalities for decades, eliminating the need for local officials to consider local design issues (Kunstler 1993). Kunstler identifies the use of the word 'park' as a semantic joke.

On the subject of destructive automobile construction, Kunstler declares that,

> the least understood cost-although the most keenly felt- has been the sacrifice of a sense of place: the idea that people and things exist in some sort of continuity, that we belong to the world physically and chronologically, and that we know where we are. (Kunstler 1993: 118)

Kunstler saves his most vitriolic criticism for the seemingly compliant cultural geography espoused by John Brinckerhoff Jackson, his failed 'critical faculties' in considering the consequences of his geographic observations. And according to Kunstler, Jackson's academic contribution to cultural geography exerted a problematic influence on the arch post-modernist, Robert Venturi, who so admired the Las Vegas Strip, that he overlooked the negative impact on the environment (Kunstler 1993).

In an interview between Kunstler and J.B. Jackson in July 1989: Jackson was fascinated by the post-war highway scene, describing it as 'a fabulous [and] grand pageant of our national life'. Kunstler responds: 'I find myself reconciled to a great deal of ugliness, a great deal of commonness'. Jackson responds by stating that he doesn't 'object to it at all'.

With an almost Trumpian gusto, Kunstler disparages the academic critical balance expressed by Jackson's fellow cultural geographers. Kunstler anticipates their analysis of the new franchised America in this way: 'a Jacksonian student of landscape can observe a Red Barn hamburger joint [without acknowledging] that the Red Barn is an ignoble piece of shit that degrades the community' (Kunstler 1993: 123–124).

A fellow 'disciple' of Jackson was Pierce Lewis (1983), who contributed an insightful analysis of the American post-war landscape. Lewis offered a fatalistic yet prescient view of the emerging franchised landscape:

> But Americans are not going to abandon those freeways, nor their ranchhouses on those cul-de-sacs in the woods. Nor will the old nucleated city be restored to its former eminence […] what shall be done about this new ubiquitous metropolis? […] We must learn to live with it. (Lewis 1983: 141–142, quoted in Kunstler 1993: 123)

According to Coates (1998), the absence of Native Americans (*Indians* as they prefer to be called) in the wilderness debate reveals wilderness itself as a cultural construction supporting those in power:

> Many social justice environmentalists see wilderness as no more than a construct – and a violent and imperialistic one at that, a conceit of an empty, unsullied place born of dispossession of the American Indian – and therefore no more intrinsically worthy of our concern than any other environment. (Coates 1998: 157)[30]

There are, of course, plenty of cars on show in the work of the American photographers working during the 1970s, but these often appear abandoned (parked). Their apparent stasis suggesting the simulacra of a ghost town. Yet, another ironic revolt against the consumer/commuter lifestyle which permits this kind of tract expansion. What is conveyed here is less the subject of a new man-made experience. Rather, in relation to the work of Adams, the photographer's concern is to capture the transformation of form through the effects of light. As Adam's declares: 'The Front Range is astonishing because it is over-spread with light of such richness that banality is impossible' (2008: 12).

In the foreword to *The New West*, John Szarkowski (2008: ix) proposes a more sanguine, possibly redemptive quality in Adams's investigation, one in which the spectator may find in these 'pictures nourishment, surprise, instruction, clarification, challenge, and perhaps hope', although, however beautiful these photographs appear they also function as a protest, against the insensitive development of the American landscape.

This assertion is further supported when we consider the relationship of Robert Adams to Ansel Adams. As William Jenkins explains, the younger Robert Adams was a devoted 'disciple' of the older photographer, writing in a 'fan' letter to him in 1979, that he regarded his work as representative of a purer West.[31] Interestingly, Robert Adams's first print purchase was Ansel Adam's photograph, *Moonrise, Hernandez, New Mexico* (1941). What is emphasised here is that both artists share a vision of nature (the American wilderness), as a redemptive force.

Discussing the contribution of Anselm Adams, John Muir (1838–1914), one of Thoreau's devoted followers, is acknowledged as having established the trope of the wilderness in American cultural identity. Muir had a profound influence on the choice of landscape imagery of Adams, through his proselytizing of the Sierra (leading eventually, to the State of California designating 100,000 acres of the Sierra

as Ansel Adams Wilderness Area). By using red and green filters, Adams accentuated the visual contrasts between snow, rock, and cloud structures. Also, an extended manipulation of depth-of-field, combined with an expanded tonal range, produced an augmented sense of naturalism—a proto-hyper-realist representation of the wilderness. The carefully framed vistas show an inviolate landscape, eschewing any semblance of human agency, or human inscriptions. From our contemporary perspective, we might have concerns that Adams chose to eliminate the presence of humans, even though we know that Awahnichi ('Yosemite Valley People') and Yana Native Americans lived in the area, along with other Americans (however small and itinerant their presence might have been during his period of working). This iconography of human absence, evident in the work of Adams, sustains the eidetic vision that only an undefiled nature offers an authentic transcendental encounter.

In contrast to America, the UK National Parks support the active presence of people, in the belief that this adds vitality to the notion of preservation.

As Terry Clifford (2009 [1999]) argues in his book, *Pastoral*, 'the American vision of its land was created by the colonialists through Eurocentric imagery' (Clifford 2009 [1999]: 33). This feeling of dislocation from place inhabits Adams's *The New West* project: the only frontier now is the signage on the petrol station photograph entitled *Pikes Peak* (1974) that declares 'Frontier', beyond which the sun goes down over a distant range. The rare appearance of a human is shown either digging foundations for a tract house (his own grave, or symbolically the old West's grave), in silhouette within a sterile home interior, or obscured through shade and scale.

The exception to this apparent human absence is the photograph, *Sunday School. A church in a new tract. Colarado Springs* (1974), where a group of teenagers congregate outside in strong light, dressed in formal clothes, featuring the recurrent wilderness motif of the distant mountain range.

This subtle eco-critique is echoed by Lewis Baltz in his radically different approach to landscape valorization, explored in his *Candlestick Point* (1989) project. The *planar axis* framing continues, yet the subject matter is quite different from the earlier cool minimalism shown in the earlier Irvine industrial parks work. Produced between May 13, and July 2, in 1989, Baltz documents the more accidental collision of the man-altered landscape through the bizarre movements of 'waste-management',

and the unpredictable movements of nature. In the Romantic sense, the images depict the destructive results from American consumerism, as *Candlestick Point* becomes a repository for a 'washed-up' detritus, of wooden railway sleepers, ubiquitous automobile tyres assembled in totemic mounds (more often associated with the earthworks of Robert Smithson made in the 1960/70s) of discarded building materials, forming a forgotten, and eroded civilization. Jeff Brouws's sumptuous photographs of a similarly damaged American hinterland continue the critical and aesthetic legacy of the *New Topographics* (1975) photographers. In a series of Brouws photographs: *North Forestiere Avenue, Fresno, California* (1991), *37 Parking Lot, Highway 62, Vidal Junction California* (1994), *72 Strip mall No 13 (abandoned Kmart)*, and *Brookings, South Dakota* (2003), we encounter what Brouws describes as America's 'franchised landscape', or 'discarded landscape'. Fox (2006) shares Brouws' need to continue the critique of the 'American Dream', in line with the dystopian critique delineated in the *New Topographics* (1975) exhibition.

The work of the New Topographers was not celebratory in the least, but rather a dystopian view of an American Dream moulded by advertising that promoted an ever more expensive consumerist lifestyle. A profound redirection of both cultural geographers and photographers was taking place, as they shifted their attention from natural land to cultural landscape, and from looking at instances of the individual American vernacular to those of corporate standardization (Fox 2006: 142). Interestingly, Brouws paid an ironic *homage* to Ed Ruscha's celebrated *Twenty-Six Gasoline Stations* (1962). In 1992, he produced his own intertextual series of *Twentysix Abandoned Gasoline Stations* (1992).[32] In this accurate re-visiting of Ruscha's iconic sites, Brouws charts the transformation from individual entrepreneurs to the new corporate ownership of Shell and Exxon.[33] The iconography of the road has featured in many of Brouws's photographs. His output from the late 1980s, and early 1990s, focused on Highway 99.[34] This specific route featured a range of sites along the north-south spine of California's Central Valley, which included local service stations, motels, and cafes. In choosing these locations (which were so pervasive in the photographers' work shown at the *New Topographics* show in 1975), Brouws conveyed a sense of the local (the authentic), through an environmental and socio-economic interconnectedness within the immediate community. As Fox (2006) points out, these photographs represented a conscious 'creation of memory in a landscape

that hadn't been occupied by Europeans for all that long' and were now losing its unique identity, through the rapid development of homogenized strip malls and housing projects, where once (Fox 2006: 142):

> family history fostered a kinship with the surrounding towns and workaday environment I drove through; landscapes can make a deep impression when they involve personal memory, and this may have been partially why I was drawn to the area. (Brouws 2006: 147)

On some occasions, when investigating these urban 'no-go' areas, Brouws would reflect on the fearful entry into largely derived African American neighbourhoods. He felt protected by his photographic intentions, believing that photographs retain the 'power to help right wrongs by their existence (in the world) as viable documents registering societal problems' (Brouws 2006: 155).

Brouws's critically informed photographs resonate within the work of Robert Adams. Both photographers (inadvertently in Adams's case) identify with the role of visual anthropologist: investigating the meanings and 'pattern behind the cycle of growth and construction, entropy and decay, in American society' (Brouws 2006: 146). Brouws celebrates the intellectual ballast that an interdisciplinary 'weave' produces. He harnesses the discrete disciplines of 'cultural geography, urban history, and public policy', which in turn, enhances, and validates the contribution of his creative practice.

We might consider Adams's pivotal photograph of *Along Interstate 25* (1974), as symptomatic of an earlier homogenized exploitation of an authentic America? Completed in 1971, Interstate 25 followed a route a few miles to the west of an older business route, and for many, this new route symbolized a subjugation of the American landscape by a national corporate highway culture. In tracing the effects of this rapid change, Brouws adopted the role of visual anthropologist in the recording of an increasing 'detritus of displacement', exacerbated by the transition from local to international capital (Fox 2006). The work of Brouws was also underpinned during this period by the writings of the polemical cultural geographer, John Brinckerhoff Jackson. Both Brouws and Jackson did not totally reject the development of a road network, yet, they did lament 'the sterilization of [the American] landscape by freeways' (Fox 2006: 143). In Jackson's book: *Highway: America's Endless Dream* (1997), the conclusion of the journey arrives at a place classified

by geographers with the unforgettable acronym: T.O.A.D.S., meaning, temporary, obsolete, abandoned, and derelict sites.[35] From an English perspective, the reference to 'Toads' may conjure earlier twentieth-century recollections of Kenneth Graham's, *The Wind in the Willows* (1908), a bucolic elegy for a pastoral England under threat, represented, to a certain extent, by Mr. Toad's transient engagement with his new motor car, and the excitement of the open road, with the 'rush of air in his face, the hum of the engine, and the light jump of the car beneath him intoxicated his weak brain' (Graham 1983 [1908]: 195).

By 1998, Brouws had 'reversed the gaze' of the influential *New Topographics* (1975) photographers by investigating the non-place centre of the city, rather than its edge-lands. It is here that he witnessed the aftermath of the exodus of capital from the city. The repercussions revealed the stark inequality that existed between the socio-economic classes.

A similar lament for the decline the authentic America city is evident in the somewhat 'reactionary' caustic critiques offered by James Kunstler (2001), referring to the unsatisfactory condition of Las Vegas, as the 'place where America's spirit crawled off to die' (Kunstler 2001: 143). The emergence of discarded space also concerns Kunstler, one replaced according to the geographer, Larry Ford (2003), by a disinvested business district.[36] A space characterized by a 'zone of discard' amongst old industrial structures, dilapidated warehouses, run-down hotels, and general decay. Areas which were later referred to by Alan Berger (2006), as 'drosscapes'.[37]

An analysis of such areas is alluded to by the economist, Joseph Schumpeter as a process of 'creative destruction' which reflects the horizontal abandonment of inner-city zones such as Detroit, to produce a 'terrain of displacement'.[38]

By contrast, Baltz's *Candlestick Point* (1989) photographic series exposes the displaced detritus produced by urban living, now hidden away from the central city. The mounds of *Candlestick Point* act as pyres for consumerist shame. According to Mabey (2010/1973), rubbish tips represent the 'real untouchables in our caste system of landscapes' (2010/1973: 147).

In the postscript to this substantial project, Gus Blaisdell (1989) refers to the suggestion of the Sublime in the nondescript flatness of *Candlestick Point*, as a 'wasted reality', a place as 'apart as cemeteries, national parks, civic plazas - an underbelly of the sublime, where the wasted challenges the composed'.[39]

This sense of places that are 'apart', which are difficult to engage with ontologically, permeates the work of other photographers who have been influenced by the critical reverberations surrounding the *New Topographics* show in 1975 and the subsequent show in 1981–1982: *New Topographics: Photographs by Robert Adams, Lewis Baltz, and Joe Deal.*

Although the photographer John Gossage was a friend of both Lewis Baltz and Robert Adams, he was not invited to exhibit at the original *New Topographics: Photographs of a Man-Altered Landscape*, exhibition in 1975, yet, according to Gerry Badger (2010: 54), he could be regarded as a 'fellow traveller'. Gossage's subject matter is highly relevant to the photographic investigation of non-place, in relation to the locational specificity of his recently reissued Aperture photography book *The Pond* (republished in 2010), in which walking becomes a prerequisite creative methodology for an evocation of place through a photographic narratology—a sequential narrative of *terrain vague*. Interestingly, in relation to the adoption of the non-place term in this study, Badger (2010), in his concluding essay for *The Pond*, claims that Gossage is more concerned with 'non-place', rather than a specific place, whilst also acknowledging the ambiguous liminal space that exists between city and country.

Unlike his American contemporaries, who exhibited prints concomitantly with publishing books, Gossage privileges Photobooks, rather than prints and the conventional gallery show. *The Pond* Photobook is regarded by many as more than equal to the other great American photography books. Turning each page of Gossage's book is part of an intimate performance, and relationship with the project, where each monochrome photograph allows us to discover these nondescript pockets of landscape through discrete glimpses, whilst sensing the tension that exists between liminal nature and an encroaching suburban culture, that will subsume any fantasy of American wilderness.

The content and form of these photographs differ from Gossage's *New Topographics* contemporaries in subtle ways; there is evidence of a deliberate literary *homage* to Henry David Thoreau's eco-transcendental book, *Walden* (1854), where Thoreau spent two years in a cabin near Walden Pond, owned by his friend and mentor, Ralph Waldo Emerson. The conceptual 'debt' owed to Thoreau is acknowledged by Gossage, for in the final page of Gossage's book we see the re-photographed extract of Thoreau's 'The Pond' text erased, in a dystopian gesture, suggesting that we live in a more problematic relationship with nature.

Gossage's photographs attest to this drama: many of the images resist the inherent formal 'austerity' presented by many of the *New Topographics* photographers, and instead, pursue a compositional agenda that exploits unusual framing and focus shifts—often suggesting an animalistic viewpoint. This sense of unease (replicated in so many of the 'teen' horror genre movies during this period) created by Gossage in a nondescript district of Columbia, Maryland, could be explained by the peculiar disquiet invoked by the narrative sequence, in which we follow the steps of the photographer, having to avoid, as he does, the various detritus on the way to the eventual suburban 'refuge'. The journey must be taken without re-tracing one's steps (an echoing of the one-take in cinema), a decisive performance according to Gossage (2009), in which 'each stop was specific, and all the pictures interlocked [and] when you have a destination in mind, you don't double back'.[40]

On concluding this journey, we appreciate the liminal vulnerability proposed by the sequence, in which a reciprocal process of landscape osmosis is suggested by the wilderness encroached upon by a 'creeping' suburban development, which itself is dependent on socio-economic conditions, to prevent the reverse—the re-wilding of suburbia. This potential conflict of re-appropriation contributes to the narrative power of the Gossage's Photobook.

As a project concerned with the medium of photography as a recording tool, Gossage's 'pictures' also contribute to the debates surrounding beauty, nature, and the intrusion of the man-made, by documenting the unexpected detritus along the way. Yet, in the exploration of trees, we sense broader pictorial allusions to the formal arabesques present in Japanese woodcut prints. Nevertheless, such an abundance of information, often presented through various depth-of-field decisions, imbues the Photobook with a strong forensic resonance. Indeed, depending on one's interpretation of the journey and images alone, a crime could have been committed here.

The Pond Photobook re-presents for the late twentieth-century a reflection on Thoreau's proto-ecocriticism, with its embedding of the American pastoral narrative, in which the individual (not the group) searches for a transformative encounter—an epiphany in a nature devoid of people. If we consider *The Pond* further, we apprehend the intertextual relationship with Thoreau's *Walden* Pond, a place similarly vulnerable to the imminent incursion of the modern. In Thoreau's case, the modern was represented by the increasing ubiquity (and associated

noise) of the railways. In this context, *Walden* Pond becomes the critical vehicle for a meditation on modernity, and allows Thoreau to express his antipathy towards the rupture of an Edenic pastoral silence. For Garrard, *Walden* (1854) reveals a conflicted ethos, one in which Thoreau's own cosmopolitanism is concomitantly seduced by the presence of the railroad (Garrard 2012):

> I am refreshed and expanded when the freight train rattles past me, and I smell the stores which go dispensing their odours […] reminding me of foreign parts. (Thoreau 1992 [1854]: 97)

In the photograph *Plate 11*, reproduced on page 11 of *The Pond*, Gossage seems to refer (as did Robert Adams in *The New West*) to the nineteenth-century archive of American survey photographs. Although the allusion is not straightforward, as it relies on the nuanced effects of depth-of-field, and focal viewpoint, to create a 'macro' re-presentation of the erstwhile epic American landscape, in which arbitrary limestone fragments of rock are invested with a monumental character. If we temporarily cropped the hazy wooded background, it would lend the scene an even more ambiguous scale. A recent cycle track, still damp from its own impression, reveals evidence of a less epic journey, to find safe passage through this desert in miniature.

A re-evaluation of *The Pond* photographs occurred through an exhibition at the Smithsonian American Art Museum in 2010. This exhibition presented the original form of the Photobook as a series of sequential prints. This show acknowledged the contribution made by Gossage to the photography of place, both in America, and within a broader European context. Gossage continued to build his reputation through work in Germany and more recently in the Gulf States.

The critical and aesthetic export of the *New Topographics* photographers' way of working was further disseminated through their European travels and teaching abroad. For example, Lewis Baltz lived in Europe during this period, whilst Stephen Shore had a solo exhibition in Düsseldorf in 1977. Shore's exhibition further cemented his relationship with Bernd Becher, and exerted some influence upon the emerging students at the *Kunstakademie*. It is worth noting, that these students included Thomas Ruff, Candida Höfer, Thomas Struth, and Andreas Gursky. The work of these students, now 'superstar' photographers within the global art market, emerged through different responses to

both the minimalist architectonic principles espoused by the Bechers and the *New Topographics* photographers' ironic examination of the everyday. The notable difference between these two different generations of photographers is the younger photographers' preoccupation with monumental scale. This embrace of large-scale photographic prints could be explained by the desire to compete with the epic scale of contemporary gallery paintings, adopted in the work of artists such as Julian Schnabel and Anselm Kiefer. Also, one must also consider the significant technological developments that occurred during the post-1980s period, which made it possible to print photographs at a much larger scale.

To expand this discussion, regarding the legacy of the *New Topographics* show, it is worth considering what makes an interesting subject for photography in the first place? This requires us to deviate from the well-documented success of the Düsseldorf School, in Germany, to reflect on the more intimate photographs of two other German photographers who explore (inadvertently perhaps) the notion of non-place in Berlin: Ulrich Wüst and Michael Schmidt.

On viewing Schmidt's photograph as part of his untitled series from *Berlin after (nach) 45* (1980; Fig. 3.9), a body of work containing thirty-two photographs (although he has been documenting Berlin since 1965), we witness a sustained examination of the more undeveloped vacant areas of the Berlin urban *milieu*. There is no discernible human presence here, save for the casual detritus resulting from intermittent human agency. This area is partially shielded by the redundant brick built building on the right, which also forms a stark aperture through which to view the newly restored Berlin housing projects in the distance. Schmidt directs the viewer to the foreground, a space that appears to have been levelled at some point, another void which might have been

Fig. 3.9 *Berlin after (nach) 45*, 1980. Michael Schmidt

set aside for redevelopment, hence the partial evidence of re-wilding taking place. This rather sombre foreground surface is difficult to read in a neutral way, due to the fact, that Schmidt had a previous career as a policeman. Moreover, in the historical context of Berlin after 1945, we sense that Schmidt himself may be looking for answers, a forensic probing through photography. And yet, what kind of witnessing is this? A gesture of belated witnessing for whom? Why has photography been incorporated in this process? In deploying photography, Schmidt is concerned with producing some form of documentary evidence (*zeugnis*), alluding perhaps, to the macabre way in which photographic evidence was used by the Nazi regime before 1945? So, what might we infer from this seemingly nondescript evidence, a vacant space? For my own part, Schmidt's photograph contributes to his personal journey for some form of national atonement, in which the photographic print provides an artefact for personal reflection after the event. Schmidt's 'execution' of the photograph could be seen to perform an extended function of the German term *zeuge*, one which requires the individual to bear witness for society, to tell the truth.

The history of the photographic representation of the empty city is explored by Steven Jacobs (2006) in his article *Amor Vacui: Photography and the Image of the Empty City*. The volcanic annihilation and remnants of Pompeii to the melancholic musings of Georges Rodenbach in *Bruges-La-Morte* (1892) to the more contemporary images of a devastated Beirut by Gabriele Basilico in 1991. Jacobs (2006) interprets this preference for the subject of 'voids' in the urban landscape as symptomatic of artists reacting against the 'kaleidoscopic culture of congestion celebrated by street photography', and that this represents a physical 'dilution of the city to a form of de-dramatisation' (Jacobs 2006: 107–118).

The photographs of Ulrich Wüst (who trained as an urban planner) show a similar preoccupation with a de-dramatized urban landscape, where we encounter East Berlin's monochrome architectural spaces, often devoid of people. The oppressive mood of these spaces relies on the configuration of a designed space where light is obstructed. These built obstructions result in sharply defined angular shadows, which allude to the formal trope that existed in German Expressionistic cinema from the First World War period to the 1920s. When figures do appear in Wüst's photographs, their presence increases the sense of narrative anxiety within this urban predicament. A situation which requires each figure to negotiate a demarcated series of solid diagonal boundaries. We sense

here, an urban design experience where the individual is made to feel insignificant in relation to the East German Socialist State. Wüst examines the tension that exists between the citizen as a private person and as part of the collective. In this respect, the individuals appear burdened in the manner of Kafka's Joseph K., the paranoid protagonist in the novel, *The Trial* (1925). Later developed into Orson Welles' film *The Trial* (1962). Adopting the same wariness, Wüst's citizens must negotiate the Cold War politics of space.

The stark architectural environment depicted in Wüst's photograph *Berlin (East), Mollstrasse* (1983; Fig. 3.10), forms an interesting dialogue with the apparent anonymity and clinical minimalism celebrated in the first *New Topographics* show. What perhaps links the two is the representation of landscapes of power, in which structures are manifest, but their real function is obscured. One might infer from Wüst's East Berlin photographs that the buildings function as housing blocks—or prisons?

The ultimate construction and subjugation of landscape provides us with the final example of the sustained influence of the *New Topographics* project, which is found in the *Nature as Artifice (New Dutch Landscape in Photography and Video Art)* exhibition at the Kröller-Müller Museum in Otterlo, Netherlands in 2008. It is worth noting, that the relationship with the *New Topographics* 1975 Eastman House show is further supported by the participating artists in the *Nature as Artifice* show, citing the major influence on their work from 'Lewis Baltz, Robert Adams and Stephen Shore - along with Walker Evans, who did not take part in *New Topographics* - as models or sources of inspiration'.

The legacy of the landscape representational tradition in the Netherlands was established through the medium of painting. The medium's enduring influence on cultural perceptions is subverted by

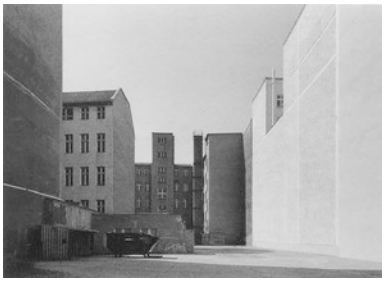

Fig. 3.10 *Berlin (East), Mollstrasse*, 1983. Ulrich Wüst

the breadth of the *Nature as Artifice* show. A different version of the Netherlands is exposed, which seeks to erode the tourist myth of a land of windmills, reed beds, canals, and dunes. The exhibition exposes the Dutch landscape to what it is: the most artificially constructed landscape in the world, quite literally—a 'constructed landscape' in every sense. The artists present a more vulnerable vision of the Dutch landscape, without sentimentality; a land reclaimed in the form of polders, dykes, and various technological drainage devices (Heuvel 2008). Of course, such land is valuable, and the results are often seen as a maximised landscape to realise the initial investment. This commercial and aesthetic conflict informed the work of the *New Topographics* to a certain extent, yet within the *Nature as Artifice* show, the criticality is more explicit, more political. The same detached framing persists in many ways, exemplified through the framing distance of Baltz, Adams, and Shore, yet the iconography presented is located within a more spatial narrative; these images are more accessible in that sense.

In his series of photographs exposing poisoned Dutch landscapes: *Poisoned Landscapes* (1986), Wout Berger appears to allude to Baltz's *Candlestick Point* project in the pursuit of a paradoxical beauty. Inspired by the hue saturation in Stephen Shore's book *Uncommon Places* (1982), Berger became fascinated by the strange hue transformations of flora and fauna found in the most polluted Dutch landscapes.

These bizarre findings became part of his *Poisoned Landscapes* project produced in the late 1980s. This project is particularly revealing in its relationship to a Dutch tradition in which the act of photography is embedded within notions of social justice—a kind of visual 'direct action'.

The specificity of this need to embed social criticism beyond the aesthetic surface of the photograph is evident in Wout Berger's *Amsterdam, Diemerzeedijk IBS- code 025-007 June* (1986; Fig. 3.11). The IBS code within the caption title refers to the Interim Act on Soil Decontamination, which was implemented in the Netherlands in 1983.

On the site of a former incineration plant, now showing a paradoxical and vibrant re-colonisation of flora, Berger's photograph presents a problematic encounter for the spectator: the quality of colours and textures encountered here resemble more exotic natural phenomena—coral reefs for example, whilst the art historical allusions may suggest the paintings of Van Gogh, or the later paintings of Claude Monet. Yet at the same time, the title disturbs this aesthetic encounter, by its factual,

Fig. 3.11 *Amsterdam, Diemerzeedijk IBS- code 025-007 June*, 1986. Wout Berger

geographical, and scientific disclosure. And in some sense, the operation of the photograph forms a dialogue with the earlier concerns of the Sublime, one that encouraged a new engagement with the shock and awe represented by a wilder nature, most evident in the paintings of Alpine mountain landscapes.

Poisoned Landscapes Revisited

In 1992, Berger published *Giflandschap* (Poisoned Landscape) to wide acclaim.[41] The book contained photographs of badly polluted locations in the Netherlands. Complementing Berger's fifty intriguing photographs are soil scientists Theo Edelman and Willem Hendriks. They both provide a lucid account of over 40 years of soil remediation in the Netherlands. Interestingly, twenty-five years later, Berger returned to the same 1992

locations to capture the transformations in a new book and exhibition entitled *Poisoned Landscape Revisited* (2017). In many ways, Berger's new book provides some positive ecological news, as we witness the significant environmental remediation that has been achieved since 1992.

Although the preoccupation with social justice permeates Wout Berger's 1980s work, his later work is more concerned with the perceptual and formal problems posed by photography. His final photograph in the *Nature as Artifice* show were selected from his *Roadside Flowers* (2005) project. This series investigates the Dutch need to both manage and assist nature; the sowing of seeds to encourage biodiversity on the embankments of roads results in beautiful strips of sinuous 'meadows', which Berger documents through macro photography. There is an obvious relationship here, to some of the underlying biodiversity and re-wilding themes that pollinate my own work.

The geographical specificity evident in much of Berger's work forms an appropriate parallel with the humanistic aims of the American FSA photographers. They were also concerned with the role of photography in raising the public's awareness of environmental and socio-economic problems.

Non-place as Dystopia

The enigmatic film *Stalker* (1979) directed by Andrei Tarkovsky presents a similar allusion to a contaminated landscape seen in Berger's poisoned Dutch zones. Tarkovsky situates the film *Stalker* amongst abandoned utilitarian buildings amongst an emerging wilderness: a 'zone of exclusion' that anticipates the photographs of Robert Polidori, taken during his courageous field trip to the site of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster (26 April 1986). In Polidori's subsequent Photobook, *Zones of Exclusion: Pripyat and Chernobyl* (2003; https://vimeo.com/38993935), we discover the ultimate non-place, where human exclusion has been determined by nuclear contamination. What makes these photographs so compelling is the evidence of rapid evacuation; the most poignant of these photographs reveals deserted classrooms and nurseries in frantic disarray. In the photograph *Classroom in Kindergarten#7, 'Golden Key', Pripyat* (June 6–9, 2001) an upturned desk drawer shows a cut-out magazine photograph of a girl and boy in profile holding hands in front of a painted portrait of Lenin. Polidori's dystopian imagery provides a guilty fascination with the visually incongruous: playgrounds now subjugated by re-wilding, with

entire school classrooms now carpeted in the rubble of textbooks, forming its own memorial sediment to an exiled community.

