

The Haunted Bog and the Poetry of Seamus Heaney

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Abstract: The article examines the haunting function of the bog within Seamus Heaney's bog poems through the theoretical lens of Jacques Derrida's *Specters of Marx*. Derrida's idea of hauntology will be used to show the haunting nature of the past upon the present with Derrida suggesting that 'a ghost never dies, it remains always to come and to come-back'. In this sense, the spectre that historically resides within the bog is unearthed and returns to haunt Northern Ireland during the late 1960s and 1970s. These spectres enable the poet to draw parallels between his world and that of a wider, older Northern European world. The progression of the function of the bog, for Heaney, will be shown through a selection of poems from *Door into the Dark*, *Wintering Out* and *North* and will reveal the absent presences that reside within Seamus Heaney's bog poems.

Keywords: Heaney, Derrida, spectre, bog, hauntology