The evacuated remnants of Pripyat and Chernobyl resonate within the photographic mapping of Tom Jackson amongst the islands of Hong Kong. Although Jackson's investigation is a less-hazardous, he shares an interest in abandoned and restricted zones. In Jackson's composite photograph, *Ma Wan Main Street Village* (2014; Fig. 3.12), the idiosyncratic functions of the Hong Kong produced Holga camera are embraced. In this sense, the mechanical failures fondly associated with the Holga camera—its tendency to choose a random depth-of-field,

Fig. 3.12 *Ma Wan Main Street Village*, 2014. Tom Jackson

whilst allowing unpredictable light to enter from faulty seals only adds to the other-worldly mood of the multiple scenes. Jackson has stated that he prefers the 'atemporal reality' of these aleatory Holga representations, where the photographic outcomes remain closer to his own recollections of being there. The rendering of surface information on each photograph corresponds to our own vision and, indeed, our memory of place, in which we are intuitively drawn to specific areas within the available view. Our eyes navigate what is available, whilst focusing on that which interests us the most. In some ways, Jackson's composite photograph provides a dream-like, nostalgic version of multiple CCTV cameras, further enhanced by the chance vignette of the Holga plastic camera. Moreover, the sequential grid structure of these Holga photo-works encourages the viewer to construct some narrative meaning, one which connects the subject matter and time of day. The narrative effect relies on a creative strategy employed in cinema, in which the director and cinematographer develop a working storyboard to plan key scenes/camera angles. Jackson's investigation of an evacuated Hong Kong (largely hidden to most Western visitors) evokes a form of photographic parapraxis, where the photographer and the erstwhile ousted residents of Ma Wan island should not be present to witness the vacant village. Yet Jackson, ignoring the official signs prohibiting access uses photography's 'certificate of presence' to reveal the remnants of a unique cultural topography, one which still resists the merging and homogenization associated with official Chinese national narrative re-presentations.

As Ackbar Abbas (1997) highlights through his conceptualization of the politics of place and disappearance in a post-colonial Hong Kong during the 1990s, we must understand that 'disappearance is not a matter of effacement but of replacement and substitution, where the perceived danger is re-contained through representations that are familiar and plausible' (Abbas 1997: 8). Paradoxically perhaps, Hong Kong's ambition to be the centre of international Asian culture has led to a loss of a distinctive identity, as it competes with other globalized cities, such as Shanghai and Beijing.

'I'm Just Trying to Get Home'

Although there is no direct invitation to be guided through the American urban landscape in Joel Schumacher's film *Falling Down* (1993), starring Michael Douglas, the film's narrative is described in the promotional

material as a 'Tale of Urban Reality'. The more controversial aspects of the film beyond the 'practice of space' were the contentious representations of multicultural America and the film's somewhat reactionary (neo-Conservative) agenda. The anxious Michael Douglas character, who continues his work routine (even though he is unemployed), abandons his vehicle in a gridlock situation, with no concern for the other drivers. He climbs the hard shoulder with his briefcase, to embark on a deliberately ambiguous quest across an *othered* Los Angeles urban landscape, one that is represented by sequential scenes involving American minority communities. The film explores the relationship between sociopolitical identity and space: the so-called no-go zones and implicit boundaries in American cities, which prevent understanding and integration. In dramatic fashion, the Douglas character asserts his right to walk where he pleases. The ironic twist in the film, is that his character has been similarly transformed into the *other*, by his traumatic recollections from Viet Nam, and the sense of shame that many returning Viet Nam veterans experienced, on returning to America, his estrangement from his child, due to divorce, and his current unemployed status. And for our purposes here, the film provides a compelling narrative exploration of walking as a sociopolitical performance, and the non-places (imaginary as well) that are vicariously constructed by our fears of other people.

In relation to sociopolitical constructions in the urban landscape driven by fear of other ethnic minorities, it is worth comparing *Falling Down* with the Oscar-winning film *Crash* (2006), directed by Paul Haggis, in the portrayal of ethnicity, power, and place.

The compelling *leitmotiv* of *Falling Down* in relation to the critical reflections made by de Certeau and Lefebvre within 'spatial practices' is made more poignant by the main character's insistence that he is just trying to 'get home'. We continue to follow Michael Douglas in his full peripatetic paranoia, as he takes on the role of the 'ordinary man [being-in-the-world] at war with the everyday world', a human lens through which the audience experiences an eschatological vision of a dislocated, modern 'edge city'. An urban phenomenon explored by Edward Soja in his investigation of so-called *Thirdspace*:

> All excursions into Thirdspace begin with this ontological restructuring, with a presupposition that being-in-the-world, Heidegger's *Dasein*, Sartre's *être-là*, is existentially definable as being simultaneously historical, social, and spatial.[42]

In the book *Ecology of Fear* (1998), Mike Davies (the renowned storyteller of urban California's underbelly) has employed concentric rings to illustrate the decline of Los Angeles, and its inner core of urban decay, which he declares, is 'metastasizing in the heart of suburbia' (Davies 1998: 363). During an interview with Dana Cuff from the website Boom California (2016), Davis reflects on the spatial production of Los Angeles, explaining that the key to understanding its development, is to recognize the 'economic logic of real estate and land development', which he emphasizes, 'has always been the master key to understanding spatial and racial politics in Southern California' (Davies 2016). According to Davies, a solution may be found through direct municipal intervention:

> If you don't intervene in the operation of land markets, you'll usually end up producing the opposite result from what you intended. Over time, for instance, improvements in urban public space raise home values and tend to become amenity subsidies for wealthier people. In dynamic land markets and central locations, nonprofits can't afford to buy land for low-income housing. Struggling artists and hipsters inadvertently become the shock troops of gentrification and soon can't afford to live in the neighborhoods and warehouse districts they invigorated. Affordable housing and jobs move inexorably further apart and the inner-city crisis ends up in places like San Bernardino. (Davies, interviewed by Dana Cuff for *Boom California*, 29 December 2016)

The term 'edge city' is attributed to Joel Garreau (1991), as the postmodern morphology of shopping malls, office parks, industrial parks, and residential enclaves. As discussed by Shane, the evolution of the city pattern is revealed in a witty sequence by Cedric Price, employing the metaphor of the egg: a 'hard-boiled egg' is metonymic for the traditional city, followed by the 'fried egg' city, showing the expanded space created by the development of the railways, creating an accelerated series of 'space-time corridors' out into the landscape, where the postmodern city as we might imagine from our own contemporary experiences is represented by the 'scrambled egg' city, manifestly fragmented across various networks.

A photograph that continues the idea of a peripatetic human agency across the urban landscape is *After the Fire* (2010; Fig. 3.13). Here, the viewer is shown the aftermath of the fire, in which paradoxically, a

Fig. 3.13 *After the Fire*, 2010. Photograph by the author

new barrier is formed from the charred remains of brambles, reminding one of a wilder nature, more redolent of desert scrubland, or the Wessex heath-lands evoked by Thomas Hardy, in his novel *Return of the Native*.[43] But my own associative projections of wild-country are tempered here, by the middle distance surfacing of pre-fabricated industrial units, a pervasive sign of modern storage, with its own 'sexed-up' nomenclature of 'logistics'.

The architectonics of the photograph *After the Fire* belong to a subtle change in the body of work since 2008, in which the formal address of the photograph emphasises a flattened frontality (using a strong horizontal element) in relation to the viewer; a dialogical invitation, a compositional method also adopted in *Burnt Ground* (2009; Fig. 3.14), and the photograph *Plot* (2009).

These landscapes allude to other contemporary works that explore a paradoxical Sublime seen in the desecrated desert images featured in Richard Misrach's *Desert Cantos* project begun in 1979. In *Desert Fire#1* Burning Palms (1983; https://www.sfmoma.org/artwork/84.59), Misrach was initially drawn to the essential beauty of the desert

Fig. 3.14 *Burnt Ground*, 2009. Photograph by the author

landscape, yet remained to record its environmental abuse; evidenced by abandoned weapons, dead animal pits, and the detritus related to encroaching human habitation. Misrach's own defence of his *beautiful* images resonates within a broader aesthetic debate, one in which he proposes that the 'beauty' in his work helps to convey challenging ideas—that 'it engages people when they might otherwise look away'.

Misrach continues to explore places where contamination or destruction has recently happened. His most recent project *Destroy This Memory* (2010; Fig. 3.15) documents the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina (August 2005):

> We felt that 9/11 had changed our lives in an instant, that we had been jerked out of a pleasant dream. The difference in the blow that Katrina struck was not merely that we could see it coming. It was that, as a nation, we thought we were already fully awake. ("Revising 9/11" Editorial, *New York Times*, 11 September 2005)

These untitled photographs feature various abandoned homes which carry the often angry, poignant, and humorous messages left by owners

Fig. 3.15 *Destroy this Memory* ['I'll miss you'], 2010. Richard Misrach (© Richard Misrach, Courtesy Fraenkel Gallery, San Francisco and Aperture Foundation)

who have fled the approaching disaster. In many ways, these inscriptions act as figures in the landscape, providing a form of displaced urban poetry—a dystopian Twitter. The more malevolent messages in Misrach's series exposes a paranoid America; one in which the inhabitants fear their fellow citizens: a fear of dispossession that in some cases, appears stronger than their fear of the approaching hurricane. (And yes, we are reminded of the other inscriptions of fear and hate speech, exemplified in the mid-1930s anti-Jewish proclamations on houses and businesses.) But on a more sanguine note, some of the boarded-up messages attest to the home as a repository of memory and the anchor of place (hence the title of Misrach's Photobook).

In the Misrach photograph inscribed with the orange spray-painted message: 'I'll miss you' (2010; Fig. 3.15), we consider who was responsible for this message? Was it sprayed by the homeowner(s), or a concerned

neighbour? The rather gentle rendering of the inscription transforms the house into a tender note, the kind of message written in a hurry, then placed on a table or fridge. Whilst acknowledging in its sunlit facade the Hopper painting *Early Sunday Morning* (1930), Misrach's photograph provides evidence of Hurricane Katrina's devastation in the foreground depiction of strewn vegetation against the solid brickwork. It would appear that this home has survived without suffering total devastation.

Yet, as Hell and Schönle (2010) reflect, '[Hurricane] Katrina suddenly revealed social realities that American political discourse had studiously obscured' (Hell and Schönle, 2010, 4). A situation that Timothy Garton Ash referred to as a 'threat [to] civilisation, the thin crust we lay across the seething magma of nature, including human nature' in which New Orleans 'opened a small hole through which we glimpsed what always lies below'.[44]

A Formal Invitation

In the same way that the photographer Richard Misrach avoided overt perspectival space; one that creates the angular shapes associated with the Cyclopean imposition of perspectival recession, my photographs rely on the stability of planar axes (an emphasis on flatness), which attempts to counter the apparent disarray associated with these marginal non-places. The imposition of a high modernist compositional flatness, with its related emphasis on the horizontal, is intended to allow the viewer time to contemplate, to negotiate the digital surface (see Fig. 3.16). The index operates in a declarative way, directly pointing to the key signifier within the photograph's *tableau* form; I refer here to a parallel with the pictorial elements more commonly found in painting, in which the French sense of a construction of the 'pictorial' is emphasised.[45]

The Value of Non-place

In relationship to the UK, some might argue that many of our landscape encounters are deeply affected by the pervasive 'lens' of the heritage industry, working concomitantly with numerous literary associations. We might consider 'Brontë Country' in West Yorkshire and 'Hardy Country' in Dorset. This process of both explicit and implicit designation and privileging of one place over another is most evident in the designation of the National Park. The archetypal landscape 'construction' (in the cultural sense), complete with the obligatory visitor centre, and further

Fig. 3.16 *Boundary*, 2007. Photograph by the author

articulated through the interactive tourist information screen. It is here that we witness the visitor as 'pilgrim' to the venerated site, suggesting a degree of complicity in an agreed valorisation of nature and landscape. Furthermore, let us consider what I describe as the 'plaque effect', where value is bestowed upon landscape through a form of spatial branding.[46]

Do we then concede that culture is predisposed to privileging certain landscapes for veneration and commemoration?

The entrenched trope of the pastoral in environmentalism (and landscape representation) is ubiquitous and permeates current discourse. The term itself is open to different interrogations; Terry Gifford examines different characteristics of the pastoral: the pastoral[47] in the literary tradition is encapsulated by the retreat from the city to the countryside, 'a literature that describes the country with an implicit or explicit contrast to the urban' (Gifford 2009: 2). This literary form would be reinforced through the promotion of Romantic poetry, and in our own period, still hold a semiotic influence over such products as cottage rental promotions, and not surprisingly, the lucrative breakfast cereals' market.

Gifford's other pastoral attributes emerge through a rather pejorative Marxist critical lens, in which Romanticism[48] (as an aesthetic/cultural

political movement) is seen to suffer, with reference to Garrard (2012), from a predisposition to anthropomorphism, and the egocentrism attached to the individual, in which the relationship to the pastoral reinforces an 'oppressive social order', determined by a landed aristocracy (Garrard 2012: 54).

It may be difficult to refute that established natural icons such as forests, mountains, and rivers have embedded various cultures—providing a cultural stability through associated rituals, symbolism, a profound 'sense of place' and belonging. This landscape symbolism is often resurrected to bolster the notion of national identity for various reasons.

To agitate the debate further, those organisations that already purchase land and act as the guardians of 'areas of outstanding beauty'—most notably in the UK, the National Trust, might re-consider their criteria when acquiring future sites. The acquisition of a non-place within their landscape portfolio would surely elicit a broader debate relating to heritage, and to that most difficult of words—beauty. Indeed, how ironic it would be if such valorisation led to an increase in access to the non-place, thereby placing those innate qualities previously discussed, at risk.

The messages that culture communicates are explicit in most cases. The language of heritage, re-gentrification and its sibling, regeneration, pervade our everyday lives. It is this power of language that confers special treatment for certain landscapes as being worthy of preservation.

When I have shown my photographs of the non-places to various groups of architects and urban planners, both in the UK and Czech Republic, Brno in 2008, I anticipated their architectural fantasies as a provocation for debate: 'I imagine that when you see these photographs, you start to imagine your own architectural schemes there, you see potential buildings, grand projects'.[49] If we hypothesise, for demonstration purposes only, how the authority of the plaque might conspire in the reification of the non-place, say for example, on an anonymous arboreal embankment along the M1. How different would be the perception of that place?

Notes

1. See Althusser, L. (1970). 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses', p. 163.
2. *Embourgeoisement* Marxism views the bourgeoisie as emerging from the wealthy urban classes in pre- and early capitalist societies. The term in this sense denotes a bourgeois appropriation of cultural artefacts to further bestow personal status in society. The outcomes from artistic practice

become embroiled in the politics of ownership and 'products'. Also, the term carries with it a suggestion of an art that is conventional, that fails to question existing values. Paintings especially are denuded of their aesthetic/sociopolitical power by their involvement in this exchange of goods. They become mere hedonistic objects on walls for the owner's consumption. In relation to my digital outputs in this study, the work is not engaged with as a potential purchase by the audience, and this lack of an ownership 'drive' (in my view) enables the study to communicate in a much more radical way. (I make these comments in the context of my lack of gallery representation of course, but these are not limited edition prints, and their function is purely dialogic.)

3. Wittgenstein, L. *Notebooks*, entry for July 11, 1916, pp. 75–75c.
4. See Michael Fried. (2008). *Why Photography Matters as Art as Never Before*, Yale University Press, p. 347.
5. See Raymond Williams, *Preface to Film* (Williams and Orram, 1954).
6. Shouse, E. (2005). 'Feeling, Emotion, Affect', *Media-Culture* 8 (6).
7. For Foucault, the archive is a repository for statements from history; yet this chronological discursive thread is open to question, due to the 'density of discursive practices'. For further reading see Michel Foucault. (1972). *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (trans.) A. M. Sheridan Smith, New York: Pantheon Books, p. 128.
8. *A tour thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain*. The Industrial Revolution is believed to have begun in the 1760s (though some scholars say it had already started when Defoe was writing.) For a full digital text visit: http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/text/contents_page.jsp?t_id=Defoe.
9. As Iain Sinclair himself recognises in his introduction (written in 2010) to Richard Mabey. (1973). *The Unofficial Countryside*, Little Toller Books, p. 7.
10. Geoff Dyer in his book on photography: *The Ongoing Moment* makes the interesting observation that certain visual tropes surface throughout photography's history; the example of the white picket fence becomes a recurrent theme in the work of Strand, Weston, etc.
11. See Paul Gough. (2000). 'From Heroes' Groves to Parks of Peace: Landscapes of Remembrance, Protest and Peace', *Landscape Research*, 25 (2): pp. 213–228. Also, Morgan, J., *Arboreal Eloquence: Trees and Commemoration* (Ph.D. thesis), Department of Geography, University of Canterbury, N.Z. 2008.
12. Joseph Beuys. (1982). *7,000 oaks project*, planted between 1982 and 1987 for Documenta 7.
13. See Mosse, L. G. (1990). *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 87–89.

14. As Coates suggests, Richard Walther Darré, the German Minister of Agriculture and peasant leader between 1933 and 1942, has been closely associated with the emergence of the 'green movement'. Darré himself was antithetical to key Nazi policies and, as a result, was marginalized after 1939. Darré's predicament reflects the 'uneasy coexistence between ecology and mainstream Nazism' (Coates 1998: 168).
15. *Spuren*—we may also infer from the word the act of clandestine criminal activities, and the avoidance of detection by forensic scientist and detective agencies, etc.
16. The newly named Topography of Terror museum opened to the public on the 6 May 2010.
17. James Young writing in *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning*, New Haven: Yale University Press, (1993) discusses the motif of piles of rubble, which reminds him of the Yiddish word *tel*: the piles of stones that signify the Jewish tradition of laying stones on graves. See the final sequence in *Schindler's List* (1993), directed by Steven Spielberg.
18. Mikael Levin's photographic work has been exhibited widely in the US and in Europe, including solo exhibitions at the Jewish Museum, Paris (2010), the Berardo Museum, Lisbon (2009), the Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris (2003), the International Center of Photography, New York (1997), and Fundacion Mendoza, Caracas (1980). His work was included in the Venice Biannual in 2003, and his work is included in the permanent installation of the Jewish Museum in Berlin, and he is represented in major collections such as those of the Whitney Museum of American Art (New York), the Metropolitan Museum (New York), the International Center of Photography (New York), the Fonds National d'Art Contemporain (Paris), the Bibliothèque Nationale (Paris), and Moderna Museet (Stockholm).
19. Relating to the 'index' from Charles Pierce's 'Trichotomy of Signs: Icon, Index and Symbol', in 'Division of Signs' in *Collected Papers*, 1932 [1897].
20. In conversation with Professor David Hill on the 29 November 2010, at my solo show *Terra Nullius: Encountering the Non-place*, The Corridor gallery, University of Leeds.
21. Of course, contemporary photography ('photographies') is open to many discussions, but is beyond the scope of my book.
22. *The Zone System* is a photographic technique for determining optimal film exposure and development, formulated by Ansel Adams and Fred Archer in 1939–1940. The Zone System provides photographers with a systematic method of precisely defining the relationship between the way they visualize the photographic subject and the final results.

23. See *New Topographics* (2nd ed.) Co-published by Steidl and the Centre for Creative Photography, in cooperation with George Eastman House, 2010.
24. Mack, M. (1999). 'Architecture, Industry and Photography: Excavating German Identity', In *Reconstructing Space: Architecture in Recent German Photography*, AA Publications, p. 10. The students who studied under Bernd Becher at the Düsseldorf Art Academy between 1976 and 1997 include Laurenz Berges, Johannes Bruns, Andreas Gursky, Candida Höfer, Thomas Ruff, Heiner Schilling, Thomas Struth, and Petra Wunderlich.
25. Although the Bechers' recording of these industrial ruins excludes the human figure, the objective address (it that is possible anyway?) of these images still resonates within a Romantic landscape representational tradition, one which the Bechers' would be all too aware of, and would certainly include the German painter, Caspar David Friedrich, and his series of haunting ruined encounters, such as *The Abbey in the Oakwood* (1809–1810). We might also refer to the influence of compositional frontality, evident in the work of Swiss symbolist artist, Arnold Böcklin's paintings: *Ruins by the Sea* (1880), and *Isle of the Dead* (1880). In respect of German photography, we cannot underestimate the influence of August Sander's magisterial portraits of German people in *Face of our Time* (*Antlizer der Zeit*) in 1929, which not surprisingly was confiscated by the Nazi regime in the late 1930s, for its socialist tone, and monumental portraits of ordinary Germans.
26. Stryker, R. E., and Wood, N. (1973). *In This Proud Land: America 1935–1943*: *As Seen in the FSA Photographs*, New York City: Galahad Books. An examination of the work undertaken by the photographers commissioned by The Farm Security Administration. It was Roy Emerson Stryker who directed this group of photographers. Interestingly, in the context of the text here, Ansel Adams referred to these photographers as a 'bunch of sociologists with cameras' (in conversation with Stryker).
27. Salvenson, B. (2010). 'New Topographics', Center for Creative Photography (2nd ed.), Steidl, p. 42.
28. Adams, R. (2008). 'Mountains', in *The New West: Landscapes Along the Colarado Front Range*, Aperture (originally published in 1974 by Colorado Associated University Press under the direction of John Schwartz), p. 113.
29. Adams, R. (2008). 'The City', *The New West: Landscapes Along the Colarado Front Range*, Aperture (originally published in 1974 by Colarado Associated University Press under the direction of John Schwartz), p. 63.

30. This quote is informed by the work of William Cronin. See Cronin, W. (1995). *Uncommon Ground: Toward Reinventing Nature*, also, Pulido, L. (1996). *Environmentalism and Economic Justice: Two Chicano Struggles in the Southwest.*
31. The letters are reproduced in 'Reinventing the West', p. 3. Cited in 'New Topographics', by Britt Salvenson. (2010). *New Topographics*, Center for Creative Photography (2nd ed.), Steidl, p. 44.
32. Brouws, J. (1992). *Twentysix Abandoned Gasoline Stations, Santa Barbara*, CA: Gas-N-Go Publications.
33. Using the anti-pollution regulations imposed by the American Environmental Protection Agency, the larger corporations forced the independent gasoline station owners out of business, as they could not afford to replace their out-of-date underground tanks.
34. See Brouws, J. (1997). *Highway: America's Endless Dream*, New York: Stewart, Tabori & Chang.
35. T.O.A.D.S. See Clay, G. (1994). *Real Places*, Chicago and London, University of Chicago Press, pp. 129–130.
36. See, Ford, R. L. (1994). *Cities and Buildings: Skyscrapers, Skid Rows, and Suburbs*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. Also, Leach, W. (2000). *Country of Exiles*, New York: Random House.
37. See Ford, R. L. (2003). *America's New Downtowns: Revitalization or Reinvention?* The Johns Hopkins University Press: Baltimore and London. 55. Also, the landscape architect, Alan Berger pejoratively labelled such urban wastelands as 'drosscapes'. See Berger, A. (2006). *Drosscape: Wasting Land in Urban America*, New York: Princeton Architectural Press.
38. See Carayannis, G. E., and Ziemnowicz. (eds.). (2007). *Rediscovering Schumpeter: Creative Destruction Evolving into 'Mode 3'.* Palgrave Macmillan, UK. Also, Schumpeter, A. J. (1994 [1942]). Capitalism, Socialism & Democracy, Routledge.
39. Blaisdell, G. (1989). 'Space Begins Because We Look Away from Where We Are: Lewis Baltz: Candlestick Point', in *Lewis Baltz: Candlestick Point*, Gallery Min.
40. Gossage, J. Quotation from a conversation with Toby Jurovics, *Curator of Photography Smithsonian American Art Museum*, Washington, DC. December 2009.
41. https://www.nederlandsfotomuseum.nl/tentoonstelling/wout-berger-giflandschap-revisited/.
42. See also Soja, W. E. (1996). *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places*, Blackwell Publishing, p. 73.
43. Asquith, M. (Sept 2003). '"A Drama of Grandeur and Unity": Egdon Heath in the Return of the Native', *The English Review* 14 (1): 21(3).

Also, closer relationship with Egdon Heath and After the Fire 2010 is that both locations seem to negate the effects of sunlight, as though they are beyond illumination. Hardy emphasises the absorptive qualities of heath land, its dark brooding. The notion of the return is interesting in the context of other discussions within the text.

44. 'The Thin Veneer of Civilisation', *Los Angeles Times*, 8 September 2005. Quoted by (Hell and Schönle 2010: 4).
45. See Michael Fried. (2007). *Why Photography Matters as Art as Never Before*, p. 18; Jean-Pierre Criqui 'Bustamante as Photographer (Notes for an Unfinished Portrait)' (trans.) Simon Pleasance and Fronza Woods, in *Jean-Marc Bustamante: oeuvres photographiques 1978–1999*, exh. Cat. (Paris 1999), p. 162.
46. I first used my term 'plaque effect' to describe the bestowing of value on certain landscapes in my article: 'Encountering the 'Non-Place'', *ENTERTEXT 6.3*, 2007, p. 328.
47. Lawrence Buell, (1995). *The Environmental Imagination*, provides a sustained analysis of the pastoral ideology that permeates American fiction; Buell's four criteria for a specific eco-critical are: (1) The non-human environment is present not merely as a framing device, but as a presence that begins to suggest that human history is implicated in natural history. (2) The human interest is not understood to be the only legitimate interest. (3) Human accountability to the environment is part of the text's ethical orientation. (4) Some sense of the environment as a process rather than as a constant or a given is at least implicit in the text (Buell 1995: 7–8).
48. See also, Garrard, G. (1996). 'Radical Pastoral?', *Studies in Romanticism* 35 (3): pp. 451–465.
49. Brogden, W. J. (2008). 'Terra Nullius VEREJNOST A KOUZLO VIZUALITY', *Rozvoj teoretickych základü vytvarné vychovy a otázky kulturního vzdelávání* journal (pp. 220–227, Chapter III) eds. Radek Horácek and Jan Zálesák pub: Masaryk University, Faculty of Pedagogics, October 2008.

References

Abbas, A. (1997). *Hong Kong: Culture and the Politics of Disappearance*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Badger, G. (2010). Genesis of a Photobook. In John Gossage (Ed.), *The Pond*. Aperture Foundation.

Baer, U. (2005). *Spectral Evidence: The Photography of Trauma: The Photography of Trauma*. The MIT Press.

Brouws, J. (2006). *Approaching Nowhere: Photographs by Jeff Brouws*. New York and London: W. W. Norton.

Carayannis, E. G. & Ziemnowicz, C. (Eds). (2007). *Rediscovering Schumpeter: Creative Destruction Evolving into 'Mode 3'*. Palgrave Macmillan.
Clifford, T. (2009 [1993]). *Pastoral*. London and New York: Routledge.
Coates, P. (1998). *Nature: Western Attitudes since Ancient Times*. Polity Press.
Cosgrove, E. D. (1998). The Idea of Landscape. In *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*. The University of Wisconsin Press.
Davies, M. (1998). *The Ecology of Fear*. New York: Metropolitan Books.
Davies, M. (2016). *Boom California* (online). Interview with Dana Cuff.
Fried, M. (2008). *Why Photography Matters As Art As Never Before*. Yale University Press.
Ford, R. L. (2003). *America's New Downtowns: Revitalization or Reinvention?* Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
Foucault, M. (1972). *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (A. M. Sheridan Smith, Trans.). New York: Pantheon Books.
Fox, L. W. (2006). The Impossibility of Ruins. In *Approaching Nowhere: Photographs by Jeff Brouws*. New York and London: W. W. Norton.
Garrard, G. (2012). *Ecocriticism*. London and New York: Routledge.
Garreau, J. (1992 [1991]) *Edge City: Life on the New Frontier*. First Anchor Books.
Gifford, T. (2009 [1999]). *Pastoral*. London: Routledge.
Graham, K. (1983 [1908]). *The Wind in the Willows* (p. 195). Viking Kestrel.
Grimble, S. (2003). Somewhere to Stand: Descriptive Writing and Cultural Criticism in Iain Sinclair's Lights Out For The Territory. In M. Dorrian & G. Rose (Eds.), *Deterritorialisations… Revisioning Landscape and Politics*. Black Dog Publishing.
Hell, J., & Schönle, A. (Eds.). (2010). *Ruins of Modernity*. Duke University Press. Durham and London.
Heuvel, V. D. M. (2008). Nature as Artifice. In M. van den Heuvel & T. Metz (Eds.), *Nature as Artifice: New Dutch Landscape in Photography and Video Art*.Rotterdam: Eelco van Welie NAi Publishers.
Highmore, B. (2017). *Cultural Feelings: Mood, Mediation and Cultural Politics*. London and New York: Routledge.
Jackson, J. B. (1994). *A Sense of Place, a Sense of Time*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.
Jacobs, S. (2006). Amor Vacui: Photography and the Image of the Empty City. *History of Photography, 30*(2), 107–118.
Kiljunen, S. (2002). Artistic Research in Fine Arts. In Kiljunen, S. and Hannula, M. (Eds). *Artistic Research*. Helsinki: Academy of Fine Arts Publications.
Kingsworth, P. (2008). *Real England: The Battle Against the Bland*. Granta Books.
Kunstler, H. J. (1993). *The Geography of Nowhere*. Touchstone: Simon & Schuster.

Kunstler, H. J. (2001). *The City in Mind: Notes on the Urban Condition*. New York: The Free Press.

Levin, M. (2000). The Untidy Intimacy of Places. *Common Places*. Exhibition catalogue.

Mack, M. (1999). Architecture, Industry and Photography: Excavating German Identity. In *Reconstructing Space: Architecture in Recent German Photography*. AA Publications.

Mitchell, W. J. T. (1992). *The Reconfigured Eye: Visual Truth in the Post-Photographic Era*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Olwig, R. K. (2008). The "Actual Landscape," or Actual Landscapes? In Delue, R. Z. and Elkins, J. (Eds.), *Landscape Theory*. Routledge. New York and London.

Paglen, T. (2016). Invisible Images (Your Pictures are Looking At You). *The New Enquiry*.

Sinclair, I. (1997). *Lights Out for the Territory: 9 Excursions in the Secret History of London*. Penguin Books.

Sinclair, I. (2010). Introduction. *The Unofficial Countryside* (Richard Mabey). Little Toller Books.

Szarkowski, J. (2008 [1974]). Foreword. *The New West: Landscapes Along the Colorado Front Range* (*Robert Adams*). Aperture Foundation.

Thoreau, H. D. (1992 [1854]). *Walden*. London: Dent.

Till, K. E. (2005). *The New Berlin: Memory, Politics, Place*. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press.

Tuan, Y. (1974). *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes, and Values*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

CHAPTER 4

Anthropological Encounters in Non-place

My aim in this chapter is to deploy photographs to both anchor and provide field evidence of a certain anthropology of the everyday.[1] By discussing the significance of photographic representations in revealing the meanings attached to the visual evidence of human agency in non-place, I hope to show how what people leave behind provides us with important information about why they left it and what it meant to them.

The photograph *Wire* (2010; Fig. 4.1) shows people (illegally) gathering underground cables in non-places in Leeds during the period 2005–2011. I met several ex-servicemen during my research field trips who told me that they were choosing to live 'off-the-grid' due to personal issues relating to their experiences in the Falklands War.[2] They found some comfort in wild camping amongst the unconventional topography of the more fugitive non-places. Their camouflaged tents were hidden from casual view by the canopy of unchecked hawthorn and blackthorn trees. Power sources were purloined from a nearby cement works, situated on the outer rim of the wildest section of an erased post-industrial navigation system, made impassable at its eastern edge by the Aire and Calder River. Coloured redundant power cables would have their protective plastic coating burnt-off to reveal the valuable copper wire inside. In terms of my own non-place mythologizing, these men inhabited the 'deep zone'. Their activity, where fires would leave atavistic blackened circles on the ground, sometimes sparkling with the remnants of plastic, resembled some sort of ancient ritual. These men's activity earned them small amounts of cash from local scrap dealers.

J. Brogden, *Photography and the Non-Place*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-03919-6_4

Fig. 4.1 *Wire*, 2010. Photograph by the author

The aesthetic paradox that exists in the photograph *Wire* (2010; Fig. 4.1) is revealed by the photograph's indexicality. In terms of the semiotics of Roland Barthes, for example, we could imagine that the *signification* of the wire cables means that this contemporary Arcadia has been invaded by the *Other*, represented here by so-called feral criminal activities and human detritus. Yet the indexical surface of the photograph also exposes a rather beautiful and seductive tangle of plastic cables, the function of which eludes the spectator in a state of *après coup*.[3] The French expression is useful here in providing a link with the notion of severing from the past, echoed by the 'guillotine' function of the camera's shutter: the 'click'—farewell to the present.

The *Wire* (2010) photograph encourages us to consider the juxtaposition of two different kinds of beauty; one embedded in the pastoral through an unchecked bucolic version of non-place; the other its antithesis, the seductive material anonymity of plastic technology. This contradicts a more conventional conception of non-place as devoid of landscape value. What is suggested here is that photographic

Fig. 4.2 *Delivery*, 2007. Photograph by the author

representation reveals a place which the viewer might have deliberately avoided. Moreover, one might ascribe a transfer of knowledge between photographer and viewer through the transmission of non-place signification.

We might expect to find the kind of anthropological evidence I am referring to here in what is sometimes called 'the third world' rather than within less than a one mile radius of a cultural landmark, the Royal Armouries in Leeds. It was there that I met John (an ex-wireless operator from the Falklands conflict) who was living at the time in a tent within the dense hawthorn bush immediately to the right of the upturned shopping trolley in the photograph, *Delivery* (2007; Fig. 4.2). John relied on power for his functioning DVD player from nearby cement works, visible as the white towers in the photograph *Burnt Ground* (2009; Fig. 3.15) in Chapter 3. Some of these chance meetings are described in a short film made by the *Yorkshire Post* newspaper in October 2007, in which I discuss the 'ancient quality' of these wire-burning sites.[4]

A Graze, Bruise, Scar?

Barthes suggests that photographers can only control to a certain extent the eventual interpretation of their work. He speaks of the *punctum* as 'what I add to the photograph and what is nonetheless already there'. For Barthes (1980), there is the potential for the *punctum* to be present in most photographs, yet the 'shock', the 'prick' of its discovery depends on the specific spectator's response (what they bring) to a detail in the image. Other spectators may be unaffected, oblivious to this emotional affect. But what is crucial for Barthes is that the detonation of the *punctum* cannot be predicted by the photographer who produced the image. It eludes their intentionality. We might infer from this claim that the *punctum* is the more memorable and potentially subversive/radical element within the photographic representation. But is this potent 'detail' really beyond the control of the photographer?

I propose that Barthes' view on the spectator's private response to the *punctum* should be questioned. For my part, the photographer's intentionality involves a synthesis of both the conceptual and the perceptual. This process is evident in the construction of the tripod, the framing of the motif, and the setting of the exposure, completed by the pressing of the shutter. To engage in this photographic ritual proves that the scene to be represented is important to the photographer, both in relation to the more intuitive response to the *punctum* 'prick' (its ability to emotionally jolt the individual viewer) and the more conventional public operation of the *studium*. Importantly, the photographer can be aware of both the affect and effect of the two elements, *punctum* and *studium* in such a way (and this is intended as a provocation), that for the photographer (and the potential spectator) what is created is the hybrid notion of a synthesized 'graze' or 'bruise'. Each of which extends the emotional impact of the initial 'prick' affect for subsequent reflection. And in a more reflective sense, within the subsequent 'life' of the photographic archive, what emerges is a 'scar', providing ample opportunity for sustained engagement. Barthes' 'prick' of the *punctum* suggests a temporary puncture of the viewer's engagement with the image, whilst my 'scar' suggests a more permanent feature (People often boast about scars as well).

Writing in the 1930s, Walter Benjamin proposed that the camera revealed something he named the 'optical unconscious'. Sliwinski and Smith (2017: 4) explain this ambiguous concept,

> [The optical unconscious] is not something that is directly available to sight, but it nevertheless informs and influences what comes into view [where] previously unnoticed details and dynamics, as well as the material, social, and psychic structures that shape perception. (Sliwinski and Smith 2017: 4)

The British psychoanalyst, Christopher Bollas, a leading figure in contemporary psychanalytic theory, describes this dimension as the 'unthought known', referring to material that is either 'emotionally undigested' (ibid.: 4) or actively obstructed from consciousness. The latency of memories can be seen to function in this way, sometimes unresolved, and when details of photographic information suddenly emerge into sharp focus, to become visible in unanticipated moments. In this sense, Benjamin recognized the valence of this unconscious stimulus through proximity to photography. For example, the photographs of Karl Blossfeldt, in his Photobook, *Urformen der Kunst* (1928; *Art Forms in Nature* [2003]), revealed otherwise unseen dimensions and forms within the photographic investigation of natural forms, a creative analysis which would influence the subsequent anatomical explorations of anthropomorphic gnarled peppers by Edward Weston (see *Pepper*, 1930), and more recently, *Flora: The Complete Flowers photographs of Robert Mapplethorpe* (see *Calla Lily*, 1988).

Benjamin's fascination with photography would see him spend the better part of the next decade considering the 'geyser of new image-worlds' that the medium exposed (Sliwinski and Smith 2017: 5). Moreover, Benjamin reflects on photography's technological alchemy to reveal this new alternative image-world, through which we 'first discover the existence of this optical unconscious'.[5] Benjamin was fascinated by photography's capacity to reveal new perceptions, for 'Photography, like the talking cure, reveals associations and presences not immediately available to the conscious mind' (Kriebel 2007: 13).

In *Prosthetic Culture*, Celia Lury (1998) argues that the 'Interpretations of instantaneity which take it at face value ignore the role of memorization and time in the 'immediate reception' perception of photographic 'take''. They fail to see the importance of time as a dimension of the indexicality of the photograph, and thus ignore its specific resistances, capacities, blurrings, and 'blind spots' (Lury 1998: 174). Indexicality reveals the photograph as a past presence, a record of the passage of time.

According to Lury (1998), Anne Game provides an insightful explication of the Barthes's *punctum*, with its potential to 'prick' and 'wound'

the spectator: discussing his comments on a photograph by Alexander Gardner, *Portrait of Lewis Payne* (1865), Game argues that Barthes's responds to this iconic American photograph with a combination of 'erotic affect and far of death, a kind of mortal longing' (Game 1991: 143).

A sceptical view of Benjamin's 'optical unconscious' by Rosalind Krauss, asks: 'can the optical field – the world of visual phenomena: clouds, sea, sky, forest – have an unconscious?' (1994: 176). I would argue that the optical unconscious is a purely human experience that is created by the mind's interpretive function of optical experience. The natural phenomena that Krauss posits here only exist through human perception, in the same way that the phenomena of sea and sky are defined through human-made language. The optical unconscious is relevant in its relationship to the missed opportunities that photographs reclaim from the unconscious domain, for the re-engaged conscious mind to consider.

As a private exemplar, I recently scanned an old black-and-white photographic print (circa. 1938) depicting my mother and her boyfriend sitting amongst a summer meadow. The young couple look towards the camera from the middle foreground. I was convinced that they were enjoying the solitude of this meadow alone, until I decided to zoom in (200%) to the scanned photograph on screen. When I panned to the right-hand side background to the photograph, I detected the presence of a seated man wearing a white shirt. What was he doing there? Did he alter the scene? Did he choose to be in the picture? This surprising detail, which completely rewrites the previous narrative of this private family photograph, provides a vivid explanation of Benjamin's interest in the emergence of the optical unconscious through the photograph. Benjamin further reinforces this view by stating that 'it becomes evident that it is a different nature that speaks to the camera than speaks to the naked eye' (1970: 238). In Benjamin's view, film makes visible that which has been invisible to the human eye—which, according to Lury (1998), registers aspects of the psycho-perceptual reality that was revealed through modern technology. There is further evidence of this optical unconscious trope in the 1960s' Antonioni art-house film, *Blow-Up*, in which a 'swinging-60s' London fashion photographer (based on David Bailey), discovers a hand holding a gun in the detail of a black-and-white print enlargement. This is a clear example of the invisible made manifest. The realization of this hitherto hidden referent to

violence transforms the previous intentionality of an *en plein air* fashion shoot on Hampstead Heath.

The various examples of detritus and more idiosyncratic *object-trouvé* evident in my own photographs in this text aim to reveal an archive as an unexplored metonymic index. This is an archive which is in flux; where the potential reading of each photograph is contingent on the specific spectator.

Of course, one can never designate where the viewer will find their own *punctum* 'moment', nor should one. For my own part, the referents which operate as a punctum in my work are usually associated with evidence of an enigmatic human agency: remnants of wire, metal fragments, ensnared plastic bags, the remains of fires, abandoned shoes and handbags, and other inscriptions; for these are my 'pricks', 'wounds', 'scars' on the semiotic skin of the non-place archive. Such transitory traces and detritus inscribe sites with a unique mood, that lets people know that they have arrived in a familiar place.

Supermodernity and Urban Amnesia

Augé (1995: 25) uses the term supermodernity to describe an accelerated present that precludes reflection on the recent past. It refers to 'our need to understand the whole of the present that makes it difficult for us to give meaning to the recent past'.

The need to belong to a landscape with a 'sense of place' still exists, despite the pervasive alienation and *ennui* associated with late-capitalism.[6] Though compounded by a feeling of dislocation from the immediate present.

This public 'amnesia'—a feeling of disassociation from the recent past through the complex negotiation with the present and compounded by an uncertain future finds physical form in the non-place. Non-places can provide the interested 'visitor' with evidence of a dispossessed human agency, the marginal place frequented by the marginal. Although one could argue that capitalism created urban non-places in the nineteenth century through dynamic industrial expansion (as well as housing provision for its workforce), I would argue that during the 1960s a unique transformation of the urban landscape took place through the adoption of the new aesthetic of high-rise urbanism, supported by a road development strategy. Although this urban renewal included provision for palliative green open spaces, since the early 1980s these same urban zones

have been transformed by the construction of ubiquitous 'business parks', associated 'ribbon developments', and the more recent appearance of gated communities. These new structures, promoted as a return to 'city living', are often ironically contiguous to the remnants of an industrial past that relied upon workers living within walking and sound distance of the factory siren. Many of these workers, mainly retired, now find themselves displaced to the new estates. Here the topography of late-capitalism (in comparison with the nineteenth-century model) reflects a struggle over space. Who controls it? For what reasons? And to what ends? If we consider nineteenth-century capitalism to represent the desire for faster production, then the late-capitalist twenty-first-century equivalent seems more concerned with the economic advantages of 'out-sourcing', utilizing 'smart technology' and of course creating 'flexibility', the euphemism for workplace insecurity. The late-capitalist model is content (in certain circumstances), to 'sit' on assets—especially land. My point here is that speculative investment in land, and certain physical properties of course, could be a contributory factor to the production and fragmentation of non-places throughout Western cities. As a result of this complex zoning of the modern city into various active and dormant sectors, we witness the inscriptions made by investment capitalism (and the state) on our sense of the city as 'place'.

Some Form of Consolation

Can the modern-self find some form of consolation by finding new urban encounters—new routes in those non-places previously overlooked? Could this potential re-engagement with non-place (however infrequent such encounters may be) form some tenuous sense of collective belonging with place, as a gesture of 'resistance' to the ineluctable homogenization of the local, regional, and national landscape?

In the context of inexorable urban change, how can we recover what has already been lost from the urban landscape in the recent past? And what exactly is it that we wish to recover? One might suggest that the non-place functions as a fractured archive for a form of collapsed collective memory. Non-places are potential palimpsests, commemorating the displacement of the urban community's 'sense of place'—each one unique, depending on the neighbourhood and city. For as the debate broadens in relation to the conception of non-place, the more likely the erosion of *non* in non-place may occur, with the potential to be

re-transcribed as 'place' perhaps? Although I understand that my claim for non-places to be perceived as an emerging 'memorial' places could be viewed as simply absurd (in the context of their largely ignored status), I suggest that the memories of these non-places (especially those associated with our formative years, referred to earlier) have the potential to contribute to the DNA of the self, and in the broader sense to the accretive collective memory of a community and nation.

It is common practice for people to make sense of their social identity in relation to their environment; for example, 'to place someone', to 'know one's place'. One person's place (with meaning) could be another person's non-place (without meaning), a selection process as unpredictable and complex as the formation of memory itself. According to Peter Jackson (1995) 'this language of social existence is unmistakably geographic', as he calls for a decoding of landscape imagery, a reading of the environment through 'maps of meaning', which reveal, reproduce and sometimes resist social order.[7] To continue this navigational metaphor, we might wish to consider non-places as random folds within a much used map, a narrative glue, which, however fragile that adhesion may be, could be seen to make an important contribution to the accretion of collective memory. Antze and Lambek (1996) examine the significance of this narrative process within the architecture of memory, of a continuity 'between past and present, between who we are and who we think we are', in which 'memory operates most frequently by means of the threads of narrative' (Antze and Lambek 1996: 17).

The Palimpsest, Memory, and 'What Has Been'

Barndt (2010: 270) argues that 'Ruins are palimpsests that invite us to contemplate a layered temporality'. The non-place interregnum is in this sense a fertile place for projecting 'fears and hopes', for 'casting dreams and burying memories', revealing a place of abandoned, dormant 'cultural feeling', existing on the 'edges of representation' (Highmore 2017: 91).

> The reasons that a set of feelings concentrate around a landscape of ruin and dereliction are very much to do with historical process of decline and fall, rebirth and progress. Ruin signals, for a particular group, the passing of one historical period and the implicit emergence of something new. (Highmore 2017: 76)

A further conception and value of non-place could be in its contribution as palimpsest, in which a manuscript of place (with its promise of historical conflation and meaning), echoes the polysemous aims of the photographs as indices, traces of multiple events, available for the belated witness.

Through this declaration, non-place acts as a memorial for a displaced urban community, commemorating, in some new form, its passage, and an obscure acknowledgement for those who venture there, through its evolving relationship with the alleged inequities of late-capitalism.

In this place of departure, human absence finds consolation in each man-made fragment found amongst that part of the palimpsest which is still writing—the enduring recolonization of nature. With each new spring, the man-made remnants formed by more distant habitation and industrial use, become less distinct, camouflaged within rampant flora and more recent detritus.

As Christophe Girot argues, the increasingly adept visual representation of cities is, rather than purely illustrative, is in fact 'shaping' these 'future sites'. The visual enquiry provides a reflective critical space in which the enigma of the city can be decoded (Girot 2006). In Girot's vision, the European urban landscape reveals a 'syncresis of countless moments compressed into a single space' (Girot 2006: 90).

With much grandiloquence, Girot postulates that the urban landscape exposes a 'multifaceted mirror of our epoch' (Girot 2006: 91). In this claim, Girot reinforces my own somewhat polemical assertion, that the human transformation of the built environment provides an indexical map, from which we might trace a sequential ideological inscription, close to the experience of landscape as a 'structure of feeling'.[8]

In the same way that an individual's actions delineate their feelings, their aspirations, and fears, amongst their friends, family, work colleagues, and strangers, the journeys they decide to make.

A clear example of this ideological imprint on the urban landscape (and beyond of course) is found in the British Victorian legacy, which amongst other contributions, bequeathed public access to elegantly designed arboreal parks, for recreational use. Similarly, the widespread planting of trees during the 1945 post-war housing boom demonstrated a belief in the life-enhancing qualities of arboreal surroundings, to also mitigate perhaps, the hardship, horror, and public disruption caused by the Second World War enemy bombardment of many UK industrial towns and cities.

A lack of care in designing cities without due consideration of landscape is criticized by Girot: rather than an afterthought, landscape is integral to any architectural urban design. The more recent preoccupation

with the preservation of sites of memory is seen by Girot as a somewhat reactionary preservationist obstacle in the design process—a 'retroactive stance', that does not assure quality of design construction[9]:

> There is a need for a completely re-founded vision of contemporary urban landscapes, a creative gaze capable of providing a clearer understanding and line of action for each place. (Girot 2006: 94)

In relation to Carlo Scarpa's architectural ethos, Girot shares at least, a similar hope that 'past traces' and 'potential futures' might be reconciled in a synchronous landscape architectural design solution.

To further ameliorate the current crisis in urban landscape design, Girot proposes that the 'subjective point of view' should be a prerequisite component within the design process. Interestingly, Girot eschews a design process which uses plans and computer screens, reminding us that our most cherished older landscapes were established through an accretion of developments, achieved on site, over the years, where 'working on a history of plans is not the same as working on a vision of the land' (Girot 2006: 95). A kind of creative *dasein* process!

Following in line with Scarpa's aesthetic values, Girot supports a synthesis of different architectural 'times in space' to realize 'a new dimension' (Girot 2006: 95). In alluding to non-places inadvertently, Girot refers to the 'black holes' that we experience on a daily basis as we move through the urban landscape[10]:

> We need to consider these long non-entities as probably equally significant as the most celebrated vistas of the Alps. These black holes require a long process of aesthetic acceptance. They need more time and memory to decant their specific identity. (Girot 2006: 100)

The redevelopment of redundant architecture within new dimensions of space is exemplified in the Duisburg North Landscape Park in Germany. The Duisburg landscape project was established around the abandoned steelworks and reclaimed industrial land for public use.[11] The entire site has been re-aestheticized, amongst flower meadows, fountains, trees, and even a theatre stage (Barndt 2010).

> As signifiers of a specific historical time and economic regime, these residual architectural traces of Germany's Fordist industrial past are embedded in natural cycles of birth and death, growth and decay. (Barndt 2010: 270)

In relation to the damaged mood of certain urban non-places, the imaginary which Highmore alludes to still exists, in the evidence of feral drug culture that inscribes such places, away from city-centre CCTV surveillance. The difference now is that the environmental pathetic fallacy of 'horizontal' slums throughout the 1940s, 1950s, 1960s, and into the 1970s have been replaced by vertical slums, affording more anonymity. These vertical narratives are one of fearful and isolated children, who very rarely descend to play outdoors.

The compelling images of children playing in ruined landscapes remain in the collective imagination of a certain post-war generation, who are now over the age of 60, and who would most likely regard themselves as working-class. Compared to the endless imaginative options afforded by the waste-ground (non-places?), the reconfigured urban landscapes from 1980, to the present day, appear banal, too signposted, to accommodate a child's innate desire for wildness.

It is this seemingly incoherent collision between the different layers of human intervention (and absence of intervention) juxtaposed with the associated affective trace(s) of memory, which provides the more compelling (at least for the more general reader?) *topos* of this book. One in which the human being in the state of *Dasein* evolves as an ever-changing anthropomorphic 'palimpsest', through a complex (often psychoanalytical) process of self-understanding, involving the active reflection on one's formative years, where there is always the inclination to self-mythologize. Those self-inscriptions of memory are often located, and in some cases, depend on the 'trigger' of place to be recalled for personal reverie. To continue in this rather wistful tone, might we consider that the photographs in this study function as relics from these sites of memory?

Photographs as Repositories for 'Structures of Feeling'

According to Highmore (2017), 'writing counter-moods for our recent history is a form of cultural politics', which require the generation of more realistic, 'more complex mood-worlds that more accurately articulate the various patterns of experiences that attach themselves to an epoch or a moment' (Highmore 2017: 16). To explicate the sense of the epochal moment in mood terms, Highmore considers the theoretical contribution made by the 'architect of cultural studies', Raymond Williams, in his seminal 'structures of feeling' enquiry. According to

Highmore, the use of the term 'feeling' by Williams indicated a politics of culture, one that balanced economics and ideology and was not necessarily 'coterminous with emotions or affect' (Highmore 2017: 16). With specific relevance to the photographs deployed in this book, and how they might be read, and felt, the 'structures of feeling' concept resonates in relation to their evidential representation of social change, one that occurs at the level of cultural feelings. Photographs inter feelings for the moment, they construct emotional typologies from the epic to the everyday. How might the ubiquitous 'Selfie' represent the 'structures of feeling' from our own period? To subsequent generations, will the 'Selfie' speak of a collective feeling of self-doubt, narcissism, or an unselfconsciousness in terms of the representation of the self?

Interestingly, Highmore attempts to deconstruct Williams's cultural epithet, by speculating on the addition of the word 'structure', which he believes, adds a 'masculine' tone, to preclude it 'sounding too emotional'.

Williams first introduced the term in his jointly authored book with Michael Orram: *Preface to Film* (1954). What the 'structures of feeling' encapsulates for Williams, is a synthesis made from constitutive parts, that form a social totality, rather than a fragmented critique of the various entities, ranging from religion, politics, and leisure. Yet, one can only speculate on how Williams might have re-framed his concept, had he anticipated the massive impact of the Internet, and its problematic 'pilot fish'—social media? Furthermore, how would Williams's 'structures of feeling' accommodate the current global situation of 'truth decay', a sociopolitical, and cultural infestation threatening the values of so-called western democratic structures? But perhaps, Williams might have developed a sentimental 'soft-spot' for the immediacy of social networks, in their power to connect friends and help empower new radical forms of activism?

But leaving our Williams hypothesis and returning to the present, we might consider what a year feels like? How we may feel about a year that has just passed is a very different feeling from sifting through the diary entries from that year. And of course, the individual reader will still apprehend and experience this 'feeling' according to their own background and personal situation within the collective. So, in a sense, this symbiotic individualization reverberates within 'structures of feeling', to create a subtle paradox, in which we can all experience differently, however nuanced. Yet, as Highmore insists, the 'overarching aspect of a 'structure of feelings' is what articulates this difference' (Highmore 2017: 24).

In the following section, we consider how feelings are embodied in the material presence of the monument, whilst speculating on the potential of non-place to function as a counter-monument.

Non-place as Counter-Monument

Considering the influence of post-war architecture by an 'entire generation's knowledge of the Holocaust', James Young concedes that the formal properties of the 9/11 World Trade Center Memorial Fountain (designed by the architect, Michael Arad) embodies a quiet meditation on the nature of absence:

> Loss, absence, and regeneration [and] may well be informed by Holocaust memorial vernaculars. This was also a preoccupation they shared with poets and philosophers, artists and composers: How to articulate a void without filling it in? How to formalize irreparable loss without seeming to repair it? (Young 2016: 2)

If memory in its various forms provides solace for the living witnesses, does forgetting provide solace, or guilt?

The counter-memorial artists/architects, Horst Hoheisel, Jochen Gerz, and Esther Shalev-Gerz all cite the influence of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (1982), designed by Maya Lin. Lin's creative and formal approach made their own designs possible (Young 2016). The investigation of the 'negative form' evident in Lin's work prefigures its eloquent omnipresence in the 9/11 Memorial Fountain void concept. Although the excavated space may represent a process that allows for the 'articulation of uncompensated loss', through the physical removal of earth from the site of the atrocity, how might the subsequent aesthetization transmute the horror of what happened here, and respect those who died? (Young 2016: 3). Is a monument for the dead or the survivors—the living?

The overarching function of Lin's *Vietnam Veterans Memorial* (1982) was to replicate the violence and subsequent trauma experienced by the soldiers, by physically cutting into the landscape site. According to Lin, this initial violent intrusion on the landscape site would enable psychological healing and some form of resolution over time.

This desire to subject the landscape itself to a form of self-harm resonates in the pantheistic narratives of Native Americans, in which the sacred landscape expresses anthropomorphic tears and bleeds.

The desire for a creative convergence between land art, landscape architecture, and memorial design was made explicit in the highly contentious proposal designed by Jonas Dahlberg: to cut a 'memory wound', which would form a channel through the Sørbråten peninsular, close to the island of Utøya, to remember the seventy-seven victims who were murdered by Anders Breivik, including the sixty-nine teenagers massacred on Utøya, and the eight people who were killed on the same day by a car bomb blast in Oslo.

In many ways, the proposal was a deliberate provocation, one which sought to disfigure the natural environment, to resist the more complacent materiality and siting of memorials to atrocities. Here nature itself relived the atrocity through its own loss of physical material. The earth that would need to be removed from the Sørbråten peninsular site would be repurposed in Oslo, to construct a second memorial.

During the subsequent heated debates, some locals protested that they would be traumatized for a second time, with the pervasive reminder of the newly formed channel, a revulsion which would be exacerbated by the anticipated influx of tourists. Also, to further undermine the legitimacy of Dahlberg's winning proposal, some families of the victims refused to grant permission for the inscriptions of their loved ones' names on the sheered channel walls.

The monument that was eventually agreed was a modest shrine to the victims—a silver ring, suspended amongst the woods on Utøya.

The Norwegians' contestation of Dahlberg's *wound* memorial motif resonates with Roland Barthes's memorable use of the *punctum* metaphor as 'that which pricks me'; the power of the photographic encounter to 'wound' the spectator through personal iconographic associations. And what of the open-wound mechanism of the camera lens? A mechanical process that severs the moment, a violent disruption of the flow of time, creating perhaps, a *divisive* moment?

A continuation of the *opening* memorial gesture is reflected on by Young as he recounts Lin's earlier career experiences under the supervision of her Yale Professor, Vincent Scully: Lin recollects Scully's haunting reference to Lutyens's *Memorial to the Missing*, in its resemblance to a 'yawning archway' and more redolent of Edvaerd Munch's seminal painting of existential angst: *The Scream* (1893).

Interestingly, the act of walking is an overt consideration in Lin's design of the *Vietnam Veterans Memorial*: a linear walk invites the visitor to experience a sombre promenade along the reflective surface of the walls inscribed with so many names of the fallen soldiers honoured

(however belatedly). If the visitor walks too quickly, then names might be merely scanned, without due deference to their sacrifice. In this careful monument choreography, Lin exploits the meditative potential of walking, its unique capacity to elicit a narrative reconciliation with past events, an opportunity to release what the body remembers, or to achieve at least, some measure and apprehension of scale and loss.

One cannot underestimate the influence of Lin's memorial concepts on certain German artists and architects. We witness a rejection of the conventional and self-confident 'national shrines', in favour of the more subversive counter-monument (Young 2016: 4). This more contentious and provocative approach to the authority of the commemorative monument is witnessed in the subsequent public monuments to the Holocaust. Incorporating Lin's destabilizing creative methodology, these future monuments would embrace material transience as symbolic reminders of memory's relationship to the act of forgetting. The realization of a paradoxical form of commemoration in which the memory function of the monument is vulnerable to the entropic forces of physical nature and the impermanence of collective cultural memory. As we have witnessed in recent global events, the role of memory in the public realm is both contested and open to change as social and political discourses re-evaluate what, and who, should be remembered.

In relation to the Holocaust memorials, the challenge has been to reify the incomprehensible 'enormity' of the event. The more recent responses to this challenge have been defined by a clear rejection of the figurative style of the grand narratives in favour of a dignified deployment of postmodernist nihilism, characterized by an innovative use of materials which appear to embody an added layer of meaning. It is in this sense that these recent memorials wish to question conventional values. The recent Holocaust memorials seek to resist explicit aestheticizing and overt narrative coherence, whilst at the same time eschewing any conventional phallocentric architectural design urges. Rather, these monuments withhold (in some cases) the spectator's desire for redemption and healing. And in this sense, the monument functions as a place for reflection, relinquishing its previous role to provide (in the popular sense), closure.

One monument which exemplifies an understated resistance to any straightforward reconciliatory explanation for the spectator is the two burning candles placed at the terminus section of the arrivals section of single track train line at Auschwitz concentration camp. We are moved by the simplicity of this gesture of remembrance, by the highly symbolic

meaning attached to the notion of the eternal flame—signifying the pledge never to forget, itself reinforced by the physical context of this encounter—in the symbiotic place of the victims' arrival and departure from this life. Yet, the burning candles are also testament to the same fragility of remembrance, by their outdoor siting, exposed to the disinterested weather conditions of nature.

The embedding of transience and disappearance as an essential conceptual element within the commemorative encounter is poignantly represented in the *Monument against Fascism, War, and Violence-and for Peace and Human Rights* (1986–1993) created by Esther Shalev-Gerz and Jochen Gerz, and situated in the Harburg district of Hamburg (now vanished). The now empty flat elevated space overlooking a rather prosaic open market square provides an unobtrusive reminder to not rely on the presence of a monument to deliver, to inter, the public's memory work.

On a much larger scale, yet still eschewing the overt illustrative monumentality of previous commemorative projects, the *Denkmal* (Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe 2005) produced by Peter Eisenman, and situated in Berlin, conflates the two visual tropes of the cemetery and ocean, in his 'Field of Stelae', a 4.7 acre site subjected to the emplacement of 2711 concrete slabs, following a grid pattern across a sloping site. The design of the memorial incorporates different heights of stelae, which in turn, alludes to the undulating rhythm of the ocean waves, and the swimmer's (or drowning person's) visual experience of an interrupted viewpoint—a kind of *not waving but grieving* effect. The essential meaning is that the visitor is immersed in the impossibility of apprehending the vast scale of the horror that this site attempts to remember.

According to Young, this 'modern skepticism' for the monument may explain its resurgence in 'late modern or so-called postmodern societies' (Young 2016: 14). Such a resurgence could represent a need for some permanent truth made manifest by the materiality of the monument, an unambiguous historical gesture resistant to the cultural relativism of postmodernism? We therefore live in an increasingly anxious period, in which evidential truth across the entire public sphere is open to cursory interrogation, often compounded by the now indelible appendage of 'fake', deployed expediently by some political actors. If, in this Trumpian dystopia, truth is denied, then the manifest symbols of truth embodied in the monument are undermined, potentially malleable to other reductive political agendas, including anti-historicism.

To highlight this concern, we should consider the recent bill voted in by the Polish parliament on the 26 January 2018 (the eve of the Holocaust Remembrance Day) that would make it illegal to accuse Poland of complicity in Nazi war crimes. In response to the Israel Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu's comment during his address to his own cabinet on the 28 January 2018, that the Polish bill was a 'distortion of the truth, the rewriting of history and the denial of the Holocaust', Poland's President, Andrzej Duda, issued a statement defending the bill on the 7 February 2018, through the Polish Embassy in Tel Aviv:

> At the same time, it is for me also essential to make sure that we as Poles, as the Polish state and the Polish nation should not be defamed and charged with complicity in the Holocaust. In the first place, some people say, much to my regret and grief, shared by most of the Polish people, that the Poles as a nation had their hand in the Holocaust, and in a systematic institutionalised way. Nothing of that kind! The historic truth is that there was no systematic institutionalised participation among Poles.

The widespread development of memorial projects could be interpreted as a desperate attempt to anchor memorial discourse, and the related values associated with honouring the past. These same projects seek to assuage the concerns raised by the proliferation of global capital's 'signature' architectural statements which often honour clandestine wealth and power.

To a certain extent, the counter-monument serves a dual purpose: to provide a genuine critique in relation to the commodification of the memorial monument within the context of global capitalism's investment in tourism-friendly landmark projects, such as the neo-futuristic Shard, situated in Southwark, London, and designed by the Italian architect, Renzo Piano. The Shard is emblematic of an architectural style which seeks to eschew unnecessary detail (and the use of local materials) whilst trying to establish a clearly differentiated physical presence in the city landscape amongst its competitors. In this dazzling architectural high-aesthetic environment, how can the memorial monument differentiate itself, establish cultural relevance, and meaning? Although it represents a different challenge of course, traditional journalism (and this includes its gatekeepers) is involved in a similar conflict, in reaction to a changing audience and declining readership (and related decline in advertising revenues), due to the rapid expansion of web-based

'citizen journalism', disseminated through various social media news-feed platforms. A situation which is compounded or ameliorated, depending on your viewpoint, by an endemic suspicion of the political establishment and authority in general.

The memorial problem often associated with a transient and fragmented nation of communities is considered by Young:

> By creating common spaces for memory, monuments propagate the illusion of common memory. Public monuments, national days of commemoration, and shared calendars thus all work to create common loci around which seemingly common national identity is forged. (Young 2016: 15)

Young's notion of 'multiple voices' within an increasingly 'democratic age' provides another reason why citizens are less likely to accept the ideological subjugation that older monuments exerted. The prerequisite of our age: inclusivity, with its ever-present reactionary fears of 'design by committee'—the loss of creative uniqueness has in most cases resisted the emplacement of explicit ideological grand projects (notwithstanding the Millennium Dome debacle) by the current UK government institutions. Young argues, that the current memorial situation marks a 'shift away' from the more conventional approach to the formation of collective memory, to a much more nuanced solution—a version he refers to as 'collected memory' (2016: 15).

Yet Young's notion of *collected* might suggest a commodification of memory. An unfortunate conflation with the act of shopping? The problem is whether we regard a common space for memory as a market for memory transactions? Is it even possible to negotiate with the past, or even to choose our own memories? Memories remain intangible, often ineffable, and resistant to any fixed personal or collective ('collected') checkout process.

Reflecting on his experience as a selector/consultant advisor on the 9/11 World Trade Center proposed memorial, Young questions its teleology: 'What is to be remembered here, and how? For whom are we remembering? And to what social, political, religious, and communal ends?' (2016: 28).

'And what of the World Trade Center ruins?' asks Young. Rather than preserve some specific element associated with the atrocity and subsequent ruination, the winning memorial 'Reflecting Absence' designed by Michael Arad, in collaboration with the landscape architect Peter

Walker, eliminated any remnants. This design decision contrasts with the Hiroshima Peace Memorial (Genbaku Dome) opened in 1955, which preserved the ruined Prefectural Industrial Promotion Hall, as part of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park.

An opportunity to incorporate a visually arresting remnant from ground zero, which would have literally grounded the destructive narrative of the event, was captured in the rather too sumptuous full-colour Photobook *Aftermath* (2011), created by Joel Meyerowitz, who was granted special access to the ground zero site. Meyerowitz's photograph shows three vertical steel structures like three straining fingers, a defiant gesture as they emerge from the rubble. Although one cannot criticize the choice of the 'Reflecting Absence' memorial for its profound elemental landscape design minimalism and the creation of a meditative space which draws the visitor's viewpoint down, as in prayer, the pervasive cleansing aesthetic could be seen to avoid any semiotic trace that America is vulnerable to attack.

In this sense, we might ask the question: why is there in recent times, a resistance to preserve destruction, in favour of a *tabula rasa* approach to replacing what is ruined? This apparent cultural repulsion for a preservation of destruction (save for some industrial and heritage sites) confuses Young, for 'all cultures preserve bits of relics and ruins as reminders of the past; nearly all cultures remember *terrible destructions* with the remnants of such destruction' (Young 2016: 28 my emphasis)

For my own part, my photographs of certain non-places deliberately frame evidence of past destruction (although not through war or terrorism). The photographs expose the imbrication of successive destructive transformations. I consider insensitive regeneration since the 1960s to be part of this destructive process; a process that disregarded the importance of embedded collective and personal memory in relation to specific places, usually working-class neighbourhoods within walking distance of their places of work within the inner city zones. The partial regeneration of these neighbourhoods left remnants of an industrial past, referred to by architects as 'voids' in the unresolved urban landscape. These voids (which I label non-places) were in turn further transformed by the inexorable force of nature's recolonization—its urge to re-wild dormant ground. I argue that there is some offer of memorial redemption in the re-wilding process in non-places. A literal containment within non-places of an aftermath, adopting its alternative meaning as the regrowth of grass, a re-emerging meadow following mowing.

The temporary resistance evident in non-places to the rapid re-purposing of available land affords a fleeting opportunity for personal reflection in a less-codified place. Moreover, based on my own presentations of these photographs to audience members over the age of fifty-five, the recurrent verbal response (and occasions, online) is: 'I used to play in these areas'. The random iconography represented in my photographs of non-place, previously alluded to in Highmore's reflections on structures of feeling in relation to the emotional triggers of post-war wastelands, cause an emotional jolt in these people. As Freud has stated, the most insignificant trace of one's past has the potential to cause an avalanche of personal recollections. For this reason, the non-place functions as a counter-monument to a less-designed structure for childhood, albeit an essentially working-class childhood. A childhood without 'play-dates'—the freedom to explore a more idiosyncratic urban landscape complete with spatial 'chance-juxtapositions', such as obsolete churches next to untended patches of allotments, and partially demolished brick-built streets, whose cellars seemed always to be flooded. An urban landscape still recovering from the effects of the Second World War, whilst at the same time, needing to reconfigure this established urban landscape for the 1960s' social housing revolution of slum-clearances and decentralized housing estates and high-rise housing blocks.

In response to these recollections, my photographs act as a testament. As memorial catalysts for remembered spaces, ones that allowed imaginative play as a form of childhood re-wilding—an antidote to the current fears of unsupervised play, and the real dangers posed by the significant increase in traffic. If we recognize the monument as a structure to honour what has passed, or a site for collective grieving, then the non-place can be considered literally, as a grounded counter-monument, one that honours a less well-known working-class history—of close communities, industrial work, and an imaginative, less homogenized place for children to grow-up. And in the auto-ethnographic sense, the motivation to explore these past remnants through photographic practice has been to achieve some emotional catharsis: photography as both an interdisciplinary invitation/conduit and a means to examine the past for some form of emotional therapy. Each of my photographs in this book eschews a specific focus point, preferring instead, to accentuate a hyper-real focus clarity across the entire field of view. Although this may be a rather prosaic observation to make, the additional use of a heavy tripod makes the decision to frame specific

non-places significant; the construction of the tripod precludes the voracious tendency offered by digital photography to take too many random shots. In this respect, the construction of the tripod suggests a ritual performance in front of the subject. The placement of the tripod at the desired height honours the subject. The screwing of the camera body onto the tripod thread, and the attaching of the cable release to avoid camera shake, is similarly ceremonial—ritualistic. To conclude this somewhat elegiac deconstruction of the photographic act, even the pressing of the shutter, the invitation to light, echoes the laying of the aperture as wreath on certain public memorials. But to assuage any concerns regarding sentimentality or mawkish self-indulgence, my photographs display sharp full-colour non-places, which deliberately avoids the nostalgia so often attributed to black-and-white photographs. Therefore, my photographs are concerned with the present, rather than a simplistic search for the past. But yes, there may be residual details in the photographs which haunt the present: a surface of brick wall, a remnant from a 1960s' wire fence, for example. Yet the clarity of the present, made more pervasive by the direct framing and broad depth-of-field, seeks to 'let go' of the past, by convincing me, the photographer as direct witness, to reconcile how these places used to be. To find personal solace in a direct experience of stillness between the past and vivid present. Even if this feeling only lasts for a moment, the meditative performance of photography, its now-ness, allows it to emerge. In the same way that the public commemorates through a 'one-minutes silence', the compressed moment of the shutter opening to the world and closing, is an honouring of the moment.

To continue in this rather elegiac mood, it is worth considering Young's previous work on 'negative-form monuments', which provide a potential affective mirror to monumental loss. Such an argument resonates with the empty spaces afforded by non-places, and the sanctuary that they provide for re-wilding as grieving. The irony of non-places, that they are often produced by the effects of outsourcing, finds an interesting parallel in Young's use of the term 'fallow', extrapolated from *Exodus 20*, pages 10–11: 'For six years you shall sow your land and gather its yield; but in the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow'.

The associative bringing together of the pejorative adjectives, fallow, empty, and negative, communicate the unproductive the sterile. So, in the sense of negative, how does a 'negative-form monument' deliver its memory function, and to what aims?

Seeing Through the Monument

Rather than enshrining the ineffable feeling of loss, through the installation of a conventional monument, Shalev-Gerz strove to conceive the monument as a cultural provocation, whilst concomitantly honouring the dead.

The *Oil on Stone* (1983) piece submitted by Shalev-Gerz, situated within view of the celebrated *Roaring Lion* (1926), Israel National Memorial (designed by the sculptor Abraham Melinkov) invites the spectator to form a dialogic relationship with both monuments, a contentious spatial intertextuality that explores the ideals of heroism, sacrifice, national history, and myth. The materiality of *Oil on Stone*, its use of the cultural ballast of Jerusalem stone blocks, combined with a graphic cut-out figure shape, directs the spectator to consider the literal figure-ground relationship; a relationship in which the 'negative' becomes the landscape, the homeland. In this context, the spectator must construct the symbolic absence of the figure (its *doppelganger* revenant) through the filling-in function of being, like the memorial itself, in situ. Our physical encounter is not passive, we contribute to the affective presence of this memorial by our movements and ocular orientation. This experience in turn transforms the cut-out negative form of *Oil on Stone* into a monument as an instrumental *aperture*, through which we reflect on the idea of a Jewish homeland and its related contestations.

The influence of monuments on the perceptions and understandings of audiences is, according to Till (2005), bordering on coercion, where 'a traditional memorial tells the visitor how he or she should feel through monumental sculpture', and in doing so, creates a 'form that provides national catharsis' (2005: 167). The purpose of the Berlin memorial district is to represent Germany as a 'cosmopolitan, moral, and open society' (Till 2005: 203).

Since Till's assessment in 1993, Germany's redemptive trajectory continues, to remain both a moral and open society, reaching its apogee of atonement perhaps, in Angela Merkel's controversial decision to admit into Germany over one million refugees fleeing the turmoil in Syria, Afghanistan, and Iraq. Discussing her decision in the newspaper *Welt am Sonntag* (four weeks before the Germany's 24th September federal election), Merkel explained that 'It was an extraordinary situation and I made my decision based on what I thought was right from a political and humanitarian standpoint'.[12]

The *Denkmal* design eschews a centrally located monument. Interestingly, amongst many of the debates in relation to how the land might be used as a memorial site for the murdered Jews, some suggested that the area should remain empty, deploying a simple sign stating with a dark irony, that: 'Germany's Holocaust Memorial. We debated it for twelve years and couldn't find a solution'.

The word spur (literally trace) identifies what is left behind the remnants of human agency.[13]

Till refers to the term's capacity to denote the material and 'spiritual imprint of the human touch, and the connection of that touch across time and space' (2005: 208).

According to the Japanese philosophy of *Wasi-Sabi* (discussed in the re-wilding palimpsest section), all things are impermanent, an entropic predicament where 'things begin to break down and approach the primordial state, they become even less perfect, more irregular' (Koren 2008 [1994]: 49).

But surely, within this opportunity to preserve we must confront the paradox, that through the act of valourization itself, we attenuate those qualities which we initially valued, the site negotiating its own history.

In this context, many of my own photographs become a suggested counter-monument to a journey and place that is no longer possible to experience, due to the recent re-development of many of the sites during 2009–2011. For example, the site of *Passage* (2007; Fig. 4.3) photograph is now a Miller Homes development. There are no monuments here to the erased Esso oil depot that occupied this land until the 1980s, or the workers, and the associated businesses of pubs, cafes, mechanics, bakers, etc. To assuage these concerns of an erased public memory, Philip Smith (1999) argues for a broadening of acts of remembering, in which:

> various types of place require nourishment of narratives […] Their special nature, then requires forms of remembering […] Monuments index, solidify and define the nature of space […]. (Smith 1999: 13–36)

In relation to this sense of loss in the everyday, Petri Ravo (1999) reminds us that a 'landscape is always a landscape for somebody', a statement given greater significance if one recognizes the potential effects of an imminent deregulation of planning laws in the UK, to 'fast-track' local initiatives, the new euphemism for off-loading governmental responsibility and cost.[14] A strategy where the value of

'green-field' sites may be reconsidered within the 'big idea' of the re-exhumed 'Big Society' promoted by David Cameron during the 2010 Conservative election campaign and later through the Liberal/Conservative coalition government.

The photograph *Passage* (2007; Fig. 4.3) points to a possible counter-monument. Although I acknowledge that my claim for the non-place as an emerging memorial place or 'counter-monument' could be viewed as absurd in the context of the largely ignored status of such places, I would like to suggest here that the memories of these non-places (especially those associated with our formative memories) have the potential to contribute to the DNA of the self and, in a broader sense, to the accretive collective memory of communities.

If we probe the photograph *Passage* (2007) deeper we encounter a central iconicity that is redolent of the camera's function: the aperture's implicit invitation to light; the passage of light subsequently fixed within the coloured photograph as object, the formation of an echo in which 'colours are the deeds and sufferings of light' (Goethe). There is also the exhortation to the spectator to recognize, and question their own

Fig. 4.3 *Passage*, 2007. Photograph by the author

position as witness, in what Barthes describes as an *antiphon*. The *antiphon* is characterized by an exchange, in which the photograph-spectator-relationship incites a form of alternate figurative chanting.

Moreover, the photograph *Passage* (2007) alludes to other historically significant photographs, notably, the photographs of Talbot, Schwab, and Levin (discussed in Chapter 3), and their use of the open-door trope. The debris outside the lower improvised entrance/exit in *Passage* (2007) suggests animal activity perhaps? Whilst the suggestion of an excavation from within connotes its own relationship with memory and recall. The inherent formal modernism here is of course transient, as we note the encroaching vegetation from the left of frame, which, left unchecked, will surely consume this building over the subsequent years.

The dark improvised entry point below the bizarre bricked-up doorway in *Passage* (2007) introduces us to the historically significant photograph *The Open Door* (1844; Fig. 4.4) produced by William Henry Fox Talbot.

Fig. 4.4 *The Open Door*, 1844. William Henry Fox Talbot (Salted paper print from a calotype negative) (© Artlokoloro Quint Lox Limited [Alamy Stock Photo])

The photograph *The Open Door* (1844) provides the sixth plate in William Henry Fox Talbot's landmark 1844 publication: *The Pencil of Nature*. Aligning his work with the tradition of genre painting, he wrote: 'We have sufficient authority in the Dutch school of art, for taking as subjects of representation scenes of daily and familiar occurrence'. Here Talbot turned his camera from the vaulted splendours of his home at Lacock Abbey, which he photographed extensively, to the simple door of the stable and the resting tool of the worker. Talbot exhibited and sold variants of this image with the titles *The Stable Door* and *Stable Yard in Talbot-type*. The diagonally clipped corners of this print suggest that it may have been removed from an album.

The Disappearing Monument

In the counter-monument *Monument for Peace and Against Fascism in Germany* (1986) by Jochen Gerz and Esther Shalev, the monument was designed to disappear over time.

As Young reflects: How might artists provide some redemptive memorial to encompass the enormity of German guilt? And how does a 'How does a nation mourn the victims of a mass murder perpetuated in its name? How does a nation reunite itself on the bedrock memory of its horrendous crimes?' (2016: 158–159).

Shalev and Jochen Gerz understood the post-war generation's distrust of the more grandiloquent monumental architecture synonymous with the Nazi period. The intention was to define a strategy that would combine Shalev-Gerz's uneasy relationship to overtly Jewish icons, with Jochen Gerz's deep suspicion of post-war monumental forms. The concept of the disappearing monument was informed by the cathartic First World War monument to the 'unknown soldier'. The notion of forgetting conflated with disappearance echoes the disappearance of the victims of Nazi atrocities.

The twelve-metre high pillar monument (1986) constructed from hollow aluminium was completed with an external skin of soft dark lead, and a multi-lingual inscription on its base, with the exhortation to 'remain vigilant', and the reminder that it is 'only we ourselves who can rise-up against injustice'. The monument disappeared on 10 November, 1993.

In a paradoxical sense, Gerz and Shalev have attempted to reclaim public memory by installing a monument that does not last forever. What better acknowledgement in relation to the fragility of memory itself than its own erosion over time, and our own responsibility to remember?

The strategy to leave old sites to experience natural change without design intervention reminds us of Daniel Libeskind's criticism of Berlin's reunification plans for the destruction of some historically important sites, recommending instead that the Potsdamer Platz should remain as a derelict field.

When it comes to the past, Till (2005) asserts that planners are unable to reclaim a 'singular past' for the 'past is continuously defined by and defines the city' (Till 2005: 51). Those resistant to urban change on green issues are categorized by Till, as 'conservative heritage fanatics', antigrowth socialists, and liberal ecologists (2005: 68).

In the context of our own times, with the attendant challenges presented by global capitalism, we should also remind ourselves of the prescient essay: *Nine points on Monumentality* (1943), written by Sert, Léger, and Gideon, reflecting on the landscape(s) of the Second World War, in which 'Monuments are […] only possible in periods in which a unifying consciousness and unifying culture exists'.[15]

Others have argued, most notably Pierre Nora (1986), that rather than preserving public memory, the monument, and even the counter-monument, displaces memory, and in this way supplants a community's memory work within the materiality of the monument in which 'less memory is experienced from the inside' the more it 'exists through its exterior scaffolding and outward signs'.[16] If this is the condition, then might we consider that the photograph escapes this relinquishing of the memory-duty, by its relationship to the archive? Or, as Foucault has warned us, there is no guarantee that photographs deposited in the archive, or subsequently exhibited in galleries and edited in books on contemporary landscape photography, will remain true to the memory of place and people, if that was ever possible anyway.[17] Moreover, if we acknowledge the omnipresence of the Internet, and increasingly, the ambitions of Google to secure, even without copyright it would appear (although strongly resisted in France 2009, through a government debate) images and texts in their digital ark, this might be the ultimate challenge in securing the 'what has been' for future generations to interpret.

According to Freud, the similarity between melancholy and fetishism is that both involve a simultaneous acknowledgement and negation of loss (an absence of acceptance, or 'closure' in the popular sense), a *vergangenheitsbewältigung*.[18] This suggests that the melancholic may become attached to certain objects-places? The ruin seems an appropriate investment for melancholic contemplation, due to its interstitial 'state between culture, nature, life and death?' (Steiner 2010: 299).

It is also worth considering the telling observation by Hell and Schönle: that the ruin signals an imminent erosion of meaning, from which a 'compensatory discursive action' may ensue. The fecund discursive possibilities of the ruin can be expanded perhaps, by its porous ontology—as a 'trope for modernity's self- awareness' (2010: 6).

A self-awareness that is triggered by the ruin's physical stability, however fragile to the erosion of time it might be. The encounter (depending on the individual) allows one to ponder the transience (or not) of power structures, in relation to the destructive power of deep time. We may also consider the changing values, the anachronistic qualities of ruins, and more intimately, our private sense of loss?

> At the beginning of the twentieth century, Spengler predicted the ruins of modernity: the decline of Western culture into a civilisation that leaves an apocalyptic landscape of decaying global cities. (Hell and Schönle 2010: 7)

The aesthetic of ruins suggests an innate need in people to reconstruct the visual world. The fascination of ruins, the related pilgrimages to ruined sites, all attest to this desire to interact, contemplate the beauty of destruction, however serendipitous it might be, from religious sites in the ancient world, to the more recent scenes of natural disasters, earthquakes, and of course, the destruction wrought by wars. Sites which have been reconfigured by some destructive force, be it natural or man-made, have attracted an audience due to the dispersal of a previously accessible cultural decoding, which in its present state, facilitates, requires a different form of interaction from those present. The filling-in of lost iconology, where a clear historical narrative is now absent, provides a bizarre human pleasure:

> in its ambivalence and amorphousness, the ruin functions as a uniquely flexible and productive trope of modernity's self-awareness. Indeed, it is one of the master tropes of modern reflexivity, precisely because it encapsulates vacuity and loss as underlying constituents of the modern identity. It is the reflexivity of a culture that interrogates its own becoming. (Hell and Schönle 2010: 6–7)

In relation to the Hegelian concept of becoming, we might apprehend the ruin as a concrete physical incarnation (*das Dasein*), of a felt loss, historical event, one that acknowledges a transition from more intangible cultural abstractions (*das Sein*).[19]

Where to Dig and What to Remember

To act on Benjamin's dictum that memory is the theatre of the past and that 'fruitless searching is as much part of this as succeeding […] and in the old ones dig to even deeper levels', we might consider that the present participles of digging, remembering, and photographing refer to deliberate and selective acts.[20] So, in what sense should we attempt to 'dig' and subsequently remember in these most elusive of places? Is the process of digging, searching, and researching a form of mourning? Does the final archive function as a mausoleum to these forgotten urban sites? Is the exhibition a cortege of images that elicit a more active remembrance? Perhaps the non-place will not be erased without some form of landscape legacy?

Let us consider the photograph that I regard as the most metonymic in relation to a suggestion of mourning for the disappearance of non-place: *The Deluge* (2007; Fig. 4.5).

A collapsed buddleia becomes a potential metonym for commemoration, made more allusive by the biblical resonance of the title, a flood,

Fig. 4.5 *The Deluge*, 2007. Photograph by the author

where a floral tribute has been cast adrift. This image provokes the audience to analyse the available evidence offered: what was the function of this place? Depending on the specific audience, the photograph could offer a range of readings, some more disquieting than others. A different signification might be prompted by the appearance of washroom tiles in a partly erased landscape. This form of involuntary connotation is evident, for example, when one has seen the footage brought back from the extermination camps, and other landscapes of 'trauma'. After such a visual encounter, how can one view certain iconography with an 'innocent eye?' The apprehension of chimneys and wire fences will always be haunted by the lens of the *final solution*.[21]

Notes

1. My reference to the 'everyday' (especially in relation to visual representations) engages in the critiques of everyday life, which emerged during the twentieth century, between European social and aesthetic theory, which sought to rediscover new forms of transcendence and visual tropes, within the everyday. In some ways, I follow the example of the 1960s Situationist International (not necessarily in an overt disruptive political sense) that aimed to disrupt the conventional encounter with the familiarity of the everyday, whilst questioning the omnipresence of the technocratic and bureaucratic (Bennett 2005).
2. The term 'off-the-grid' (OTG) or off-grid also refers to living in a self-sufficient manner without reliance on one or more public utilities. The term also carries a subversive connotation that repudiates the more conventional consumerist life style.
3. *après coup* suggests after the event.
4. See Yorkshire post Newspapers web film *Feral Leeds* here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m-n7KBk_h7A.
5. Benjamin quoted in: Smith, S. M. (2013). *At the Edge of Sight: Photography and the Unseen*, Duke University Press, p. 6.
6. A 'Sense of Place' is a much-used expression, chiefly by architects, but as now been adopted by urban planners and interior decorators and the promoters of condominiums, so that now it means very little. It is an awkward and ambiguous modern translation of the Latin term *genius loci*. In classical times, it meant not so much the place itself as the guardian divinity of that place.
7. Peter Jackson's *Maps of Meaning: An Introduction to Cultural Geography* (1995) quoted in Jim Brogden's 'Forensic Intimacy: A Digital Exploration of Non-place', *Colour & Design Creativity*, Vol. 1, p. 11.

8. See *Preface to Film* (1954) by Raymond Williams and Michael Orrom.
9. For an opposing view see Scarpa, C. (1994). 'Friedhof Brion in San Vito d' Altivote', in *Architektur+Beton* (ed.) K. Kinold, Hatje Verlag, pp. 124–131. See also, Scarpa's I Tomba Monumentale Brion in San Vito d' Altivote, Italy (1969–1978).
10. Girot identifies several Swiss artists who have documented these so-called nondescript areas, including the work of: Peter Fischli and David Weiss, both of whom investigated the Zurich suburbs, whilst the Affoltern area has been explored by the photographer Georg Aerni. Each of these visual practitioners attempts to integrate a pictorial representation of nondescript places with an implicit social critique. See Peter Fischli, and David Weiss. (1993). *Siedlungen, Aglomeration* (ed.) Patrick Frey, Zurich. Georg Aerni, Studie Öfflentliche Raüme Affoltern, Amt für Stadtebau Zürich, 2003.
11. Established in 1989 by the Berlin Senate, the Internationale Bau-Ausstellung (also known as the IBA) has organized innovative architecture exhibitions, and critically informed reconstruction projects, that aim to develop ecologically sensitive urban planning concepts, such as the 2000–2010 Fürst-Pückler-Land project, in former East Germany, situated in Southern Brandenburg. The project aimed to 're-interpret and renew the landscape in a rural region after mining'. Mining and processing of lignite had characterized the Lower Lausitz region for 150 years, but over 20 opencast mines were closed in the early 1990s. Left behind were wounded landscapes and abandoned industrial buildings. As a result, the goal of IBA Fürst-Pückler-Land was to upgrade the former mining landscapes and give the landscape of wasteland a new identity.' 7 July 2018. Accessed: https://www.open-iba.de/en/geschichte/2000-2010-iba-furst-puckler-land/.
    Sources and further information: M:AI Museum für Architektur und Ingenieurkunst NRW; IBA Hamburg (Hrsg.): IBA meets IBA. Eine Ausstellung zur 100jährigen Geschichte der Internationalen Bauausstellungen, (o.J.).
12. See full 27 August 2017 article 'Frau Merkel, haben Sie in der Flüchtlingsfrage Fehler gemacht?' *Welt am Sonntag*, at: https://www.welt.de/politik/deutschland/plus168025776/Frau-Merkel-haben-Sie-in-der-Fluechtlingsfrage-Fehler-gemacht.html.
13. *Spuren*—we may also infer from the word, the act of clandestine criminal activities, and the avoidance of detection by forensic scientist, detective agencies, etc.
14. See Ravo, J. P. (1999). 'In this Very Place: War Memorials and Landscapes as an Experienced Heritage', paper presented at the *Thingmount Working Paper Series on the Philosophy of Conservation*, Lancaster University.
15. Sert, Léger, Gideon, *Nine Points on Monumentality*, essay 1943, published 1958, p. 48.

16. Nora, P. (1986). 'Les Lieux de mémoire (Realms of Memory)', in Vol. 2: *La Nation*, Paris: Gallimard, p. 1.
17. Michael Foucault. (1972). *The Archaeology of Knowledge, and the Discourse on Language*, New York: Harper & Row, pp. 9–10.
18. *vergangenheitsbewältigung*—a process of coming to terms with, even overcoming the past, through the erasure of unpleasant memories.
19. Berthold-Bond, D. (1989). 'The Deeper Significance of Becoming', in *Hegel's Grand Synthesis: A Study of Being, Thought, and History*, State University of New York Press, p. 78.
20. Benjamin, W. (1979). *One-Way Street and Other Writings*, London: New Left Books, p. 314.
21. The Final Solution (German: *Die Endlösung*) was Nazi Germany's plan to implement the systematic genocide of European Jews before and during World War 11, resulting in the deadly phase of the Holocaust. Heinrich Himmler was the chief architect of the plan. Adolf Hitler referred to it as 'the final solution to the Jewish question'.

References

Adams, P. C., Hoelscher, S., & Till, K. E. (Eds). (2001). Place in Context: Rethinking Humanist Geographies. *Textures of Place: Exploring Humanist Geographies*. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press.

Antze, P., & Lambek, M. (Eds). (1996). *Tense Past: Cultural Essays in Trauma and Memory*. Routledge. New York.

Augé, M. (1995). *Non-places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity* (Trans. John Howe). London: Verso.

Barndt, K. (2010). Memory Traces of an Abandoned Set of Futures, Industrial Ruins in the Postindustrial Landscapes of Germany. In J. Hell & A. Schönle (Eds.), *Ruins of Modernity*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Barthes, R. (2000 [1980]). *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* (Trans. Richard Howard). London: Vintage.

Benjamin, W. (1970). *Illuminations* (p. 238, H. Zohn, Trans.). London. Fontana.

Bennett, T. (2005). Everyday. In T. Bennett, L. Grossberg, & M. Morris (Eds.), *New Keywords: A Revised Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. Blackwell Publishing.

Game, A. (1991). *Undoing the Social: Towards a Deconstructive Sociology*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Girot, C. (2006). Vision in Motion: Representing Landscape in Time. In Waldheim, C. (Ed.). *The Landscape Urbanism Reader*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press.

Hell, J., & Schönle, A. (Eds.). (2010). *Ruins of Modernity*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.
Highmore, B. (2017). *Cultural Feelings: Mood, Mediation and Cultural Politics*. London and New York: Routledge.
Jackson, P. (1995). *Maps of Meaning: An Introduction to Cultural Geography*. London: Routledge.
Koren, L. (2008 [1994]). *Wabi-Sabi: For Artists, Designers, Poets & Philosophers*. Point Reyes, CA: Imperfect Publishing.
Krauss, R. (1994). *The Optical Unconscious*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
Kriebel, T. S. (2007). Theories of Photography: A Short History. In Elkins, J. (Ed.). *Photography Theory*. New York and London: Routledge.
Lury, C. (1998). *Prosthetic Culture: Photography, Memory and Identity*. New York and London: Routledge.
Ravo, J. P. (1999). *In this Very Place: War Memorials and Landscapes as an Experienced Heritage*. Finland: Department of Geography, University of Oulu.
Sliwinski, S., & Smith, S. M. (Eds.). (2017). *Photography and the Optical Unconscious*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.
Smith, P. (1999). The Elementary Forms of Place, and Their Transformations: A Durkheimian Model. *Qualitative Sociology, 22*(1), 13–36.
Smith, S. M. (2013). *At the Edge of Sight: Photography and the Unseen*. Duke University Press.
Steiner, G. (1989). *Real Presences: Is There Anything in What We Say?* London: Faber and Faber.
Till, K. E. (2005). *The New Berlin: Memory, Politics, Place*. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press.
Young, E. J. (2016). *The Stages of Memory: Reflections on Memorial Art, loss, and the Spaces Between*. Amerst and Preston: University of Massachusetts Press.

CHAPTER 5

The Valedictory Landscape

The overarching theme of this chapter is the situating of non-place as a landscape of farewell. A valedictory experience, due in part, to the increasing homogenization of the urban landscape through the vicarious imperatives of regeneration and re-gentrification.

Building on the previous core chapters of the book, I set out what I think are the crucial elements necessary for a new critical conception of non-place.

For some people, non-place might simply be cherished as an emerging 'new landscape', liberated from landscape architectural design. A place that is becoming increasingly rare, and invaluable in relation to its paradoxical contribution to biodiversity. Enabling a unique aperture through which we might view an alternative to the increasing homogenization of the urban landscape.

My contention is that those disparate non-places which are still emerging within urban landscape might be conceived as a form of new landscape? An urban experience that requires a radical stewardship if we are to retain its idiosyncratic qualities. For to intervene too much would risk eroding the heterotopic qualities that we valued when first encountering the non-place.

Ever since Robert Smithson initiated a way of working with 'entropic landscapes' in the late 1960s, through the recovery of 'damaged nature as culture', there has been a surge of artist-activists responding in various restorative and interactive ways: the reclamation of landfills, 'clear-cuts', and 'other industrial wounds'.[1] But significantly, in relation to this

J. Brogden, *Photography and the Non-Place*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-03919-6_5

debate, Lucy Lippard (1997) declares that these artistic negotiations have rarely occurred 'in their own neighborhoods' (1997: 184).[2]

Searching for Authenticity in the Regeneration Game

A contested term in the debates surrounding the politics of regeneration in our major cities is *authentic*. The term emerged from the exclusion of German intellectuals from the eighteenth-century French court, due to the seriousness of the intellectuals' pursuit of culture, and the authentic. Marshall Berman (1970) explains that 'though these intellectuals did not hold power, their claim to authenticity foreshadowed the way more ambitious groups would eventually use the term as a means of excluding others'.[3] The idea of exclusion persists in our own time. In considering the rapid socio-demographic changes experienced by citizens since the 1980s (in the UK/America), we recognize the enormous impact exerted by regeneration projects. Certain groups move into the central districts, and other groups move out. Of course, the regeneration process may appear as incremental, one that is often disrupted by 'public consultation', but when private capital is involved the outcome is usually inevitable. The retention of so-called authenticity, in relation to both people and the politics of place, is enmeshed with the regeneration discourses. It is no surprise then that I would situate non-places as representative of the authentic under threat.

The term authenticity has extended the popular lexicon over the past few years, as a high-concept media strategy. A ploy associated with a discerning criticality, and morally informed choice. In relation to the freighted area of 'identity politics', one's actions denote the degree to which one might proclaim 'authentic'. In its provenance to a hyper-form of Hip, post-Yuppiedom, the term authentic has been deployed to differentiate between people (a 'target audience') and products. And within our main debate here—places.[4] According to Zukin (2010), authenticity denotes an attitude of moral superiority. The vocabulary of the authentic is found embedded in various place-making strategies: postmodernist-inspired retro architecture and ubiquitous façadism.[5]

From a specifically American perspective, Zukin (2010) laments the disappearance of people from local neighbourhoods who had been in place for a long time. According to Zukin, the heterogeneous urban experience in New York has been subsumed within an ineluctable

expansion of exclusive apartments and branded chain stores. Global investment has deracinated low-cost apartment houses, to re-market these for lucrative 'condos':

> The rebuilding of public spaces since the 1980s shows signs of the same homogenizing forces of redevelopment. Like the World Trade Centre site, which is partly a place of mourning and partly a spectacle for mass consumption, these spaces are funded by private money and focus on the two issues that became our preoccupations after 2001: shopping and security. (Zukin 2010: Preface xi)

With this transformation comes the inevitable 'loss of a distinctive identity' (Zukin 2010: Preface xi). Zukin reflects on the key question in speaking to power: 'who benefits from the city's revitalization? Does anyone have the right to be protected from displacement?' (Zukin 2010: Preface xii).

In view of the continuing debates regarding the authenticity and preservation of the High Line in New York, this ficto-authenticity, suggests Zukin, still retains the persuasive power to surreptitiously enter the urban imaginary. A *faux*-authenticity (if established over the years) has the potential to be apprehended by a new generation, as original, unique. A useful case study which examines the authentic/simulacra problem is the prophetic *zeitgeist* film, *The Truman Show* (1998), directed by Peter Weir. A narrative based around a media constructed simulacra of a coastal town in America, complete with perfect neighbours.

In Zukin's *Loft Living: Culture and Capital in Urban Change* (1982), the parasitic relationship between artists and real estate is investigated. A situation in which artists become instrumental in the gentrification of previously marginalized housing zones. Yet once these 'bohemian' areas become fashionable, the same real estate powers seek to eject the artists, to make these spaces available to a higher-paying clientele. In this bizarre urban ecology, the creative sector is itself implicated in the destruction of the distinctive places that attracted them in the first place.

A consequence of this rapid transformation of inhabitants is that the concept of the authentic has now 'migrated from a quality of people to a quality of things, and most recently to a quality of experiences' (Zukin 2010: 3).[6]

In many ways, the re-deployment and re-presentation of the authentic have been co-opted as an instrument of power, 'irrespective of whether

it's real or not' (Zukin 2010: 3). The contestation begins when one group's 'authentic' is deemed to be more important (genuine) than another group's authentic. This apparent conflict results in a displaced evolution within some urban areas. Along with the American examples illustrated by Zukin, we could consider the experiences of artists (such as Derek Jarman) living along the river Thames, in London, during the 1960s and 1970s, who managed to occupy (on a free squat basis) spacious redundant warehouse accommodation. Today, the same spaces would require several million pounds to purchase.

This regeneration/re-gentrification process represents not only financial power, but also a more insidious cultural power, in which:

> New tastes displace those of longtime residents because they reinforce the images in politicians' rhetoric of growth, making the city a 24/7 entertainment zone, with safe, clean, predictable space, and modern, upscale neighborhoods. (Zukin 2010: 4)

Based on my own research conducted around the Royal Armouries cultural hub in the centre of Leeds, one witnesses the performance of city-living, emboldened by a post-1980s' re-branding of the city as a recreational choice. A place in which work is always 'flexible', to accommodate your experiential desires. For people don't buy 'stuff' anymore, they buy experiences. I first encountered this conflation of work and leisure in prophetic terms: delineated in legible graffiti on a bridge in the district of Burley, in Leeds, during the mid-1970s. The message read: 'Neither work nor Leisure'. What an appropriate slogan ('brand value') for our current period.

Despite this deluded engagement with the seductive allure of an aspirational notion of a connected form of city-living (aimed at a young professional 20–40 demographic), the same exploitation exists below the 'hip' shiny surfaces. As Zukin considers from an American context:

> In the gentrified and hipster neighborhoods that have become models of urban experience since then [1960s], authenticity is a consciously chosen lifestyle and a performance, and a means of displacement as well. (Zukin 2010: 4)

This analysis echoes an earlier urban transformation experienced in the UK from the 1960s onwards; the UK economy suffered from global

market forces, resulting in the decline of UK-based manufacturing. A situation compounded by a combination of anachronistic industrial practices and low-wage competition from overseas so-called out-sourcing. Furthermore, the urban industrial decline was accelerated by the relocation of businesses to purpose-built out-of-town development zones, increasingly ubiquitous by the rapid expansion of the road network system, a strategy which produced various forms of 'ribbon-development' infrastructure. The diffusion of both manufacturing and service industries (save certain financial/insurance services) to new enterprise zones and 'business parks', conjoined with cheaper models of suburbia, reflects the current state of the urban (and peripheral) landscape in the UK. Yet this edge-city urban landscape is not just familiar in the UK and America, it was successfully 'exported' to Europe, and most notably, in the peripheral business zones that orbit many French cities and towns.[7]

One element within this edge-development which is now being reassessed as an effective business model is the viability of some large supermarket sites. This is due to the change in shopping habits, the tendency to shop on a day-to-day basis, rather than one giant shopping trip. This realignment to a pre-1960s' model of shopping which included the local 'corner shop' provides less financial risk for the retail companies, and huge infrastructure savings, as they seek to reconfigure their long-term business model in the knowledge that both web-based online ordering and home delivery transactions are increasing, and of course, the rising threat of Amazon's move into the food market.

Importantly, to resist this increasing dislocation of the central zones in our cities and towns, the pursuit of an authentic space will require a genuine, long-term, accretion of everyday experience. There is also an expectation that our neighbours and buildings will embody the need for community and continuity. A prerequisite in establishing a city's *genus loci* is this imbrication of lived experience which continuity affords.

As early as the 1960s, Jane Jacobs (1961) considered a solution to the erosion of an authentic sense of place, where people felt they belonged. Jacobs advocated a more conciliatory approach, one that envisaged a more sensitive development of the New York urban landscape. This measured argument recognized the importance of the city's social diversity and materiality. An antithetical view in relation to the city's phallocentric preoccupation with tall towers, resulting in wide streets to accommodate automobiles, at the expense of pedestrians. This style of development also created marooned and empty parks. These secondary

spaces disconnected the community and were compounded by the concomitant demolition of older buildings, now made obsolete.

As I argue in this book, Jacobs also values the reassuring humane *imbroglio* of urban spaces. A predilection for a more organic form of architectural spatial patterning, one that affords aleatory encounters.[8] According to Zukin, Jacobs argued for 'authenticity as a democratic expression of origins, for a neighborhood's right against the decisions of the state to determine the conditions of its survival' (Zukin 2010: 13).

> Mobility gives us the distance to view a neighbourhood as connoisseurs, to compare it to an absolute standard of urban experience, to judge its character apart from our personal history or intimate social relationships. (Zukin 2010: 20)

The disillusionment with capitalist progress represented an end to place-bound cultures, whose identities we imagined would continue well into the future. But in fact, we have witnessed since the 1980s the rapid growth of consumer culture facilitated by a neoliberal market economy. A light approach to business regulation that was embraced wholeheartedly in the UK by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's Conservative government (1979–1990) and surprisingly to those on the Left, by New Labour (1997–2007) under Prime Minister Tony Blair (and fleetingly, by his successor Gordon Brown). The neoliberal revolution was allied to global, transnational investment that transformed the post-industrial landscape into a simulacrum of the urban village, securely enclosed, often gated, within the new concept of the corporate city:

> Destination Culture has offered a general model of a city's new beginnings in post-industrial production and leisure consumption. It suits real estate developers who seek to encourage the high value of urban land, especially in the centre, by converting it to high-rent uses and appeals to a younger generation who trend toward an aesthetic rather than political view of social life. (Zukin 2010: 237)

With some resignation, Zukin (2010) suggests that however much urban spatial politics is contested, there will always be 'upscale' developments. These will subsume and rupture the desire for authenticity by implementing contemporary developments, which override the needs of the community, the local *sui generis*, and the preservation of older buildings.

Recent evidence from London (2014 onwards) shows that a significant proportion of young creatives who had previously congregated in the creative economy districts have been emigrating to Berlin, Germany, where rents are far more affordable. This exodus of young British talent has led to the claim of a new creative 'brain-drain'.

The increasingly inequitable state of our urban centres since 2010 has resulted in some low-rent residents being coerced out of their homes, by a combination of exorbitant rent rises and unfair acquisition of local council rented accommodation by the private sector (especially in London). This has resulted in a so-called ethnic cleansing, which is reconfiguring London as a 'playground for the international rich'. Although it may be too late to prevent this internal migration from the UK capital, Zukin has recommended that we must recalibrate the critical lens, to include people, not just buildings:

> Authenticity is nearly always used as a lever of cultural power for a group to claim space and take it away from others without direct confrontation, with the help of the state and elected officials and the persuasion of the media and consumer culture. (Zukin 2010: 246)

In considering the influence of the media within this debate, we might reflect on the emergence of the city as destination, celebrated in the promotion of the 'city break', in which trophy cities are positioned as romantic, hedonistic 'get-a-ways'. This kind of spontaneous weekend holiday package has led the city of Barcelona to reconsider the rules governing citizens' rights to rent out their homes through such online companies such as Airbnb, due to the disruption caused by a deluge of tourists. This is just one more reconfiguration of the new paradigm that cities must resolve.

The 'Credit-Crunch' Landscape

Space is ideologically 'groomed' through (most) regeneration projects to subjugate a more radical approach to urban landscape use and valorization.

From the start of the economic downturn in the UK from 2008 onwards, I witnessed an immediate halt in the regeneration of non-place sites in Leeds.[9] Moreover, many of these sites had become increasingly prohibited in relation to access, especially for photography. So, what is

the effect on the urban landscape when investment in redevelopment projects is withdrawn? Or frozen until the market 'picks-up?' How do the partial regeneration sites respond in the meantime? What might nature do when the work stops? In what ways should we interpret this landscape stasis?

To protect these emerging inadvertent non-places, new fences were erected. Their dimensions were higher, with improved security materials to prevent casual climbing. These barriers were also linked in a more systematic way and were further reinforced by the presence of robust fluorescent-wearing security guards. One must acknowledge that I am not taking photographs in Iraq or Afghanistan, but for the interested reader, the average time that I have been able to photograph freely in these more secure spaces has been in the region of forty minutes. This includes the time it takes for the security guard(s) to detect my presence, followed by the obligatory mobile phone call to a superior, and the eventual walk from the portacabin to where ever I might be at the time. Interestingly, the security guards were more interested in my mode of access, enquiring 'where did you get in?', rather than an interrogation of my photographic practice. In most encounters, I would find myself ameliorating the confrontation by stating that 'I used to play here as a boy'.

The photographs that emerge from this 'credit-crunch' period invoke more profound questions about the notion of landscape as a culturally agreed construction, and how those landscapes become embedded in that culture.

A photograph which questions this historical construction of landscape by a deliberate denial of explicit signifiers is *Landscape* (2009; Fig. 5.1). This arrested wave of inconsequential urban landscape is essentially a bull-dozed rise in the land, reconstituted from the former site represented in the photograph *The Deluge* (2007; Fig. 4.5) discussed in Chapter 4. In the photograph, *Landscape* (2009), we witness a site that has been crushed, shredded, and compressed by machine tracks. On closer inspection, we notice a nascent ridge, fertile with new growth. The way in which this photograph has been framed leads the spectator from the barren foreground up to the early signs of ineluctable re-colonization. But the *Landscape* (2009) photograph also 'speaks' (in a critical sense) to other landscape representations. The title caption further probes the spectator (and reader's) preconceptions, regarding what constitutes landscape. And how we might confer aesthetic value on certain representations of landscape. The photograph provides a critical conduit

Fig. 5.1 *Landscape*, 2009. Photograph by the author

through which other inter-subjective, intertextual debates might emerge. This is due, in part, to the apparent inconsequence of the place represented—an ontology that is not even earth-bound.[10] I refer to the other-worldly representations of the *Mars Twin Peaks* (1997), captured by Viking Lander 1.[11]

The remaining down-to-earth referents compacted in the foreground of *Landscape* (2009) appear unremarkable on first viewing, but are discernible through closer examination. We notice different types of rubble, red brick fragments, amongst the gradual aftermath of vegetation, through an almost 'forensic intimacy' (Brogden 2007: 1–12). To extend the allusive interpretations suggested by *Landscape* (2009), we might consider its physical resemblance to ancient burial mounds or the more contemporary inscriptions of subterfuge associated with crimes against humanity.

What then are the effects of this rapid transformation of the remembered urban landscape into non-place? Perhaps a consequence of this new urban configuration is that the notional link between a 'sense of place' and a sense of collective belonging becomes more ambiguous and increasingly untenable.

As Waldheim (2006) argues, 'in this horizontal field of urbanization, landscape has a new-found relevance, offering a multivalent and manifold medium for the making of urban form', most notably, the location of post-industrial sites (Waldheim 2006: 15).

The hybrid practice of landscape urbanism emerged out of the seminal 1997 *Landscape Urbanism* symposium and exhibition, coordinated by Charles Waldheim. The conflation of landscape and urbanism seems to allow each contested term to retain its essential identity.

Nevertheless, the symbiotic situating of 'urban' and 'landscape' within the nomenclature of architectural design is evidence of a more profound attitudinal shift in a profession often regarded as the domain of men and the ego-driven projects, which have so often downgraded the spaces impacted by such projects.[12] We are still in the process of trying to resolve the insensitive fragmentation of urban spaces created by these 'signature' architectural impositions. Remedial intervention in the urban landscape is required through a multi-agency approach, one which would enable collaboration with professional landscape architectural design practices (seen in Germany). If I might deploy an analogy to the practice of life-drawing at this point: for an effective rendering of the model, one must perceive the 'positive' occupation of space by the model, whilst at the same time, closely observe the 'negative' spaces created by the model's physical presence (posture) in three-dimensional space.

In considering how art and representation can respond to regeneration through a form of 'slow art', Lindner and Meissner (2014) refer to a series of 'street photography' case studies based in Amsterdam's urban renewal initiatives, which attempts to reinstate photography, as both a creative and disruptive reaction to the accelerated city:

> Instead of interpreting these photography projects as being solely a form of resistance against the lived experience of gentrification and social fragmentation in the accelerated city, we also show how slow are can simultaneously become complicit with the neo-liberal globalization and imperatives of contemporary urban development. (Lindner and Meissner 2014: 102)

Whilst drawing on the work of Jamie Peck (2011: 5–9), Lindner and Meissner (2014) consider the hypermobility of the creative economy and its tendency to diminish a sense of place and community, leading to the over-commodification of the urban *milieu*, as a form of spectacle,

an event, in which so-called authenticity is constructed—a simulacra, divested of any genuine personal responsibilities and interdependency (Lindner and Meissner 2014):

> These economic hipsters thrive in buzzing 24/7 neighborhoods, where they can satisfy their craving for 'heart-throbbingly real' experiences, but at the drop of a hat may choose to relocate to an even more happening place. (Peck 2009: 6)

There is evidence amongst certain sections of the contemporary arts, of a renewed interest in the eidetic potential of landscape to change policy, to engage with places that do not conform to the more conventional template of landscape beauty and spectacle.

Embracing this contested aesthetic in North America, there are several prominent photographers who in various ways could be seen to investigate versions of the non-place imaginary in the urban landscape. One of the most memorable of these projects was the Photobook, *Joel Sternfeld: Walking the High Line* (2001), created by the photographer Joel Sternfeld. A photographer who already had an established reputation as a photographer of contested landscapes.[13]

In the seasonal recording of New York's redundant fourteen-miles-long elevated commercial railway, Sternfeld questions (amongst other things) the various notions surrounding landscape beauty. And importantly, the function of unchecked re-wilding in relation to the possible legacy of the post-industrial urban landscape. In Sternfeld's photograph *Looking south at 27th street, September* (2000; Fig. 5.2), the vanishing point is in the centre of the frame to create maximum visual impact. The accentuated one-point perspective establishes Sternfeld's presence in our reading of the photograph: the compositional aesthetic is unambiguous in the recording of detailed information. The candid everyday style of framing echoes the work done by earlier pioneer photographers of the late nineteenth-century American landscape, as the railways worked their way west. The expansive depth-of-field captures the various surfaces within this *imbroglio* of railway track remnants, a variety of re-wilding flora, tightly juxtaposed with an old and more recent New York in the middle distance. The abundance of spatial detail residing in Sternfeld's symmetrical composition reminds one of the works of Giovanni Battista Piranesi (1720–1778), especially the architectural complexity revealed in the etching, *Hadrian's Villa, Tivoli, The Canopus* (1768), from the series Views of Rome (purchased by the Chrysler Museum of Art).

Fig. 5.2 *Looking south at 27th street, September*, 2000. Joel Sternfeld (© Joel Sternfeld; Courtesy of the artist and Luhring Augustine, New York)

Due to the subdued available light in Sternfeld's photograph, the decision to work in full colour enables the spectator to distinguish the unexpected iconography in this elevated scene. The overall mid-tonal range of this scene precludes a black and white monochrome outcome, which would only disguise some of the important recolonization information. In the event, the grey hues add to the subtle neutral mood of the photograph, as dispassionate as a Bechers' post-industrial typology. But what the photograph does declare through its direct address is: 'I'm the only one here. Look what I've discovered in New York, nature is fighting back!'

Writing in Sternfeld's exhibition catalogue, Adam Gopnik (2001: 47) describes the natural restoration of 'grasses and even small trees' that 'sprout from the track bed'. As a successful postscript to Sternfeld's photographic project, we are reminded again that photography has the potential to make a genuine impact in the politics of space.

The objective of *Friends of the High Line* to preserve this sinuous park from insensitive development, whilst promoting a new vision as an elevated green walk-way, has been successful.[14] After ten years of lobbying, the New York Council approved the application to begin the preservation of the High Line:

> While the […] completion of the ULURP […] does not guarantee full preservation, it is a major, positive step in the right direction. Friends of the High Line has always envisioned transforming the entire High Line into continuous public open space. (Gopnik 2001: 47)

The High Line has continued to stimulate 'public interest in landscape design, while simultaneously reintegrating an industrial relic into the everyday life of New York City' (Lindner and Rosa 2017: 1). Moreover, according to Lindner and Rosa, the installation of the High Line elevated park has reinvigorated the notion of the urban promenade, another addition to the 'slow movement' ethos. And as we have discussed in relation to the instrumentality of walking, the High Line's 'upgrade' to a promenade provides a gentle disruption to the frenetic ambition of 24/7 New York: the 'city that never sleeps'.

The High Line could be apprehended as a monument to a collective urban activism, one which manifests an innovative approach to ecological design. Despite the evidence that the unchecked re-colonization made famous by Joel Sternfeld's book, it has now been 'managed' under (some would argue) conventional horticultural aesthetics. Yet, as LaFarge (2014) declares, the innovation and vision of the project reveal a radically new elevated landscape, where the 'Romantically post-industrial and progressive' embrace amongst 'emerging ecologies' (LaFarge 2014: 21). I infer from LaFarge's use of the Romantic movement that he is responding to the rescue of a re-wilding ruin, a grand Romantic gesture against earth-bound, material conformity. An opposing view is offered by the Blogger, Jeremiah Moss (2012), who has criticized the subsequent gentrification effect precipitated by the High Line. For Moss, writing in the *New York Times*, the project resembles a 'Disney World in the Hudson'.[15]

The radical development of the High Line project can be seen in the context of other urban transformations, notably social, ecological, cultural, entrepreneurial, neoliberal, and as spaces that might be interpreted as exclusive and unequal.

The High Line provides an appropriate case study to situate Brenner's (2009) explication of critical urban theory. A field of enquiry that 'emphasizes the politically and ideologically mediated, socially contested and therefore malleable character' of the 'urban site'. One that considers its 'continuous (re)construction as a site, medium, and outcome of historically specific relations of social power' (Brenner 2009: 198).

Moreover, within urban political ecologies, an explanation of the pastoral function in urban design places an emphasis on the synthesis of an artificial, yet naturalistic design solution, in which nature is situated critically, as a form of refuge, in a hybridized production of space (Baker 2017).

To better approach the contested term *pastoral*, William Empson (1974) suggests adopting a wider sense, one which would incorporate folk-literature, created by the people, 'for the people, and about peoples' (Empson 1974: 6, quoted in Baker 2017: 111). According to Empson, the pastoral earth-bound lives of the rural poor are often presented as 'a more authentic experience through cultural consumption than is available through a life removed from the firsthand production of landscape' (Empson 1974; Baker 2017: 111).[16]

As Tom Baker (2017) asserts in his essay 'The Garden on the Machine', Sternfeld's celebrated new-Sublime photographs of the High Line, together with a perceptive essay by Adam Gopnik, provided effective advocacy for the High Line rescue project. Sternfeld's photographs share a dual purpose in this context—as works of cultural importance, whilst also functioning as eco-political visual documents.

The photographs show the line of travel in dramatic perspective, even though the strong compositional strategy may have been more pragmatic than aesthetic, due to the constricted space restricting the options to set up the camera position. Even so, we could read these photographs as alluding to the archive of nineteenth-century survey photographs of the American new frontier.

According to Darren J. Patrick (2017), Sternfeld's photographs provide an immersive encounter with botanical species, such as *ailanthus altissima*. A plant with a 'reputation as an "aggressive" invasive species, with a strong affinity for "disturbed" ecologies'. A realization that fractures the sensitive vegetal discourses concerning 'preservation and sustainability advocated by FHL [Friends of the High Line]' (Patrick 2017: 154). Here Patrick highlights how the photographs subvert the 'narrative of success', espoused by FHL, by revealing how 'unruly species' have been erased from the High Line's present floral design aesthetic (Patrick 2017).[17]

Moreover, the photographs conveniently elide any representation of animals or 'queer uses', explicitly avoiding any depictions of human sexuality, and human presence, except the photographer's presence (Patrick 2017).[18] In an historical sense, we are perhaps reminded of those enigmatic spaces in the photographs of Paris by Eugene Atgét, in which hidden recesses must have been frequented by those seeking clandestine sexual adventures.

During an interview with Tom Baker on 1 July 2011, Robert Hammond, the co-founder and executive director of the FHL (Friends of the High Line), explained the inspirational effect achieved by Sternfeld's photographic advocacy, as, 'that's what people got attached to, that natural wildscape, and that heavily influenced what's up there now'. Baker reminds us that the 'production of the High Line may seem like something out of the blue', but the creation of a traditional nineteenth-century elevated garden was attempting to establish an urban 'park for posterity' (Baker 2017: 113). The garden design challenges of the High Line were to maintain its essential wilderness, unchecked qualities, whilst making the route safe and accessible to the public.

One important aesthetic concern, which also includes the concern for authenticity, is whether a strategy of re-planting would be implemented? The aleatory recolonization of the High Line clearly represented in Sternfeld's photographs, appeared to eschew the need for further horticultural intervention, or what indeed happened, the planting of an extra one hundred thousand plants. As Baker explains:

> Arranged in what is made to seem an arbitrary fashion. In fact, the approach of Piet Oudolf (the leading planting designer) to specifically reference the pre-development "urban wilderness" is both thoughtful and playful. (Baker 2017: 113)

The wilderness paradox is difficult to ignore when we consider the claims made by the High Line's curator, Lauren Ross to the 'elevated meadow', when the meadow is in fact a pastoral simulacrum. This is evident in the erasure of all the pre-FHL project wildflowers, to facilitate the renovation of the industrial structures. According to Baker, some additional design features deliberately allude to the pictorialism of the pleasure garden. The design of a 'linear water feature consisting of a long strip of concrete over which a shallow stream of water flows into a drain' (Baker 2017: 114).[19]

The claim that the High Line is a self-sustaining urban park wilderness is refuted by an acknowledgement that the park relies on a watering system. A feature more in keeping with an established botanical garden, rather than a public park (Baker 2017). In addition, the installation of prohibitive signs, advising the public to 'keep to the path', goes against the freedom to roam that we associate with most parks. A consequence of this restriction is the prohibiting of children from exploring plants in a sensory, uninhibited way.[20] The reification of the High Line experience through navigational sign-posting prevents visitors from encountering the very thing that they may have been looking for—a sinuous metropolitan wilderness, providing new chance-juxtapositions.

Whilst the designers of the park embraced an ethos of 'slow landscape', the park nonetheless subjected 'the neighbourhood to the velocities of touristic consumption' (Patrick 2017: 161). Patrick (2017) laments the eradication of the High Line's unique aleatory qualities:

> What would it have taken to advocate for a responsibility to allow ecologies that emerge in abandoned spaces to continuously determine the conditions of their own emergence, even as they are guided and shaped by the people who have cared for the space during such periods of so-called abandonment? These questions point to an ethic of non or minimal intervention in abandoned spaces on specifically ecological grounds. (Patrick 2017: 161)

A structural critique of the High Line in its present state reveals the production of a material landscape that has emerged from the support of 'neo-liberalized funding strategies of public space in the city', which both reproduce and compound existing 'class-based inequalities between those who can mobilize to create a new multimillion-dollar park and those who cannot' (Baker 2017: 118). The provision for parks in America means that they will only be built where private funds can be raised.

For many, the High Line elevated park represents not only the aesthetic, recreational commodification of historic working-class urban spaces, but also the symbiotic appropriation of the urban milieu through middle-class influence and capital. A condition that Neil Smith (1996) refers to in 'The New Urban Frontier', as the 'Revanchist City'.[21] Using specific case studies from America and overseas, Smith (1996) identifies the inherent conflicts and consequences associated with gentrification, caused by urban policy decisions, investment strategies, and the repercussions in relation to

eviction rates and homelessness, whilst Zukin (2010), in ironic tone, witnesses the process of gentrification as a 'domestication by cappuccino'.[22]

In response to the over-zealous restoration of the High Line, Baker (2017) states that the 'amping-up' of the park has produced an oxymoronic 'ornamental wilderness'. A place that masquerades as a park: where visual consumption 'is prioritized above all else', in a postindustrial picturesque (Baker 2017: 124).

These so-called eco-entrepreneurial strategies combine with urban sustainability and restoration initiatives, to displace the original working-class residents, in favour of a more 'attractive' neighbourhood. This transformation results in increased property prices. If we consider London, this process has been referred to as a form of 'ethnic cleansing', a situation in which even 'key workers', such as firefighters and health workers, can no longer afford to live near their places of employment.

If we consider the two theories of *urban regime analysis* and *urban political ecology*, both contribute to an understanding of the socio-ecological reconfigurations of the urban landscape. Factors which are embedded in the High Line case study, providing an examination which reveals the postindustrial site as an ecological and cultural form of succession.

James Corner's landscape architectural design firm, Field Operations, was one of the primary designers working on the High Line project. Corner, cited by Tate (2015) assessed the function of urban parks, in their new roles as 'essential infrastructure renewal', to colonize 'no-man's land', by 'healing abused sites, and overcoming barriers connecting communities'.[23] Writing in *The Landscape Urbanism Reader*, Corner (2006) cites the design vision of Louis Kahn (1953), and his vehicular circulation plan for Philadelphia, and later proposals for Market Street East, which recommended the use of contemporary techniques of representation.[24] Corner embraces the radicalism of Kahn, in favour of a reactive design solution to the fixed idea of the urban landscape as permanent—a *Terra Firma*. Rather, Corner prefers to adopt a 'Terra Fluxus' approach, in which the landscape must be flexible to the ever-evolving 'fluid, process-driven characteristics of the city' (Corner 2006: 30).

Moreover, the creation of urban parks is informed by the imagining of visitors engaging with the space(s) in different ways, in what Corner (2006) terms, the 'field' of action; such experiences generate an experiential imbrication over time, one that reveals 'an ecology of various systems and elements' that stimulate a 'diverse network of interactions'.

In this sense, public spaces function as geographic imaginaries, forming repositories for 'collected memory and desire' (Corner 2006: 32).

Lindner and Meissner would support the aims of the High Line, as it attempts to arrest the increasing acceleration and disruption in our major cities, through a project that combined a contemporary aesthetic (horticultural/ecological) intervention, with a form of industrial heritage restoration. A project that aims to counter 'the conditions of speed, mobility and invisibility (anonymity) that have become so ubiquitous in [our] rapidly globalizing cities' (Lindner and Meissner 2014: 106).

Amongst other 'slow movements', such as slow food, urban farming, and more recently, knitting, we might consider the 'slow' act of walking and photography, as a subversive critique of the accelerated present outlined by Augé, and reflected on by Wendy Parkins (2004) in her essay 'Out of Time: Fast Subjects and Slow Living':

> It is not a slow-motion version of postmodern life; nor does it offer a parallel temporality for slow subjects to inhabit in isolation from the rest of the culture. Slow living involves the conscious negotiation of the different temporalities which make up our everyday lives, deriving from a commitment to occupy time more attentively. Implicit in the practices of slow living is a particular conception of time in which 'having time' for something means investing it with significance through attention and deliberation. (Parkins 2004: 364)

In many ways, the High Line project mirrors the recovery myths located in European and American 'neo-traditional planning narratives', from which the notion of the lost city is reclaimed to its former true self offering some 'redemptive solution' (Till 2005: 47).[25] According to Till, neo-traditional planning strategies present redemptive narratives that counter a perceived modernist decline in architecture. One that compensates through 'contemporary redemption' in 'past forms' that have 'been a defining part of neo-traditional planning and social movements in the United States and the United Kingdom since the 1980s' (Till 2005: 48). The original postindustrial non-place 'ruin' of the High Line remains preserved in Sternfeld's photographic journey only. As Huyssen (2010) notes in elegiac tone, the 'age of the authentic ruin is over'. We can never 'resurrect it'. Our own period is distinguished by its desire to preserve, restore, and reconstruct the authentic. The very processes that 'cancel out the idea of the authentic ruin' (Huyssen 2010: 27).

How to Turn a Brown Field Green

In this section, I further investigate the biodiverse paradox presented by certain abandoned sites. Such case studies support my main argument that encourages us to reconsider the value of non-places beyond a short-term economic strategy.

At a time when the main agenda has been focused on more recent global environmental issues, including the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, the nuclear fallout crisis in Japan (unfolding from March 2011, but allegedly 'open for business' in 2017) and the current climate change scepticism, made explicit by the new President of the USA, Donald Trump, the potential of the indeterminate non-places to make a positive contribution to the broader debate has perhaps been (not surprisingly) over-shadowed by their seemingly everyday locations, whilst their obscurity (at least within the eco-political agenda) can be explained by their small scale.

In attempting to establish a less transient community that flourishes together (beyond the concerns of property prices and a home as an investment), forms of urban gardening have made an invaluable contribution to the lives of those less affluent inhabitants remaining in the city's marginalized zones.

The 'New Visions Garden', situated in East New York, was founded in 1992, by twelve neighbours who were determined to repurpose a vacant lot owned by the city government. The urban gardens collection in East New York contributed eighty-eight of Brooklin's 316 community gardens. During the 1970s period of urban decline and associated crime, the city officials resigned themselves to a form of 'urban triage', in which low-income neighbourhoods would be abandoned to the spread of re-wilding (Zukin 2010). To accelerate the re-wilding reclamation of certain 'no-go' areas in Harlem, a group calling itself the Green Guerrillas threw 'seed bombs' and 'green-aids' over cyclone fences to be disseminated amongst redundant lots. In this state of proto-green activism, combined with an apathetic resignation from local government, the community gardens proposals won support because of their authenticity (unlike the support given to the East London allotment members during the development of the 2012 London Olympics site).

To anticipate further doubts as to the research value of non-place, I assert that such sites should be re-imagined in the public realm as important bio-diverse assets. To support this rather polemical view, imagine if all these fragmented non-places (in which, for arguments sake, one might

include motorway embankments and roundabouts, etc.) were gathered into one specific area, then I would estimate that the scale and importance of that area would rival a UK National Park's contribution to biodiversity.

In relation to the evolution of under-valued, incidental, urban landscapes sites, Phil Birge-Liberman (2017) argues that nature is instrumental, a powerful force when co-opted by 'urban regimes' to transform the urban landscape into certain 'environment imaginaries' that 'dominate the discourse'. It is this process that constructs the material urban landscape (Birge-Liberman 2017: 139).

A sentiment echoed in John Vidal's prophetic *Guardian* newspaper article (published on the 3 May 2003), in which he challenged the assumption that the post-industrial site was a worthless wasteland:

> Being hailed as England's rainforest […] the former Occidental site on Canvey Island is an oasis in a landscape of oil refineries, new housing, massive roundabouts and drive-through McDonalds. Laid out with concrete roads and street lighting, it has been untouched for 30 years […] it has already been found to be home to at least 1,300 species, including 30 on the UK "red list" […][26]

There are parallels to be drawn here between the problematic access to certain non-places and the difficult access to land owned by the Ministry of Defence in the UK, where again, paradoxically, there is evidence of a flourishing wildlife habitat. If we extend the coverage, we are also reminded of the former industrialized zones of East Germany. The so-called no-man's land following the route of the now redundant Berlin Wall, in addition to the exposure of the once prohibited green corridor route of the former *Iron Curtain* across Eastern Europe. Now an inadvertent sanctuary for unchecked nature, having benefited from a restricted programme of industrialization.[27]

The Greening of the Urban Landscape

As we have already discussed, the more recent interest in urban ecology achieved its 'rock star' apogee in the celebrity-endorsed ecologically innovative renovation of the High Line in New York. According to Jackson (1994), this flagship success can be ascribed to the writings and related lectures produced by the eminent ethno-botanist, Edgar Anderson, around the 1950s. In fact, through Jackson's own magazine *Landscape*

(since 1951), Anderson continued to act as an important contributor, espousing a sort of 'ethno-environmentalism'. An ecological ethos that emphasized the importance of hitherto overlooked American landscapes (Jackson 1994). Jackson outlines the contribution made by Anderson—notably, his taxonomies of New World plants. In many ways, Anderson's work was prophetic, in his explorations of the everyday landscapes: brickyards, liminal zones, the margins of roads, and abandoned fields. With great enthusiasm, Anderson encouraged his students to study 'weed flowers in the railway yards, wild lettuce on a vacant lot' (Anderson 1967: 9).

Jackson (1994) argues that Anderson's critical position is antithetical to the rather evangelical environmental critique of man as extrinsic from nature, a view promulgated by Thoreau and other professional naturalists. That cities fail to provide the harmonious connection with the natural world. Within the broader ecological argument posed by the re-wilding of non-places, one recognizes the paradox of human destruction and intervention in the urban landscape which often results in the emergence of a more valuable ecosystem.

In 1957, Anderson declared to the conference *Man's Role in Changing the Face of the Earth* that 'it is only when man, or some other disruptive agent, upsets this whole puzzle [undisturbed sites] that there is any place where something new can fit in' (Anderson and Thomas 1960: 766). For our own time, I would add to Anderson's 'new', the opportunity for dormant species to re-emerge through the disruption of regeneration—an urban aftermath (in its botanical sense).

In relation to human-made landscape inscriptions, Jackson provides an illuminating reminder that long before man appeared, the 'face of the habitable earth was everywhere scored and crisscrossed by the paths and tracks and trails made by animals […] some were lengthy routes of annual migrations' (Jackson 1994: 196).[28]

Furthermore, the evolution of the Hominid, which included the development of his/her stereovision, facilitated a focused viewpoint ahead, rather than to either side. This evolutionary fact is intriguing, when one considers some of our discussions surrounding both photographic performance and the effects of walking and driving on roads. This ocular evolution/revolution allowed the Hominid to follow the tracks of animals. But more importantly, it facilitated construction of the first human trails. As these routes became further embedded in the landscape, we witnessed the emergence of an early form of ribbon-development, in which specific locations become inscribed with meaning.

Such locations were 'often associated with a resource, an event, or a memory' (Jackson 1994: 197). These early navigational and symbolic inscriptions helped to culturally anchor a territorial instinct. An instinct that had hitherto been a nomadic, hunter-gatherer existence, now changed to one that sought to protect 'a proto-landscape' (Jackson 1994). A pedestrian 'way of life had lasted hundreds of thousands of years and had formed our ideas of community, of time and space and our relationship with the environment' (Jackson 1994: 198).

Non-place and Ecocriticism

What is eco-centrism? How might we employ this term? Colin Riordan (2004) suggests in his essay 'Ecocentrism in Sebald's After Nature' that the term goes beyond a matter of political activism, to one which addresses the question of societal values—how might we apprehend and perceive the world around us. To broaden this debate, Riordan invites Carolyn Merchant to augment the definition, in which an entire 'environment, including inanimate elements, rocks and minerals along with animate plants and animals, is assigned intrinsic value' (Merchant 1992: 74–75, quoted in Riordan 2004: 46).

For many, Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962) brought the field of ecocriticism to a wider audience. In the introduction to *The Ecocriticism Reader* (1996), Glotfelty provides a polemical critical framing of the discipline, where 'ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment [which] takes an earth-centered approach to literary studies' (Glotfelty 1996: xix). He continues to open the scope of ecocriticism to speak to other disciplines, within the broader discourses related to the environment, which would include history, philosophy, psychology, and art history. As Garrard (2012) proposes, eco-critics are commonly located to an explicit green 'moral and political agenda' (2012: 3). Moreover, according to Garrard, a more expansive situating of ecocriticism is reiterated by Richard Kerridge, in his book, *Writing the Environment* (1995), which places representations as an important element within the debate:

> The ecocritic wants to track environmental ideas and *representations* wherever they appear, to see more clearly a debate which seems to be taking place, often part-concealed, in a great many cultural spaces. (Kerridge 1998: 5, quoted by Garrard 2012, my emphasis)

To emphasize the importance of a multidisciplinary approach to the discursive development of ecocriticism, Garrard encourages eco-critics to 'transgress disciplinary boundaries' (Garrard 2012: 5). In relation to the contentious valorization of so-called wasteland, and their landscape sibling 'brown field', Garrard seems to support my provocation to interrogate the pervasive and complacent normative view of unchecked 'weeds' in the urban landscape:

> 'Weed' is not a botanical classification, it merely denotes the wrong kind of plant in the wrong place. Eliminating weeds is obviously a 'problem of gardening', but defining weeds in the first place requires a *cultural*, not horticultural analysis. (Garrard 2012: 6, my emphasis)

My own emphasis in the above quotation raises the issue of who has the final judgement on whether any plant is classified as a lesser botanical species—a weed? And who, or what system, determines whether a 'plant' is in the 'wrong' place?[29] If we translate this enquiry across other cultural modes of thinking, then we might emerge in some very dark places. For example, if we replace the term 'weed' with 'human being', then do we also assess other human beings as being in the 'wrong place?'

A deeper analysis of the valorization of terrain is suggested by some eco-critics. They refer famously to 'the map is not the terrain'. Itself, an insightful reminder to reserve judgement on a place, without relying on the cultural artefact of power and possession—the map. One that eschews cartography, in favour of a phenomenological approach that encourages a primary experience on the ground. A conferring of value on the experiential, rather than a distanciated approach.

I consider Heidegger's eco-philosophy at this point. For Heidegger, to 'be' is not just to exist, but the emphasis is to 'show up' (in the popular sense), to appreciate the *thing-ness* of things. An openness, in which human consciousness becomes the space or 'clearing' (*lichtung*). This liberating spaciousness allows a felt lived-experience 'at bottom', which reveals that 'the ordinary is not ordinary; it is extraordinary' (Heidegger 1993: 179, quoted in Swift 2009: 48). Heidegger's concept implores humans to take responsibility. An exhortation to 'let be', to allow things to reveal themselves. This letting-go involves flourishing without coercion, rather than 'forcing them into meanings and identities that suit their own instrumental values' (Garrard 2012: 34).

Heidegger's fervent 'let be' invitation resonates within Merleau-Ponty's rather opaque conceptualization of the 'flesh of the world'. A theory that he developed in his posthumous publication *The Visible and the Invisible* (1968). What is suggested by his reference to 'flesh' is the interconnectedness between the body and its immediate environment. The primacy of embodiment. This is a development from his philosophy of phenomenology, towards an indirect ontology, one in which the subject's experience of the present, the skin of the now, achieves total immersion in the environment.[30] An experience where 'the flesh is in this sense an 'element' of Being', rather than a 'fact or a sum of facts, and yet adherent to location and the now' (Merleau-Ponty 1968: 139–140). One can understand why so many eco-critics find both inspiration and solace in Merleau-Ponty's ravishment of physical location. This is the *now* where a new consciousness emerges through an experiential environmental immediacy.

The same loss, yet finding of oneself in the abandonment to the experiential now, is vividly conveyed in William Wordsworth's own boyhood recollection in *The Prelude* (1850). The poet recollects vividly the experience of ice skating on a frozen lake as night approaches. When suddenly he stops ice skating, the entire world seems to rotate. The setting sun reflecting as the 'cottage windows blazed'. Here nature provides a phenomenological epiphany, which leads to the poet's prophetic realization:

> When we had given our bodies to the wind
> And all the shadowy banks on either side
> Came sweeping through the darkness, spinning still
> The rapid line of motion, then at once
> Have I, reclining back upon my heels,
> Stopped short; yet still the solitary cliffs
> Wheeled by me-even as if the earth had rolled
> With visible motion her diurnal round! 460
> Behind me did they stretch in solemn train,
> Feebler and feebler, and I stood and watched
> Till all was tranquil as a dreamless sleep.

The Romanticism of Wordsworth attests to a nature that is not separate. A participation with nature which at the same time transforms it. Yet despite nature's separate existence as pure material phenomena, nature is also a social construct 'constituted by human social practices' (Vogel 1996: 171, quoted in Riordan 2004: 47). According to

Gifford (2009), the English tradition [before Romanticism] situates nature within the image of the garden 'or estate' which 'confirms the religiously endorsed right of humans to exploit [subdue] nature. Eden was the garden that paradise promises to be at the other end of time' (Gifford 2009 [1999]: 33).

As Coates has observed in the work of McKidden (1989), 'nature' becomes a potential synecdoche for *wilderness*.[31] For McKidden (1989), the 'changing weather' (global warming) has tainted every 'spot on earth', making it human-made. The effects of changing weather have 'deprived nature of its independence, and that is fatal to its meaning'. Moreover, McKidden insists that nature's independence 'is its meaning', and without that 'there is nothing but us' (McKidden 1989: 58):

> But still we feel the need for pristine places, places substantially unaltered by man. Even if we do not visit them, they matter to us. We need to know that though we are surrounded by buildings there are vast places where the world goes on as it always has. (McKidden 1989: 55)

Providing an antidote to McKidden's ecological pessimism, Coates (1998) highlights the 'reckless deconstructionism' of postmodernism. Its concerns in relation to nature and culture, and leads to a complacent attitude to species and the devastation of fragile habitats. In a powerful, yet ludic way, Coates deploys the motif of the sacred mountain to make manifest nature's own voiceless condition. A hypothetical situation, in which we are unable to presume 'that a mountain has not been yearning for the day when a ski resort would break the monotony of the ages?' (Coates 1998: 185):

> For the postmodernist, the identification of a state of nature, the conception of nature as an externality, and reverence for nature as an unambiguous source of guidance are simply more universalizing metanarratives, more outmoded modernist certainties, dependent on a strict and fatuous separation of culture and nature. (Coates 1998: 185)

In phenomenological terms, nature is essentially extrinsic to culture. Nevertheless, the various representations of nature and the related critical interpretations of those representations are deeply embedded within culture(s). In this sense, we might apprehend nature as indifferent to both the disruptions and violations caused by humankind, and the

various representations which inform culture(s). Nature is not a spectator to its own spectacle. For this reason, postmodernists make a valid point; that wilderness (itself a cultural construction) is unaware of being wilderness. Moreover, the 'new' ecology suggests that we cannot predict the final intentions of natural systems. We must anticipate a diverse range of outcomes, due in part, to an ecology that is 'shifting from the study of a singular, static, repetitive and universalistic system to one that is multiple, temporal and complex' (Coates 1998: 188).

In contrast to the transcendental mythologizing of the American wilderness, and to a lesser extent, the rolling bucolic landscapes of England, the social justice environmentalists highlight the problem of 'environmental racism'. A situation in which polluting and dangerous facilities are often situated in areas inhabited by low-income, disempowered, disenfranchised, and ethnic/racial minority communities (Coates 1998). According to Coates (and this is specific to American cities), the social justice environmentalists envision an urban landscape that provides a 're-conceptualizing' of nature and the environment. A place where the needs of people are prioritized through an empathetic embedding of nature in working and playing spaces (Coates 1998). At this juncture, we might reflect on the original etymological route meaning of 'eco'—house. As Coates suggests, 'for many eco-socialists' the UK National Trust 'is tarnished by its close ties with the aristocracy and its preoccupation with preserving and restoring the elite landscape of the country house' (1998: 163).

The inherited nineteenth-century critical lens approached landscape and the urban as separate concepts, in binary opposition. Living in the city was an experience to be endured. It was associated with congestion, pollution, and the general stress caused by busy social contact and compounded by the demands of technology. Yet landscape was understood to provide respite, an escape from the challenges of the frenetic pace of urban development. Landscape was imagined in the UK specifically, as a refuge, a distant reminder of an edenic life, before the mid-eighteenth-century mobilization of the Industrial Revolution (1720 onwards).[32] The compensatory municipal parks established by the late-Victorians should be critiqued in the context of a rural longing.

We must also recognize the highly problematic term 'nature' in relation to the notions attached to the city. For Corner (2006), nature is symbolically embedded within the idea of landscape. It represents all that is benevolent, virtuous, and moral. In this sense, nature is seen to provide a 'practical antidote to the corrosive environmental and social

qualities of the modern city' (Corner 2006: 25). Yet nature also has the potential to function as the city's *Other*. We should be reminded of nature's less benevolent side, its predisposition to cause human suffering. In the American experience, we recall the unprecedented storm damage and flooding across Florida and Louisiana (23–31 August 2005) caused by the category 5 *Hurricane Katrina*, and the more recent floods caused by *Hurricane Harvey* (30 August 2017) experienced by the residents of Houston, Texas. For many people living in the urban environment, landscape may not be so pervasive, but in such catastrophic events, nature is.

The recognition of nature's more damaging force is illustrated in the current debacle concerning the Los Angeles river—a case study highlighted by Corner. The river personifies the two opposing views on nature in the city. Firstly, attribution of 'river' in the Los Angeles debate is somewhat misleading, as the US Corps of Engineers converted the river into a concrete channel, to accommodate a more efficient discharge of spring meltwater from the Santa Susana Mountains. The supporters of this engineering feat, understandably, regard nature as an unpredictable and potentially violent force, whilst the opponents to this hard landscaping of natural features, the environmentalists, and some landscape architects envision an environmentally sensitive solution to the problem, which would incorporate a 'green corridor, replete with riparian habitat, woodlands, birdsong, and fishermen' (Corner 2006: 25). Interestingly, Corner's riparian evocation includes the non-visual, the auditory benefit of 'birdsong'. This is a surprising reference to a reimagining of a lost soundscape, as the debate surrounding the reintroduction of the natural into the urban landscape accentuates an ocular aesthetic.

The enhancement of urban natural habitats within the 'cityscape' would solve some genuine problems such as noise and light pollution, whilst offering citizens 'a bourgeois aesthetic, or naturalized veil' (Corner 2006: 27).[33]

Corner makes vivid use of the clandestine (or modesty?) metaphor of the 'veil' as a landscape trope. A role in which landscape functions as decoy (or compensation?) a distraction from the explicit message of power that most architectural projects display.[34]

A simplistic and unimaginative approach to urban design disregards the spatial heterogeneity and poetry of place. Instead, the imaginative and empathetic designer should embrace the unique characteristics of place, to incorporate idiosyncratic elements into the design scheme. This would ensure a new intimacy between landscape and the urban.

Continuing in this rather grandiloquent tone, the critically informed landscape architectural designer must value the needs of an expanding population, whilst balancing the ethical rights of fauna and flora to flourish. This would require sensitive management of a light-touch approach to re-wilding. I am not proposing that we reintroduce wolves into our urban landscapes (although that would certainly relieve the current *ennui*), but the benefits of wilder natural encounters could enhance and positively disrupt some of the more entrenched anxieties experienced in the contemporary human condition. The new frontier may well be the urban landscape.

In relationship to nature and forms of hierarchy, I propose that my photographs suggest an affiliation with a post-Romantic form of landscape re-presentation. One that deliberately disturbs (for some people) the aesthetic sensibility, in which nature is shown to be reclaiming the post-industrial urban landscape. Evidence of nature's own patient restoration of sites to erstwhile wilderness. This ineluctable process involves the collision, succession, and subjugation of the human-made and nature, and is most apparent in the urban non-place. We are reminded of Robert Smithson (1996: 81), and the declaration that 'one person's 'materialism', becomes another person's 'Romanticism' […]. In a sense, it becomes evident that today's materialism and Romanticism share similar 'surfaces'.[35]

Redemptive Sites: A Different Kind of Beauty

Any attempt to critique the contested term *beauty* is bound to flounder. I approach it with due caution. Not surprisingly, many spectators have referred to my photographs of non-places as both 'bleak' and 'beautiful'.[36]

In the catalogue essay to my solo exhibition of photographs: *Terra Nullius: New Urban Encounters* (2007), Matthew Kieran (2007) reflects on the beauty within the representations of the urban non-place. Kieran (2007) considers how the photographs might enable a new apprehension of the transcendental and the everyday:

> What Brogden does is bring to bear an aesthetic sensibility and photography's truth to nature as a medium upon the wastage of our commercial present. It reveals hidden spaces on the edge of our industrial landscape that force us to question our notions of beauty. (Kieran 2007: 6)

Can these different encounters in non-places provide a redemptive function for those who have witnessed their gradual sociocultural decline from place to non-place?

In the photograph, *Cloud* (2009; Fig. 5.3), we are placed in a dichotomous space, confined beneath an open sky, in dark and light. The aperture of the sky is framed and emphasized. A cloud caught reveals the white surface of the photographic print itself, whilst the door to the immediate left remains in shadow, offering a less Sublime retreat from this diptych of light and dark. The exact framing of the cloud above the broken curve of the brick wall required the pressing of the shutter at a specific time: a potential *punctum* moment. This isolated cloud, with its own porous physicality, contrasts with the semi-permanence of this enclosure—an unease that is accentuated by our knowledge that the materiality of the redundant brick structure is also transient. As we tilt our heads to follow the cloud's blue passage, we are perhaps reminded of our own impermanence as a spectator to the temporality of the depicted scene, amongst the quiet decay of a post-industrial remnant, set against the infinite suggestion of sky.

Fig. 5.3 *Cloud*, 2009. Photograph by author

Twenty-First-Century Ruins

A re-engagement with the historical motif of the ruin enmeshed in a rampant process of re-colonization inhabits the work of Camilo José Vergara. I first met the American sociologist-photographer at the Photography and the City conference organized by the University College Dublin Clinton Institute for American Studies, in 2006.[37] I was impressed by Vergara's determination to chronicle the urban change in American cities. Charting their decline and de-urbanization, where he 'concentrated on those areas of the cities' which had 'been left behind, and which are sometimes referred to as "reservations of the poor," or hyper-ghettos'.[38]

Vergara's re-photography method requires him to replicate the exact vantage point and angle of view, and lens selection. He returns to the exact spot where his previous photographs were taken, to document the changes that have taken place since his last visit. Buildings may have been demolished, or new business ventures may have colonized the site. A previous car park may now have become an improvised basketball court for example. Vergara plots his position on maps, making notes of his head height and other *aide mémoires*, to achieve a scientific replication of the previous photographic 'experiment'.

This mapping of locations within American cities is also evident on Vergara's personal website.[39] On occasions, new structures will block previously open vistas. What emerges from this practice is an archive of scientific evidence that demonstrates the distinctive changes that have occurred over time. A visual sociology of certain American cities. Vergara has documented several major American cities, including the so-called the murder capital of America: Camden. The radical proposal to declare twelve square blocks of downtown Detroit a 'skyscraper ruins park' was an imaginative Romantic gesture to establish an 'American Acropolis':

> We could transform the nearly 100 troubled buildings into a grand national historic park of play and wonder, an urban Monument Valley […] wild animals—squirrels, possum, bats, owls, ravens, snakes and insects—would live in the empty behemoths, adding their calls, hoots and screeches to the smell of rotten leaves and animal droppings. (Vergara 1995)[40]

Vergara's ongoing archive of American ruins declares in activist mode: this is what is happening to these marginalized communities. Outlier spaces where trees grow to maturity through abandoned community libraries.[41]

As early as 1993, the writer, James Kunstler, considered Detroit's level of dilapidation whilst driving in a rented car, where 'one is not psychologically prepared for the scope of desolation' (Kunstler 1993: 190). Vergara's anger and frustration were made explicit during the concluding keynote address to the conference: 'we should have been documenting other cities ages ago, it's too late now'.[42] Dillon (2014) shares this pessimistic evaluation of Detroit:

> The spectre of the city in ruins still haunts the contemporary imagination, quickened now perhaps by the idea of ecological collapse and the depredations of more recent economic crisis – consider the striking and persistent popularity of images of decays Detroit, which have in recent years illustrated time and again the effects of global financial disaster. (Dillon 2014: 30)

According to Rogner and Schumacher (2001), Detroit symbolizes the ultimate failure of post-Fordist disinvestment:

> [The city of Detroit's] precipitous and public demise may have stepped over a kind of critical threshold, offering a uniquely clear-sighted and unequivocal image of post-Fordist dis-investment. In this sense, Detroit offers the most legible indictment of Fordist patterns of urbanization. (Rogner and Schumacher 2001: 56)

The explosion of Henry Ford's production methods, first regional, then national, then globally, transformed the urban landscape that we are now familiar with: a porous space, identified by a dispiriting decentralization, accompanied by a degree of self-organizing, enmeshed within a matrix of postmodernism (Shane 2006).

The problems facing many post-industrial cities in the aftermath of Fordism (often labelled late capitalism) are how do we manage and resolve the abandoned zones of redundant factory sites, the acres of now empty workers' housing, and the related obsolescent state of retail units, that depending on workers' custom? (Shane 2006).

But using Detroit's more recent reconfiguration as a case study, the mood should not be too despondent in the light of Julian Temple's more recent documentary film, *Requiem for Detroit?* (2010). Set amidst the contemporary ruins of a once prosperous Detroit. Temple's film reveals a quite different story, as we see evidence of a 'street-level' green resistance.[43] A renewal (which continues today) in the face of a

de-urbanization aftermath. The existing tenants who remained behind joined forces with newcomers in search of a new alternative lifestyle. This robust embrace of so-called New Urbanism has seen redundant lots transformed from non-places into forms of urban agriculture to achieve self-sufficiency.

New Urbanism could be seen to have evolved over recent years in response to citizens' disenchantment with how the urban landscape is governed, and it is in this context that manifest forms of green civic direct action.[44] The movement also promotes regulations for architectural practice and civic planning (often informed by nineteenth-century models). The New Urbanism ethos emphasizes the need for a design process that seeks to benefit pedestrian access and movement. An urban design strategy which eschews the current dominance of the automobile.

There have been several organizations which have tried to reimagine the decline of the urban landscape—Charles Waldheim's initiative to establish a landscape urbanism conference in 1997. Interestingly, the term 'Landscape Urbanism' is attributed to Waldheim, who is credited with initiating the broader situating of urban landscape criticism within an academic context.[45]

In Waldheim's urban practice, 'Decamping Detroit' proposed a four-stage 'decommissioning of land from the city's legal control', involved a disconnection of 'services (dislocation), then erasure (demolition and jumpstarting)' of the native 'landscape ecology by dropping appropriate 'seed bombs' from the air'. This would be followed by *Absorption* (ecological reconstruction) of part of the zone as woods, marshes, and streams' and concluding this process with 'Infiltration (the recolonization of the landscape with heterotopic village like enclaves' (Shane 2006: 58).

According to Shane (2006), Corner (2001: 122–125) conceives the abandoned 'voids' as paradoxical 'constructions', produced by industrial strategies that create spaces of 'indeterminancy'.[46]

This new conception of what constitutes a 'life-style' amidst the ruins of Detroit seems to resonate within the 'new urbanism' movement. A challenge to the conventional topographies of centralized cities, with their counterpart, the suburban sprawl which relies on a spatial practice that prioritizes the automobile. In contrast, the New Urbanism movement promotes the idea that existing and new town developments should incorporate walking in the daily routines of school, work, and shopping.

Although there are many artists, writers, and photographers engaging with the post-Fordist de-urbanization landscape, it is Vergara's sociological tenacity, the sustained research 'in the field' that has most informed the development of my own research-led practice here. Moreover, one supports Vergara's passionate advocacy for photography as an investigative device. A multimodal medium that can provoke and initiate real change in society.[47]

Adopting a similar urban strategy in Vancouver, the photographer Roy Arden's work, especially his photograph *Pulp Mill Dump (#1), Nanaimo, BC* (1992; 5.4) forms interesting parallels with my own investigation of non-place. We appear to be drawn to similar 'landscape events', often characterized by the representation of the abject as potentially monumental, epic, and Sublime.

Although the metonymic notions surrounding trees exist in most cultures, there is a unique relationship that exists between the forest and Canadian cultural memory. A cultural memory often conflicted, contested, and filtered through native North American Indian culture, whilst further synthesized through the 'white' pioneering narratives associated

Fig. 5.4 *Pulp Mill Dump (#1), Nanaimo, B.C.* 1992. Roy Arden

with the vast Canadian forest wilderness: from Jack London's *White Fang* (1906) to the novels of John Buchan, and including the 'legend' of 'Grey Owl' (real name: Archie Bellamy 1880–1938), an emigrant Englishman conservationist, who saved the Canadian beaver from extinction in the 1930s.

Furthermore, Arden's work contributes to the theme of a culture in ruins, created by a consumerist pathology entwined in an eschatological denial that allows the disposal of vast amounts of detritus in diminishing landfill sites. The mound iconography reminds the spectator of a more ancient human history, in which such landmarks were places for gatherings, rituals, different offerings.

Nancy Tousley (2006) explores the complex cultural narratives embedded within the Arden photograph, reflecting on the evident 'pictorialist ideal', and a realistic representation of the everyday—a contested aesthetic space imbricated with 'social meaning and allegorical meaning', through which we move 'conceptually from an iconic image of the Sublime in nature to an abject remnant of the natural' (Tousley 2006: 1).

The conflation of abject naturalism with the notions attached to beauty haunts Arden's photograph *Pulp Mill Dump (#1), Nanaimo, BC* (1992). Arden's photograph (more avalanche than 'pour') pays a direct *homage* to the earth-works (and photographic documentation) of Robert Smithson, and his seminal piece: *Asphalt Rundown* (1969; https://www.wikiart.org/en/robert-smithson/asphalt-rundown-1969) created in Rome.

As part of Smithson's *Pours series* between 1969 and 1970, we witness the 'geoprocess of an alluvial' flow employing pre-fabricated industrial materials.[48] As Smithson emphasizes, he was less interested in the 'process itself', than the record of an erosion being absorbed. Although it may not have been the artist's intention, one is reminded of the siting of this work in Italy, with its own historical legacy of volcanic eruptions at Pompeii.[49] It is also worth contextualizing the *Pours* earthworks in relation to the more contemporaneous environmental incidents which happened in the late 1960s. In 1969, Smithson must have been aware of the oil spill in the Santa Barbara Channel, California, which resulted in the contamination of beaches and the destruction of aquatic species, a portent in many ways, of the future BP environmental disaster off the Gulf of Mexico in 2010.[50] Furthermore, writing in *Art Forum* in 1966, Smithson explains the key themes in his work: the landscape of

degradation—'backwater sites…slurbs, urban sprawl'.[51] In many ways, *Asphalt Rundown* reminded Smithson of home and 'the associations you could have from the falls of Paterson' in New Jersey, itself, situated on a dormant volcano and regarded as the first designated industrial city in America.[52]

The influence of *Asphalt Rundown* (1969) on both Arden's and my own work is the presentation of earth-works as an inherent eco-political critique. A paradoxical engagement with the notions of the Sublime, in which the earth-work's *angle of repose* suggests more ancient sites.

One could situate my photographic series of 'human-made' mounds as a continuation of Smithson's concern with new forms of landscape emerging from human intervention. A result of dubious waste management. Without making overt comparisons with Smithson and Arden, my two photographs *Units* (2009) and *Landscape* (2009) explore a similar iconography, inviting a similar dialogic reception. Yet, the sheer detail displayed in the Arden photograph (more avalanche than 'pour') exposes a sensuous materiality in the discarded wood pulp. A photograph given more urgency, in relation to the notions surrounding the expansive arboreal Canadian landscape.[53]

Arden's work could be seen to contribute to the theme of a culture in ruins, the West's own consumerist pathology entwined in an eschatological denial, that allows the disposal of vast amounts of detritus in diminishing landfill sites. Perhaps the use of the mound/hill as motif is meant to remind the viewer of a more ancient human history, in which such landmarks were places for gatherings, rituals, different offerings.

The notion of an entropic offering inhabits the photograph *Sand* (2007; Fig. 5.5). The image reveals the fate of man's ambitions, in the implicit narrative of temporal erosion. The metonym of sand (in its various forms) features in many of my photographs, either as a remnant from previous attempts to renovate structures; the irony of pointing (the 'index' of the builder—'look' this wall needs fixing), to a material prerequisite in the making of mortar for construction. Sand is an essential ingredient in the matrix of brick and concrete structures, yet in relation to entropy the material alludes to its previous 'life'. The desire to return to its original granular state. Sand also intimates a crucial role with photography itself, in the form of glass—the lens.

Fig. 5.5 *Sand*, 2007. Photograph by the author

As a material created by the action of the sea (salt, not river sand), we do not expect it to be the site of re-colonization (save for specialist dune species of flora). The apparent incongruity of the mound of sand in the corner of the enclosed brick space might also suggest another enigmatic narrative. Our rational view is that sand is meant to be used once delivered. So, what went wrong? The remaining mound of sand is disquieting, reinforcing the mood of absence. A fracture in the conventional narrative process, in which materials are assigned specific functions, and must be used, over time. But as the photograph shows, the schedule is broken by a form of dismembering that is compounded by the prominence of the brick wall, the material 'sibling' of sand. The spectator encounters a strange example of chance-juxtaposition, a homology of highly charged metonymic devices. The photograph presents a scene—a micro-landscape of mountain with forest and cloud. A material synonymous with the temporal and the decline of civilizations in antiquity could be considered appropriate in the context of non-place. A place resigned to the imminent imposition of regeneration. The reclaiming of nature, represented by the green plants, provides an index that declares look how quickly nature recovers when man abandons materials intended for building.

In a more sombre hermeneutic mood, the photograph invites one to consider the space of executions perhaps. An allusion to confined brutality. Yet, not all the non-place photographs propose an eschatological future for non-place.

Re-visioning the Urban Future

To arrive at any new prospect, one acknowledges the ending of some other preceding journey, as the photographer–researcher confronts a physical boundary or an unexpected rise in the land. The regeneration process pushes the inscriptions of the past to the margins of non-place. These final non-place promontories become the evidential *cul-de-sacs* of memory, the last journey possible, where the prospect is occluded by the intersection of different barriers. We are reminded of Willem Flusser (2000) and his description of the photographer's urge 'to hunt for new states of things, situations never seen before, for the improbable, for information' (Flusser 2000: 39).

The sense of a photographic 'quarry' is suggested in the photograph, *The Corner* (2010; Fig. 5.6). The archetypal non-place terminus.

Fig. 5.6 *The Corner*, 2010. Photograph by the author

The scene reveals an intriguing assemblage of improvised barricades from different periods, resistant to access and disclosure. We encounter a flux of new and past visual references. In this context, the pervasive buddleia, noted for its attraction to butterflies (and from a botanical critique, the most rampant of all flora within the non-place 'environment' in my experience), suggests a transmogrified future for this terminus. The metaphor of the butterfly is emblematic of many non-places; the metamorphosis of derelict spaces enclosed and fragmented by new developments, from which a hidden bio-diversity emerges.

A photograph which marks the end of the most important site within my own non-place series is *Hard Core* (2009; Fig. 5.7). The caption title is inflected with ludic irony, one that literally describes what is about to happen in this ambiguous landscape. The imminent 'wave' of sorted rubble (hard core) still poised will eventually be spread to provide foundations for a new Miller Homes development (2010–2011).

A similar resignation inhabits the photograph *New Land* (2009; Fig. 5.8). The photograph's iconography, and compositional address,

Fig. 5.7 *Hard Core*, 2009. Photograph by the author

Fig. 5.8 *New Land*, 2009. Photograph by the author

shares the same quality of resigned melancholia that pervades Ishiguro's haunting dystopian novel, *Never Let Me Go* (2005):

> I was thinking about the rubbish, the flapping plastic in the branches, the shore-line of odd stuff caught along the fencing, and I half-closed my eyes and imagined this was the spot where everything I'd ever lost since my childhood had washed up, and I was now standing here in front of it. (Ishiguro 2005: 263)

The photograph *New Land* (2009) resonates within the cultural memory embedded in the archive of photographs which document the exploration of the American West. One recalls the photograph made by C. E. Watkins, *Cape Horn two miles west of the village of Celilo* (1867). A photograph regarded as one of the defining images of its age. The juxtaposition of 'raw beauty' with the pioneering spirit of the untamed American West.

My own 'survey' conducted in *New Land* (2009) declares through the snagged flapping plastic sheets on the last remaining fence that the idiosyncratic non-place has finally been 'tamed'. It must prepare for a re-developed future, as anonymous as an Augé airport concourse. The left of frame in *New Land* (2009) is illuminated by a sky that has been vertically sliced in a modernist gesture, whose more distant view shows the fragile inscription of an aeroplane ascending far away from this unresolved space. Like most futures, the restricted access given to the spectator on the immediate left is open to speculation, in every sense of the word.

The destination presented by the photograph *Prospect* (2010; Fig. 5.9) reveals the mausoleum of non-place. The eschatological sampling of history and place, now graded in rubble and dust. We notice that the foreground steel fence has been pulled down, offering a view of landscape as a purely mechanical process. One devoid of cultural projection: a literal landscape construction. An ineluctable process that will change each day, as various plant machinery sort the gathered materials. What is produced inadvertently is an unintentional 'earth-work' project. In one respect, one might view this scene as a 'testing ground' for various topographical designs. An experimental zone for landscape architects.

Fig. 5.9 *Prospect*, 2010. Photograph by the author

Non-place as Heterotopia

The notion of heterotopia was originally proposed by the French philosopher, Michel Foucault (1967), a term which informs Wesselman's own reflections on spatial politics.[54] He claims that 'difference is not the independent properties of a space' (Wesselman 2017: 190). Kevin Hetherington emphasizes that heterotopian spaces 'only exist in relation, that is, they are established by their difference in a relationship between sites rather than their Otherness deriving from a site itself' (Hetherington 1997: 43). Therefore, one must consider 'strange' places in their urban contexts, where heterotopia is the specificity of difference. An immediate example of this contextual difference would be the comparison between an existing non-place and an established coterminous business/retail park. A further case study is suggested by Wesselman (2017), inviting us to consider the High Line cutting across the Manhattan grid, providing the possibility of an escape from the 'rationality and efficiency that are embodied in the city below' (Wesselman 2017: 191). Such indeterminate heterotopic spatial relationships offer the

opportunity to rediscover, or continue to engage with, a porous political potentiality, one liberated from the over-designed, re-commodified experience witnessed along the current High Line.[55] As Millington argues, the 'tension between urban amenities and the dynamics of real estate speculation renders complex' the design of public space, one that ameliorates the lives of some, whilst the issues surrounding property speculation displace low-income residents (Millington 2017: 208).[56] An egregious example of this unfairness is being currently experienced by the displacement of low-income residents after the Grenfell fire disaster in London, on 14 June 2017. Allegedly, the poor maintenance of the Grenfell Tower was seen by many residents, as a form of coercion, that would eventually see the Tower and the surrounding space re-designated to attract private-sector property developers.

According to Heynen et al. (2006), we must acknowledge the political processes through which specific 'socio-environmental urban conditions are made and re-made', to the extent to which the 'material conditions' which constitute the urban environment are 'controlled, manipulated, and serve the interests of an elite' without due consideration for more marginalized inhabitants (Heynen et al. 2006: 2, 6). And as Raban (1974) implores, we need to 'comprehend the nature of citizenship, to make a serious imaginative assessment of that special relationship between the self and the city' (Raban 1974: 246).

The function of non-place as a 'mood-space' (to borrow Highmore's term) exposes a present, in which the future is always an unstable interregnum, yet crucial to our cultural feeling for the *dénouement* of modernity.

The sociologist Anthony Giddens (1990) refers to the differences experienced by the premodern and the modern. A characteristic which is defined by a sense of displacement, one compounded by the postmodern condition. For Giddens, this feeling results in the transformation of place as 'phantasmagoric' (Giddens 1990: 140).[57]

The non-place becomes a place that represents the marginalia of our personal and collective lives—our failed industries, deracinated communities, lost thoughts, redemption, fears, paranoia, heterotopic desires, addictions, botanical delights, playful adventures, discarded possessions, grazed knees, cold kisses, ineffable longing, intangible memories, resigned forgetting.

The teleology of non-place disrupts the constructed apprehension and perception of landscape value. For what purpose does redundant, non-productive land serve? Speculative investment of course. Olwig

(2001) considers the teleological implications of place, and indeed modernism itself, 'with its inherent decentering of both people and place', which 'depends upon the notion of linear development through stages' (Olwig 2001: 107). Olwig poses why 'must place necessarily be reduced' simply to a 'portion of geographical space occupied by a person or thing?' (Olwig 2001: 107).

The Difference Between Forgetting and Amnesia

Forgetting is a necessary function of the brain to allow the individual to function in the everyday aspects of life. It would be difficult to function in the present moment if we remembered everything. It would become a form of mental suffering. Similarly, if we were constantly reminded of traumatic events, both in the private and in the public sphere, the suffering would be unbearable.

Controversially perhaps, Augé suggests that the survivors of the Holocaust might have a 'duty to forget', in which their duty 'has been to survive the memory, to escape, as far as they are concerned, from the everlasting presence of an incommunicable experience' (Augé 2004: 87). As an explanation for this highly polemical suggestion, Augé offers some support to the survivors by stating that 'if [they] want to live again' and not simply survive, then they must 'try to forget', in order to discover faith in 'the everyday again and mastery over their time' (Augé 2004: 88).

Therefore, the retreat of memory from the actuality of the present is a release from this burden, and in the case of cultural memory, a semblance of freedom from the responsibility to remember, a state symptomatic of survivors of traumatic events.

But what is the difference between forgetting and amnesia?

Amnesia suggests a temporal forgetting, a condition caused by various illnesses, a specific injury to the head, itself, a classic cinematic narrative trope (see *Memento* 2000, directed by Christopher Nolan). My polemical reference to cultural amnesia suggests that ideology and power impose a form of civic amnesia on citizens, by the control of various archives, historical narratives, various forms of texts, monuments, etc. This insidious memorial censorship reveals the instrumentality alluded to by Althusser (1969) in his often-cited phrase, the 'ideological state apparatuses' (from an article published in the French journal *La Pensee* in 1970). The same apparatus is at work in our own time, exerting an undue influence on what is remembered and honoured within the accretion of cultural

memory. Although I must restrict my discussion here (as this question is beyond the scope of this book), I include paradoxically the emergence of the Internet within this memorial debate: the overwhelming content that the Internet provides subsumes a straightforward sequential engagement with cultural memory. It is a vast archive that, in some sense, over-saturates one's ability to connect with cultural memory. There is also the more recent problem concerning the uploading of fake history, which, in turn, subverts the authority of established archives. The Internet and its siblings of social media platforms allow the implants of fake facts, and as an outcome: fake memory. Sometimes, more is less.

The digital amnesia lubricated by overt ideological institutions, both online and offline, disseminates a kind of enforced amnesia. This Orwellian strategy, which has been made explicit in the Trump regime, disrupts cultural memory, in which certain inconvenient historical truths become imbricated within layers of misinformation, and in some cases, erasure.

Forms of 'Communicative' and 'Cultural' Memory

The Egyptologist, Jan Assmann has provided an influential distinction between 'cultural' and 'communicative' memory. Much of Assmann's work builds upon the critical contribution made by Maurice Halbwachs to the notion of 'collective memory'. Importantly, 'communicative memory' emerged to clearly differentiate Halbwachs's notion of 'collective memory' from our understanding of 'cultural memory'. To further clarify these distinctions, Assmann (2008) provides an accessible, but rather simplistic binary analysis: communicative memory is distinguished by its autobiographical framing of the recent past, whilst cultural memory is embedded in the absolute past and may lend itself to the construction of historical myths. The forms of communicative memory depend on an engagement with the everyday, and informal traditions, which interestingly, underpins many of the photographs in this book—each of which celebrates some form of ordinary urban landscape. As expected, the forms of cultural memory are emplaced in 'ceremonial communication', with the apogee being the material monument. In relation to media, communicative memory is predisposed to 'embodied memory' and vernacular modes of expression. Again, photography functions as both a vernacular and highly formalized visual language, depending on its context: a mobile phone screen in the pub or an invitation-only gallery opening. Cultural memory is mediated through texts, dances, and other formalized rituals.

Furthermore, Assmann (2008) delineates the differences in time structure between these two strands of memory: communicative memory appears transient, accounting for only three generations of interaction (80–100 years), whereas cultural memory encompasses the 'absolute past', in the region of '3000 years'. Therefore, once the everyday communication that invigorates communicative memory becomes the material structures of a commodified culture, represented by cities, texts, visual images, monuments, and importantly, 'even landscapes', the collective memory is transformed into history (Assmann 1995 [1988]: 128).

If communicative memory celebrates the everyday, then cultural memory is characterized by its distance from the everyday. According to Assmann, this 'transcendence' process from the intimacy of the domestic accretion of memory to the atemporal condition of cultural memory establishes a chronological series of 'fixed points'. These memorial markers relate to key events in the past, whose memory is sustained and curated by specific cultural texts; for my own purposes, I will highlight the monument and the photograph as 'text' (and the city as urban landscape 'text'). These text/artefacts are further embedded in cultural memory through 'institutional communication' (Assmann 1995 [1988]). A vivid example of institutional communication would be the annual commemoration for the war dead at Remembrance Day services in the UK and throughout the Commonwealth nations. The wearing of the bright red poppy is the metonym for this act of civic commemoration and remembrance. When people wear the lapel poppy, they are inadvertently involved in a moving act of remembrance within the public sphere. This active performance of remembering of those who made the 'ultimate sacrifice' is interesting in the unexpected juxtapositions that can arise from the individual carrying, mediating, of this highly contentious symbol of nationhood. For some people, the poppy has been made contentious, even unacceptable, in the context of the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts. The poppy can be interpreted as a disruptive symbol within an anxious multicultural society trying to reconcile these unresolved conflicts and their aftermath, especially when compounded by the Brexit debacle.

Interestingly, to compliment the traditional lapel poppy, Canada has made available a digital poppy to download and share at: www.mypoppy.ca until 11 November 2018.

With melancholic resignation, Assmann asserts that 'no memory can preserve the past' (Assmann 1995 [1988]). Any reconstruction of the past is contingent on a society's 'contemporary frame of reference'

(Assmann 1995 [1988]: 130; citing Halbwachs), by which Halbwachs means that the past is always vulnerable to a strategic ideological interpretation to serve present needs. This commemorative re-negotiation with the past is usually re-exhumed during periods of national crisis and of course, during adversarial election campaigns.

Assmann's consideration of cultural memory in relation to *reflexivity* is relevant to my own photographic practice in non-place (Assmann 1995 [1988]: 132). The photographs function as evidence of reflexivity, in relation to their contribution to cultural memory; the photographs are 'practice-reflexive', to borrow Assmann's term, in the same way that other 'rituals' (hunting is used as another example) function. Photographic practice is now a pervasive, global 'ritual'. The ritualistic performance of photography (and urban walking) also mirrors another of Assmann's three ways of reflexivity; it certainly conforms to the required reflection on the 'self-image of the group through a preoccupation with its own social system' (Assmann 1995 [1988]: 132). An extension of this reflexivity in the auto-ethnographic sense continues after the photographs have been taken; this process takes many forms of course, including the immediate reflection 'in the field' through the camera's in-built memory screen system, and subsequently, once the digital files have been uploaded to view on the computer screen. This reflexivity is further augmented and informed by the photographs iconographic relationship to the existing academic literature, which is evidenced in this book. The construction of cultural memory in this sense is supported by photography's unique ability to explicate, 'distinguish, reinterpret' (the everyday), and criticize. Assmann (1995 [1988]) insists that the notions embedded in cultural memory depend on the use of images and rituals specific to each period, to sustain the self-image of that society.

On considering the final stages of a culture's media literacy, Assmann asserts that this has been 'marked by a high degree of self-reflexivity' (Assmann 2011: 6). Moreover, the so-called memory boom within the academic discipline of memory-studies since the 1970s has been propelled and supported by a new kind of self-conscious memory.

Landscapes of Forgetting

Is non-place a landscape of forgetting? Does photography function to arrest this forgetting, like the monument? Or do photographs of non-place enable our forgetting? In this sense, photographs of non-place

might function like the poignant valedictory letters written during the French 'Terror' (1793–1794).[58]

A devastating realization for the individual is the knowledge of their inevitable disappearance from the memories of those who knew them. This has been called a 'second death'. The analogy that I am pursuing here suggests that the non-places that are already on the margins of public awareness will also experience a kind of second death when they have been subjected to regeneration. In the manner of the valedictory letters, the iconography of the non-place photographs can only truly be remembered by those who experienced these places. For the non-place photographs lose something of their emotional pull, when they no longer mean something personal for the spectator. When the last spectator with a memory of what was once there in non-place dies, then the photographs join the other landscape artefacts that reside in the *longue durée* of public and private multimodal archives. In an archival context, the non-place photographs teeter on the edge of counter-memorial and places of forgetting.

According to Draaisma (2015), the medium of photography has been burdened with the responsibility to resist forgetting through the medium's symbiotic relationship to memory. Photography has been instrumental in capturing the so-called unforgettable moments in our lives, to be retrieved in the future. This desire to retain the unforgettable in the material form of photographs (be it print or digital code) suggests that we are cognizant and fearful of the transience of these moments. Our hope is that 'photographs will underpin our memories', but eventually, our photographs replace our memories (Draaisma 2015: 8). Although this anxiety is more acute in portrait photography where 'memory is dominated by forgetting', I suggest that it may well happen in landscape photography as well. For Draaisma, the act of forgetting is almost a biological requirement to enable us to live without the burden of the past. A similar process to 'erasure, deletion or disappearance' (Draaisma 2015: 2, 4).

In one perceptive rhetorical question, Draaisma reminds us of our linguistic resistance to any form of forgetting:

> What you remember is called memory, but what you forget is called a …? There is a gap in the language, and as a convenience no place for adjectives either. A memory can be vague or clear, pleasant or painful, but the thing you forget is only an absence, a nothingness, without attributes or qualities. (Draaisma 2015: 3)

According to Draaisma, when you take a photograph, you relinquish something—you lose the memory, or at least the memory becomes mixed up with the immutability of the photograph as a relic from the initial experience. The complex relationship that exists between the memory and the photograph, and the photograph and the memory, preoccupies the psychologist. How might we describe this effect? Does the photograph erase, eject the memory? And as Draaisma posits: 'why can't we retain both?' A 'lack of space perhaps?' For practical reasons, the necessity to function in the present moment is prioritized by the brain, as Draaisma emphasizes:

> If on leaving the cinema you remembered all the places where you had ever parked your car or bicycle just as clearly as you remembered that last of them, then you would be thoroughly confused. (Draaisma 2015: 214)

For Draaisma, memory function erases outdated information, or to continue the IT metaphor, the memory files are made inaccessible. In the evolutionary sense, memory function values the most recent information. Although this rather dispassionate and mechanical process doesn't seem to differentiate between types of information, our memories of loved ones and friends suffer this same efficiency. In considering this process where all 'content' is relative, we experience the devastation of what we have forgotten.

This disquieting aspect of the human condition is perhaps assuaged by the problematic symbiosis between memory and photography, in which the long-standing question emerges: do photographs have the permanence that memory never acquires, in which 'our memories die with us and what we are in the memory of others dies with them. A photograph remains. But what exactly remains of a photograph?' (Draaisma 2015: 214).

Paradoxically perhaps, the French psychologist, Théodule Ribot (Ribot's Law), discovered that memory loss in dementia patients begins with the most recent memories and then progresses further back. This erosion of memory undermines the claims for the prosthetic value of photographs. For a photograph to possess personal meaning, it requires the ballast of an attached memory.[59]

The poignancy of the French valedictory letters emerges through their purpose: they were intended to be read by their loved ones, not for public reading. Draaisma suggests that we are in fact complicit in some violation of this epistolary intimacy, one that exists between the writer of the letter and its intended recipient. To add to this shame, we also

realize with devastating effect that the letters never reached their destination. The letters were intercepted in the interests of the Revolutionary Tribunal, only to be archived away.

Our present access to these archives sustains the horror of the Terror. What is important in these letters is the expressed desire to be remembered by those who would still be alive, after the author's own death. The worst death would be the anticipated 'second death', in which those responsible for honouring the memory of the executed would they themselves die in the distant future. The valedictory letters also serve as prescient reminders of those more frantic notes, produced by the victims being transported to the German concentration camps (Draaisma 2015).

We might in this rather sombre context consider the fate of landscape photographs in their quixotic memory function. In general, we expect that the photographer involved in the production of the landscape photograph was present, even in this period of Google satellite photography and the now ubiquitous use of remote drone photography. And yet, when the photographer is no longer present, or those that might have recognized the places represented have departed, how might the photographs function, especially those photographs which propose a critique of culture, or serve a memorial function?

Although the valedictory claim for landscape representations may seem somewhat hyperbolic, or, at the very least, tenuous, I propose that the final photographs in my own non-places archive (2005–2017) often depict a temporary regeneration stasis. As we discussed, the photographs' evidence the so-called credit-crunch urban landscape from 2008 onwards. They provide a visual 'farewell' to the remaining traces of non-places, on the brink of physical change that regeneration would bring. In the valedictory sense, therefore, the photographs arrest the moment before regeneration impacts on these places, offering a final representation as a form of reprieve, in the tradition of the French valedictory letters, which sought to be remembered in the memory of loved ones, however temporal. To reinforce the analogy, many of the photographs taken between 2008 and 2013, notably *New Land* (2009), show the iconographic annihilation of an erstwhile unchecked re-wilding, now replaced by the cultural erasure of mechanical plant level groundwork, in preparation for the marking out of building foundations to come.

In the ultimate entropic photograph: *Prospect* (2010; Fig. 5.9), we witness a total landscape of forgetting. We encounter the mausoleum of non-place, the eschatological sampling of place and cultural memory.

The pulled-down fence offers a view of a changing landscape chameleon, mechanically re-deployed as an unintentional ongoing 'earth-work' project, or a testing ground for various topographical designs. The reduction in any form of trace to a granular state: dust.

In relation to these landscapes of mechanically crushed forgetting, it is worth considering the original title of Augé's book in French, *Les Formes de l'oubli*: here, the more prosaic translation would suggest the notion of forgotten forms that might include a relationship to remembered places, rather than the overtly epic English title of *Oblivion* (2004).

In situating this thesis, Augé extends his previous preoccupation with an accelerated experience of history, to include a present that is 'frequently divided between the uncertainties of the future and the confusions of remembrance' (Augé 2004: 15). Here Augé refers to the *Littré* definition of remembrance, which emphasizes the quality of the impression that 'remains in the memory' (Augé 2004: 17). Augé also provides a welcome floral metaphor, in view of my own proselytizing for re-wilding and succession, with memories resembling plants. Memories need to be eliminated for other ones to flourish, and prophetically perhaps, 'the flower is the seed's oblivion', which, in turn, resonates within my proposition of the photograph as a counter-monument, from which the original encounter, event, and emotional agency shrivels and eventually fades.

If we expand on Augé's declaration: 'tell me what you forget and I will tell you who you are', then we might consider how that question might reveal a nation's current state.

Psychoanalysts refer to 'mnestic traces', in which memories are 'crafted by oblivion as the outlines of the shore are created by the sea' (Augé 2004: 20).

Far from being the enemy of memory, Augé reconfigures the eschatology of oblivion as the 'life force of memory and remembrance is its product' (Augé 2004: 21).

In this context, one apprehends in my own auto-ethnographic re-visiting of boyhood urban landscapes in Leeds, echoes of Augé's own experience, in which it is an often disappointing search for one's oldest memory (Augé 2004). Yes, one might reprimand oneself for this urge, but surely, any search is more concerned with understanding the present, rather than the past. And even though we don't really need to remind ourselves, our 'oldest memory' is always re-shaped, apprehended, and felt in the present.

In a teleological sense, the impulse is to embalm or recover these seemingly disparate early memories, within the matrix of a present-orientated narrative glue. A perplexing, yet human desire to construct a coherent and meaningful life-thread. This fragile 'thread' is always vulnerable to subsequent reinterpretations, some invited, some not, by friends and family. Such 'collaborations' are informed by the evidential qualities of personal photographs, which find their apogee in the family album, or more recently, embedded in the Facebook profile.

On a personal note, my own recent case study may contribute to the ambiguous function of photography in memory. Having been left my recently deceased father's personal archive of photographs, ranging from 1923 to 2018, I found myself scanning these fragile photographic prints at a very high resolution of 500 dpi. In psychoanalytical terms, my compulsive scanning at such a high resolution (and all that the word *resolution* imparts) might be inferred as a desperate attempt to get closer to these now dead relatives, many of whom remain anonymous, due to the absence of any information on the reverse side of the prints. Most of the prints are devoid of names, dates, and locations. I would often find myself zooming into these scanned images on my computer screen, especially those showing my parents. A fixation redolent of the profound contemplation undertaken by Roland Barthes of his mother as a girl in the *Winter Garden Photograph* (1898)[60]:

> With the Photograph, we enter into *flat death*. The horror is this: nothing to say about the death of one whom I love most, nothing to say about her photograph, which I contemplate without ever being able to get to the heart of it, to transform it. The only "thought" I can have is that at the end of this first death, my own death is inscribed; between the two, nothing more than waiting […]. (Barthes 1980: 92–93)

One could interpret my own enlarging of the faces of the dead by using the computer's zoom tool, as a form of screen grieving. One entered the world of the photographs' frame immersing oneself in their now pixelated past. But eventually, one reaches the photograph's own Ultra Deep Field limitation.[61] At this point, we must accept the flow of time. We make our own departure from their frame of forgetting, to honour the dead by living. In this way, the photograph offers palliative care to our ephemeral memories, allowing some preparation for the inexorable forgetting.

For Augé, photography's claim to arrest time must consider the different experiences of time—the way we use time, 'even for ourselves or gathered in more or less ephemeral groups'. He also reflects on time extrinsic to the individual, 'of other people's time, of times passing and time returning, of dying time and the time remaining, of suspended time and time yet to happen' (Augé 2004: 25).

In relation to my own personal auto-ethnographic photographs of non-places, Augé provides a salutary explanation: that 'no individual fiction is rigorously contemporary to another (everyone has his or her past and expectations) and the differences brought about by the investigative situation' (Augé 2004: 38).

Moreover, within Augé's concept of a 'narrative dimension of existence', oblivion can be bifurcated into three main forms: in the return, we endeavour to recover a lost past again by forgetting the present, as 'well as the immediate past'. It would be too facile to reproach this desire on the grounds of a pejorative nostalgia, rather than a genuine attempt to discover a resolution or reconciliation with the past. There are many examples, in which a return to the past has contributed to a realignment and healing of the present. One is reminded of the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission* (1996) work undertaken in South Africa and assembled after the end of apartheid as a testimony to a restorative ambition.

In Augé's second form of oblivion: suspense, the aim is to locate the present by 'cutting it off from the past and the future', in the same way as the blink of the camera aperture severs the past and paradoxically (or as a tautology perhaps) forgets 'the future'. For the latter is identified with the 'return of the past' (Augé 2004: 56).

The final form of oblivion anticipates the current preoccupation with the fetishizing of the moment, *the now*, in which the transformed individual sense of self is suspended in the rapture of the present moment, relinquished from the burdens of both past and future. Augé describes this condition as a 'new awareness of time', which emerges 'erased or forgotten' where the 'initiate no longer is the one he is not yet' (Augé 2004: 57). Surprisingly, Augé re-constructs the cultural visualization of the word *oblivion* from a receding perspective that one approaches (a journey), to one that is 'always conjugated in the present - the continued present' a 'pure present' (Augé 2004: 57).

Gaston Bachelard (1994) considers a similar heightened sense of a 'pure present' intimated through an acceptance of forgetting as a

necessary function of being in the moment. A phenomenological stillness and alertness that is not dissimilar from the photographic act:

> Immensity is within ourselves, it is attached to a sort of expansion of being that life curbs and caution arrests, but which starts when we are alone, as soon as we become motionless, we are elsewhere; we are daydreaming in a world that is immense. Indeed, immensity is a movement of the motionless man. (Bachelard 1994: 184)

The *longue durée* of geological time embraces forgetting. It literally has all the time in the world. This deep time exists beyond the human historical process and memory functions. And to a certain extent, this 'slippage' is concomitant with the 'historical saturation' evident in the post-industrial landscape, with its latent signifiers of deep geological time. One which resonates within the *imbroglio* of the postmodern condition, fracturing the certainties once afforded to the grand narratives of history.

In offering some reconciliation, Barndt (2010) suggests that we re-insert the 'nonsynchronous' into the flow of time, by interrogating the imbrication of 'temporal layers, material remnants, and human experiences' (Barndt 2010: 273). The process of musealization of abandoned industrial sites transforms the former industrial landscape into a 'cultural landscape of art, education, and consumption' (Barndt 2010: 274).[62]

If reification is a form of forgetting, then how does this affect photography? The presence of the photographer in non-place, even if no photographs are taken, confers the reification of non-place by the decision to go there in the first place. In this predicament, it is difficult to avoid reification and the complicit relation of my photographs with the forgetting of non-place.

Alistair Morgan (2014) argues for a reevaluation of the oft-cited analysis of reification undertaken by Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer (2002 [1944]), in which they claim that all of life is experienced as a reification and that 'all reification is a forgetting' (Adorno and Horkheimer 2002: 191). Both borrow from Lukács' (1971) seminal explication of reification, which emerges from the transformative commodification process, itself, reinforced through an embedded relationship to capitalist production. To contest their claim, Morgan states that for reification to exist in the first place, 'there must be at least a hint of that which remains un-reified' (Morgan 2014: 377–388). In this context, perhaps non-places can remain part of the un-reified urban landscape, even with the reification effect of photographic representation.

Notes

1. See Robert Smithson. (1996). *The Collected Writings* (ed.) Jack Flam, Berkeley: University of California Press.
2. Lippard, L. (1997). *The Lure of the Local: Senses of Place in a Multicentred Society*, New York: The New Press, p. 184.
3. See Marshall Berman. (1970). *The Politics of Authenticity: Radical Individualism and the Emergence of Modern Society*, New York: Atheneum, cited by Sharon Zukin. (2010). *Naked City: The Death and Life of Authentic Urban Places*, Oxford University Press, p. 21.
4. Yuppie: a slang defined noun to describe the lifestyle of a young suburban or city dweller in a well-paid professional job, without the restrictions imposed by a responsibility to family and children. The term is strongly associated with access to an affluent lifestyle. The neologism was derived from combining young, urban, professional, influenced by Yuppie.
5. *Façadism*: an architectural term which refers to the construction practice whereby a façade is made separately from the rest of the building. More often, it refers to the preservation of the external façade of a building, whilst new buildings are erected around it.
6. The social theorists Walter Benjamin and Jean Baudrillard both declared the erosion of the auratic/authentic through pervasive technology. And the hyperbole associated with advertising and consumer culture, which reduced the so-called authentic experience to a bland, commodified simulation.
7. See *Edgelands: Journeys into England's True Wilderness* (2012), Paul Farley and Michael Symmons Roberts, for an idiosyncratic narrative of the peripheral landscape.
8. See Jane Jacobs. (1961). *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. An hour by hour ethnographic study on the Hudson Street, in New York.
9. See Michael Lewis. *The Big Short* (published in 2011), with the subsequent film version of *The Big Short* (2016), reveals the source of the financial system's subprime fiasco, with empathy and candour.
10. During a discussion exploring the difference between the analogue surface and the 'collapse' of the digital surface in relation to the index, Professor Roger Palmer describes several of the more suggestive photographs from 2008 onwards as: 'places of inconsequence' in which the apparent 'emptiness' of the subject matter seems to find its equivalent in the digital print surface 10.12.09.
11. Mars photographs see 'Viking Lander 1' images produced by Calvin J. Hamilton. Views of the solar system at: http://www.solarviews.com. The Twin Peaks are modest-size hills to the southwest of the Mars Pathfinder landing site 1997.

12. Although the architecture profession is referred to in this book, a more detailed examination of the profession's attitude to landscape is beyond the scope of my aims here.
13. See Joel Sternfeld's sombre photographs tracing American sites of twentieth-century murders: *On This Site: Landscape in Memoriam* (ed.) A. Harris, Chronicle Books (1996).
14. Thanks 'to the visionary leadership of City Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn and the City Council members, the future of the High Line at the rail yards is looking bright. On Thursday, July 29, 2010, the New York City Council voted to approve the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) application that gives the City of New York permission to acquire the High Line at the West Side Rail Yards.' For further information, see: http://www.thehighline.org/news.
15. 'Disney World on the Hudson', article *New York Times*, August 22, 2012.
16. See Joe Wright's film, *Anna Karenina* (2012), in which the cinematic structural device of high theatricality is contrasted with a sumptuous and ravishing naturalism, when Wright introduces the Russian peasants' harvest scenes.
17. The allelopathic metaphor used by Patrick (2017) has been used to describe the so-called dispersal of marginal/queer groups from dormant gentrification zones. The pejorative inference being that these groups have both the ability and resilience to thrive in disrupted spaces.
18. In considering the queer uses of the High Line, there is a growing body of writing on this subject, but any exhaustive account is beyond the scope of my text here. See also, Cataldi, et al. (2011). 'Residues of a Dream World: The High Line', *Theory, Culture and Society* 28 (7–8): pp. 358–389.
19. The term *Pictorialism* refers to an international style and aesthetic movement, which influenced photography during the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Photographers mirrored the formal conventions of the easel painting, with an emphasis on landscape format compositions, often including a figure in the landscape. For the *pictorialist*, a photograph should emulate the heightened (often over-wrought and sentimental) emotion evidenced in much late-Victorian painting. The photographs eschewed a documentary method and sensibility. See the work and writings of English photographer, Henry Peach Robinson (1830–1901).
20. See Gobster, P. H. (2007). 'Urban Park Restoration and the "Museumification" of Nature', *Nature and Culture* 2 (2): pp. 95–114. See also Stephen Vogel. (1996). *Against Nature: The Concept of Nature in Critical Theory*, Albany: SUNY Press. See also, Kullman, K. (2017). 'The Garden of Entangled Paths: Landscape Phenomena at the Albany Bulb Wasteland', *Landscape Review* 17 (i): pp. 58–77, and Clive Ponting's *Green History of the World* (1991).

21. Smith's reference to the Revanchist City borrows from *Revanchism* (French: *revanche*, 'revenge') the political desire to reverse territorial losses incurred by a country, following a war or social movement. For Smith, the city becomes a commodity, a crucible for revolt. See also, 'New Globalism, New Urbanism: Gentrification as Global Urban Strategy', *Antipode* 34 (3): pp. 427–450.
22. See Zukin. (2010). *Naked City: The Death and Life of Authentic Urban Places*, Oxford University Press, p. 4.
23. See also Corner, J. (2017). 'Hunt's Haunts', in *Deconstructing the High Line: Postindustrial Urbanism and the Rise of the Elevated Park* (eds.) C. Lindner and B. Rose, Rutgers University Press.
24. Landscape urbanism investigates how infrastructure, natural systems, and human agency operate in the city (Waldheim 2006).
25. Espoused through New Urbanism in the USA and the urban villages movement in the UK, neo-traditionalism is an international urban development movement. See Nan Ellin's. (1996). *Postmodern Urbanism*, Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.
26. John Vidal. 'It Doesn't Look Much, but This Bleak Corner of Essex Is Being Hailed as England's Rainforest', *The Guardian* Newspaper, London, May 3, 2003.
27. See 'Fall of Berlin Wall Was a Hot Moment for Conservation', *New Scientist*, July 28, 2010. After the Berlin Wall fell in November 1989, 'it was only a matter of time before Germany would be reunified and its internal borders redrawn. Over the following 10 months, one man, Michael Succow, seized the moment to set aside large chunks of land as nature reserves'. Peter Aldhous: http://www.newscientist.com/article/dn19233.
28. We could add to the contribution made by animal inscriptions, by including the massive geological disruptions made by the earth's tectonic plates and the carving of the landscape by ice age glaciers.
29. The plant ecologist, Frederick Clements (1874–1945), developed the idea of 'succession', in which disturbed ground/ecosystems would be rapidly colonized by fast-growing, hardy 'pioneer' species, to be succeeded by slow-growing species, with longer lifespans. Prominent in contemporary ecological debates.
30. It is worth noting the relationship between Heidegger's emphasis on the etymology of light in relationship to Merleau-Ponty's advocacy for total 'flesh' immersion. I'm interested in the conflation of light and the 'flesh' of the camera lens, with its own prosthetic immersion in the 'clearing' of a heightened reality. See Heidegger, M. (1962). *Being and Time* (trans.) John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson, Blackwell. The word phenomenon in relation to photography provides an interesting etymological resonance, in that the Greek root emphasizes the shared revelatory connection with light:

> [The term phenomenon…] the light, that which is bright—in other words, that where in something can become manifest, visible in itself. Thus, we must keep in mind that the expression 'phenomenon signifies that which shows itself, the manifest. (Heidegger 1962: 51)

31. Garrard suggests that:
> Wilderness has an almost sacramental value: it holds out the promise of a renewed, authentic relation of humanity and the earth, a post-Christian covenant, found in a space of purity, founded in an attitude of reverence and humility. (Garrard 2012: 66)
32. It is worth noting here, the differences between the UK and America in relation to the rural migration to the towns and cities. One obvious difference is the contrasting scale of each country. There are significant differences in the adoption of industrial practices in relation to available resources, such as water and coal, the timing of innovations, and the overall experience of internal migration. A key factor in UK migration from rural to the emerging industrial hubs was the devastating impact wrought by the eighteenth-century Enclosure Movement, in which the rural poor were forcibly removed from their homes and work, to accommodate the earliest form of industrialized agriculture. There were also sociopolitical and hierarchical experiences which each nation's population had to adapt to in different ways. Again, this is a topic area which goes beyond the scope of this book.
33. Victor Gruen coined the term 'cityscape' in 1955. Landscape for Gruen was an 'environment in which nature was predominant'. He referred to some built environments as 'techno-scapes', 'suburb-scapes', and the peripheral strips as 'subcity-scapes'. See Gruen, Victor. (1964). *The Heart of Cities: The Urban Crisis, Diagnosis and Cure*, New York: Simon & Schuster. See also Gruen, Victor. (1973). *Centres for the Urban Environment: Survival of the Cities*, New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold.
34. Corner's expressive reflection on landscape being repressed, and serving only to frame, is redolent of how landscape functioned in Renaissance painting: the religious narrative and key figures were always placed in the foreground of the painting, with the landscape iconography reduced to a background role.
35. See Smithson, R. (1996). 'An Aesthetics of Disappointment', in *Robert Smithson: Collected Writings* (ed.) Jack Flam, Berkeley: University of California Press, p. 81.
36. 'An exhibition of photographs showing views of post-industrial Leeds begins at Leeds City Museum next week. The collection of 20 images taken by Jim Brogden of the University of Leeds School of Design and entitled *South of the River* will be on display in the Leeds Story gallery at the museum off Millennium Square. The images, which some may see as bleak and depressing, include piles of rubble and brick walls. Brogden

focused on abandoned buildings and post-industrial landscapes for the collection, which examines the themes of loss, memory and beauty in an urban setting. Leeds City Museum curator of exhibitions Helen Langford said: This is a thought-provoking exhibition of images which challenge the viewer to look differently at the landscape of the city.' Extract from Yorkshire Post newspaper.
Read more at: https://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/news/bleak-photo-exhibition-finds-beauty-in-post-industrial-city-1-2582956.
https://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/news/bleak-photo-exhibition-finds-beauty-in-post-industrial-city-1-2582956.

37. *The Photograph and the City* international conference also included the opportunity to view Vergara's *American Ruins: Documenting Post-industrial Decline in American Cities* show of photographs at the Gallery of Photography, Dublin June 29–July 30, 2006. See: www.ucd.ie/am-erstud and for more information on Camilo José Vergara's work visit: www.invinciblecities.com.
38. Vergara, J. C., cited by Liam Kennedy in *American Ruins: An Introduction to the Work of Camilo José Vergara*, exhibition catalogue, Clinton Institute for American Studies, 2006, p. 2.
39. Visit: http://invinciblecities.camden.rutgers.edu/intro.html and see databases for Harlem, Richmond, CA and Camden, NJ.
40. Visit: http://invinciblecities.camden.rutgers.edu/intro.html and see databases for Harlem, Richmond, CA and Camden, NJ.
41. See Jorgensen, A., and Keenan, R. (eds.). (2012). *Urban Wildscapes*, Routledge.
42. Vergara's keynote speech concluded The Photograph and the City international conference 2006.
43. See Julien Temple. (2010). 'Detroit: The Last Days', *Guardian*, March 10, 2010. See also Aspel, Dora. *Beautiful Terrible Ruins: Detroit and the Anxiety of Decline*, Rutgers University Press.
44. On "new urbanism" see *One Place After Another: Site Specific Art and Locational Identity*, by Miwon Kwon, MIT Press, 2004, p. 209, also, *New Urbanism: Towards an Architecture of Community*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1993.
45. 'I presented my paper', Liminal Places', at the CASE-NET (EPSRC) *Recovered Landscapes* conference at Gunpowder Park, on the outskirts of London, on 30 March 2006. The landscape location of an old gunpowder making site provided an explicit case study of a recovered landscape. The site is now operating as an educational field centre and nature reserve.
46. See Corner. (2001). 'Landscraping', in *Stalking Detroit* (eds.) Georgia Daskalakis, Charles Waldheim, and Jason Young, Actar, pp. 122–125. See also Corner, J. (1999). 'Eidetic Operations and New Landscapes', in *Recovering Landscape: Essays in Contemporary Landscape Architecture*, Princeton Architectural Press, p. 157.

47. As Geoff Dyer discusses in *The Ongoing Moment* (2005: 13), Lewis Hine (who had instructed Paul Strand in photography, at the Ethical Culture School in New York, believed that 'good photography' is a 'question of art'. Yet Hine himself felt strongly that the medium of photography should contribute to social change and reform. We see in Hine's own photograph of *A Blind Beggar in Italian Market District* (1911), an emphasis on the beggar's surroundings, not the face of the beggar.
48. Graziani, R. (2004). *Robert Smithson and the American Landscape*, Cambridge University Press, p. 93.
49. Pompeii was destroyed during a long catastrophic eruption of the volcano Mount Vesuvius over the course of two days in 79 AD. The eruption buried Pompeii under 4 to 6 meters of ash and pumice, and it was lost for over 1500 years before its rediscovery in 1599.
50. Rice Odell. (1980). *Environmental Awakening, the New Revolution to Protect the Earth*, Washington, DC. Cited by Graziani, Ron. (2004). *Robert Smithson and the American Landscape*, Cambridge University Press, p. 94.
51. Robert Smithson. (June 1966). 'Entropy and the New Monuments', in *Art Forum*, reprinted in *Smithson, Writings*, p. 11.
52. See 'Four Conversations Between Dennis Wheeler and Robert Smithson (1969/1970)', in *Robert Smithson Unearthed: Drawings, Collages, Writings* (ed.) Eugenie Tsai, New York: Columbia University Press, 1991, p. 82.
53. Although the metonymic notions surrounding trees exists in most cultures, my suggestion here refers to the unique resonance of trees in Canadian culture, through the indigenous North American Indian culture, but the more recent pioneering myths often associated with the vast Canadian forest wilderness, from Jack London's *White Fang* (1906), the novels of John Buchan, to the 'legend' of Archie Bellamy, an Englishman's adventures as Grey Owl. In many ways, the rise of the ecological movement can be traced to Canada.
54. See Foucault, M. (2008 [1967]). 'Of Other Spaces', in *Heterotopia and the City: Public Space in a Postcivil Society* (eds., and trans.) M. Dehaene and L. de Cauter, Milton Park, UK: Routledge, pp. 13–29.
55. See *The Everyday Practice of Public Art: Art Space and Social Inclusion* (eds.) C. Cartiere and M. Zebracki, London and New York: Routledge, 2016.
56. See also Hetherington, K. (1997). *The Badlands of Modernity: Heterotopia and Social Ordering*, London: Routledge.
57. Phantasmagoric is defined as having a fantastic or deceptive appearance, as something in a dream or created by the imagination. Its etymological history emerges from the Greek word *phantasma* meaning 'image'.

58. Between 1793 and 1794, a new revolutionary regime in Paris became a Republic. The numerous arrests and detention of some 7000 suspects would be referred to as the 'Terror' in French history. During the summer of 1794, more than 1370 people were executed on the Place de la Révolution. Before their executions, the prisoners were given the opportunity to write personal letters. In a collection of valedictory letters written during the Terror (1793–1794) which were discovered in the French archives, the prisoners awaiting execution the next day would write their final farewell letters, with the desire to live on in the memories of their loved ones. Some of those letters that survived in the archives have been published (Draaisma 2015).
59. Before he died aged 95, my own father's rapid onset of dementia meant that all he could remember was vague childhood memories. He saw silhouetted children running across his room. The personal photographs that he had previously treasured were now meaningless.
60. The *Winter Garden Photograph* (1898) project will celebrate the 40th anniversary of *Camera Lucida* in 2020. The event will involve the publishing of new photographs and text.
61. The farthest known view of the universe by Hubble/ NASA.
62. The Royal Armouries museum in Leeds is a relevant exemplar. Designed by the renowned architect Derek Walker (chief architect from Milton Keynes development). This was the first national museum to be situated outside London. The construction project cost £42.5 million pounds, whilst it was anticipated that this cultural investment would help to regenerate a fairly forgotten inner city part of Leeds. (Much of my own photography in this text was produced in a 5-miles zone emanating from the Royal Armouries site.) At present, the immediate site has proven to be disappointing from a retail perspective, with many businesses complaining of the lack of consumer 'foot-fall'. Based upon my recent visits to the area, the regeneration zone around the Royal Armouries might be described as a 'ghost' zone, largely populated by high-density 'new-build' rented accommodation, and some purpose-built students' accommodation blocks. Anecdotal evidence received from my own undergraduate students confirms an area that is disconnected from the core social life of Leeds. One could include the Leeds Round Foundry Media Centre (opened in 2005) in the discussion of partially successful regeneration projects in Leeds. Built on the site of the former engineering works established in the late eighteenth century, the new site is emblematic of sites across the so-called Northern Power House, which has attempted to establish local regeneration, in the wake of signature arts and heritage projects. Of these, the most effective regeneration project has been the Salts Mill, in the model village of Saltaire, near Bradford, a converted textile mill, which incorporates both artisan small businesses, alongside the now famous Hockney 1853 Gallery.

References

Adorno, T. W., & Horkheimer, M. (2002). *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments* (G. Schmidd Noerr, Ed. & E. Jephcott, Trans.). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Althusser, L. (1970 [1969]). Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation). *La Pensée* journal.

Anderson, E. (1967 [1952]). *Plants, Man, and Life*. University of California Press.

Anderson, E., & Thomas, W. (Eds). (1960). *Man's Role in Changing the Face of the Earth*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Assmann, J. (1995 [1988]). Collective Memory and Cultural Identity. *New German Critique* (pp. 125–133), No. 65, Cultural History/Cultural Studies (Spring–Summer). (J. Czaplicka, Trans.). Duke University Press.

Assmann, J. (2008 [1992]). Communicative and Cultural Memory. *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook* (pp. 109–118). De Gruyter.

Assmann, J. (2011). Moses the Egyptian: The Memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism and Collective Memory and Cultural Identity. In J. K. Olick, V. Vinitzky-Seroussi, & D. Levy (Eds.), *The Collective Memory Reader*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Augé, M. (2004). *Oblivion* (M. Jager, Trans.). University of Minnesota Press.

Bachelard, G. (1994). *The Poetics of Space*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Baker, T. (2017). The Garden on the Machine. In C. Lindner & B. Rosa (Eds.), *Deconstructing the Highline: Postindustrial Urbanism and the Rise of the Elevated Park*. Rutgers University Press.

Barndt, K. (2010). Memory Traces of an Abandoned Set of Futures: Industrial Ruins in the Postindustrial Landscapes of Germany. In J. Hell & A. Schönle (Eds.), *Ruins of Modernity*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Barthes, R. (1982 [1980]). *Camera Lucida*. New York, NY: Hill and Wang.

Berman, M. (1970). *The Politics of Authenticity: Radical Individualism and the Emergence of Modern Society*. New York: Atheneum.

Birge-Liberman, P. (2017). The Urban Sustainability Fix and the Rise of the Conservancy Park. In C. Lindner & B. Rosa (Eds.), *Deconstructing the High Line: Post Industrial Urbanism and the Rise of the Elevated Park*. Rutgers University Press.

Brenner, N. (2009). What Is Critical Urban Theory. *City, 13*(2–3), 198–207.

Brogden, W. J. (2007). Forensic Intimacy: A Digital Exploration of Non-Place. *Colour Design & Creativity*, 1(1), 1–12.

Coates, P. (1998). *Nature: Western Attitudes Since Ancient Times*. Polity Press.

Corner, J. (1999). Eidetic Operations and New Landscapes. In J. Corner (Ed.). *Recovering Landscape: Essays in Contemporary Landscape Architecture*. Princeton Architectural Press.

Corner. J. (2001). Landscraping. In G. Daskalakis, C. Waldheim, & J. Young (Eds.), *Stalking Detroit* (pp. 122–125). Actar Press.
Corner, J. (2006). Terra Fluxus. In C. Waldheim (Ed.), *The Landscape Urbanism Reader*. Princeton Architectural Press.
Corner, J. (2017). Hunt's Haunts. In C. Lindner & B. Rose (Eds.), *Deconstructing the High Line: Postindustrial Urbanism and the Rise of the Elevated Park*. Rutgers University Press.
Dillon, B. (2014). *Ruin Lust: Artists' Fascination with Ruins, from Turner to the Present Day*. London: Tate.
Draaisma, D. (2015). *Forgetting: Myths, Perils and Compensations*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.
Empson, W. (1974). *Some Versions of the Pastoral*. New York: New Directions.
Flusser, V. (2000). The Gesture of Photography. In A. Mathews (Trans.), *Towards a Philosophy of Photography*. Reaktion Books.
Foucault, M. (2008 [1967]). Of Other Spaces. In M. Dehaene & L. de Cauter (Eds.), *Heterotopia and the City: Public Space in a Postcivil Society* (pp. 13–29). Milton Park, UK: Routledge.
Garrard, G. (2012). *Ecocriticism* (2nd ed.). Routledge: London and New York.
Giddens, A. (1990). *The Consequences of Modernity*. London: Polity Press.
Gifford, T. (2009 [1999]). *Pastoral*. Routledge.
Glotfelty, C. (1996). In C. Glotfelty & H. Fromm (Eds.), *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology*. University of Georgia Press.
Gopnik, A. (2001). *Joel Sternfield Walking the High Line*. Göttingen: Pace/MacGill Gallery and Steidl.
Heidegger, M. (1962). *Being and Time* (J. Macquarrie & E. Robinson, Trans.). Blackwell.
Hetherington, K. (1997). *The Badlands of Modernity: Heterotopia and Social Ordering*. London: Routledge.
Heynen, N., Kaika, M., & Swyngedouw, E. (Eds.). (2006). *In the Nature of Cities: Urban Political Ecology and the Politics of Urban Metabolism*. London: Routledge.
Huyssen, A. (2010). Authentic Ruins: Products of Modernity. In J. Hell & A. Schönle (Eds.), *Ruins of Modernity*. Duke University Press.
Ishiguro, K. (2005). *Never Let Me Go*. Faber and Faber.
Jackson, J. B. (1994). *A Sense of Place, a Sense of Time*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.
Jacobs, J. (1961). *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. New York: Vintage Books.
Kahn, L. (1953). Philidelphia City Planning Traffic Studies. *Philidelphia PA*. Architectural Archives. University of Pennsylvania.
Kieran, M. (2007). A Photographic Sense of Industrial Beauty. *Terra Nullius: New Urban Encounters: Jim Brogden*. Fugitive Publications.

Kunstler, J. H. (1993). *The Geography of Nowhere*. Touchstone and Simon & Schuster.

LaFarge, A. (2014). *On the High Line: Exploring America's Most Original Urban Park*. New York: Thames & Hudson.

Lindner, C. H., & Meissner, M. (2014). Decelerating Amsterdam: Visual Culture, Globalization and Creative Urbanism. In H. S. Donald & C. Lindner (Eds.), *Inert Cities: Globalisation, Mobility and Suspension in Visual Culture*. London: I.B. Taurus.

Lindner, C. H., & Rosa, B. (eds.) (2017). *Deconstructing the High Line: Postindustrial Urbanism and the Rise of the Elevated Park*. Rutgers University Press.

Lippard, L. R. (1997). *The Lure of the Local: Senses of Place in a Multicentered Society*. New York: The New Press.

Lukács, G. (1971). *History and Class Consciousness* (R. Livingstone, Trans.). London: Merlin Press.

McKidden, B. (1989). *The End of Nature*. London: Penguin.

Merchant, C. (1992). *Radical Ecology: The Search for a Livable World*. New York and London: Routledge.

Merleau-Ponty, M. (1968). *The Visible and the Invisible* (C. LeFort, Ed. & A. Lingis, Trans.). Northwestern University Press.

Millington, N. (2017). Public Space and Terrain Vague on São Paulo's Minhocão: The High Line in Translation. In C. Lindner & B. Rosa (Eds.), *Deconstructing the High Line: Postindustrial Urbanism and the Rise of the Elevated Park*. Rutgers University Press.

Morgan, A. (2014). The 'Living Entity': Reification and Forgetting. *European Journal of Social Theory, 17*(4), pp. 377–388.

Moss, J. (2012). 'Disney World in the Hudson', *New York Times*.

Olwig, K. R. (2001). Landscape as a Contested Topos of Place, Community, and Self. In P. C. Adams, S. Hoelscher, & K. E. Till (Eds.), *Textures of Place: exploring humanist geographies*. University of Minnesota Press.

Parkins, W. (2004). Out of Time: Fast Subjects and Slow Living. *Time and Society, 13*(2/3), 363–382.

Patrick, D. J. (2017). Of Success and Succession: A Queer Urban Ecology of the High Line. In C. Lindner & B. Rosa (Eds.), *Deconstructing the High Line: Postindustrial Urbanism and the Rise of the Elevated Park* (pp. 141–165). Rutgers University Press.

Peck, J. (2009). 'The Creative Fix', *Variant, 34*, pp. 5–9.

Peck, J. (2011). Creative Moments: Working Culture, through Municipal Socialism and Neoliberal Urbanism. In E. McCann & K. Ward (Eds.), *Mobile Urbanism: Cities and Policymaking in the Global Age* (pp. 41–70). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Raban, J. (1974). *Soft City*. London: The Harvill Press.
Rogner, C., and Schumacher, P. (2001). After Ford. In Daskalakis, G., Waldheim, C., and Young, J. (Eds). *Stalking Detroit*. Actar Press.
Riordan, C. (2004). Ecocentrism in Sebald's *After Nature*. In J. J. Long & A. Whitehead (Eds.), *W. G. Sebald—A Critical Companion*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
Shane, G. (2006). The Emergence of Landscape Urbanism. In Waldheim, C. (Ed). *The Landscape Urbanism Reader*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press.
Smith, N. (1996). *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City*. London and New York: Routledge.
Smithson, R. (1996). In J. Flam (Ed.), *The Collected Writings*. Berkley: University of California Press.
Swift, S. (2009). *Hannah Arendt*. London and New York: Routledge.
Tate, A. (2015). *Great City Parks* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.
Till, K. E. (2005). *The New Berlin: Memory, Politics, Place*. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press.
Tousley, N. (2006). Roy Arden—Imagining the Real. *Roy Arden* (Exhibition 01.02–19.03.06). Birmingham, UK: Ikon Gallery.
Vogel, S. (1996). *Against Nature: The Concept of Nature in Critical Theory*. Albany: SUNY Press.
Vergara, J. C. (1995, April). *Metropolis*.
Waldheim, C. (2006). Landscape as Urbanism. In Waldheim, C. (Ed). *The Landscape Urbanism Reader*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press.
Wesselman, D. (2017). Programming Difference on Rotterdam's Hofbogen. In Lindner, C., and Rosa, B. (Eds). *Deconstructing the High Line: Postindustrial Urbanism and the Rise of the Elevated Park*. Rutgers University Press.
Zukin, S. (2010). *Naked City: The Death and Life of Authentic Urban Places*. Oxford University Press.

Index

J. Brogden, *Photography and the Non-Place*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-03919-6