

7 Sister-matic Cannibalism in the *Dying Breed*

Heterotopic Representations of Australia's Lingering Colonial Connectivity

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Introduction: The End Is the Beginning

This chapter explores the lurking presence of a young female in the 2008 Australian horror movie *The Dying Breed* (Dwyer 2008). It is her presence in tandem with the heterotopian or topographical imprint of the landscape she lives in that form the narrative enablers and overlay of this movie.

Within this cannibalistic palimpsest she typically appears as an ever-present side presence, that is, until the last few minutes of this movie. In these final frames she shifts from her usual a-central position of watching and waiting for death to unfold to a killing vector as she seeks to rip open the throat of an outsider. To paraphrase Elana Gomel, a spatial movement and spatial reversal of space as such represents the 'carving out of a space of resistance, carving out a space of freedom and change in the static landscape of social and psychological determinism' (2014, 140). In effect, as an emerging cannibal she 'represents a far more profound threat to the status quo' (Hagelin and Silverman 2022, xii).

She is also emblematic of the violent history of Australiana that led to the 1820 miraculous escape of Alexander Pearce. Incarcerated on Sarah Island, without maps, Pearce disappeared into the Tasmanian wilderness and before recapture ate his fellow escapees in their run from the colonial forces. Unnamed and unable to escape, the young girl also represents what Tosgang Fossi has termed 'colonial amnesia' (2019, 129). Just as the colonial powers tried to forget Pearce as did history, as an illegitimate child ignored by those around her, she is the epitome of the quasi-historical absence or complete omission related to the suffering and slaughter of one subaltern group by a colonial power. However, as Hastie (2019, 273) points out, it is the creation of 'cinematic imagination' that 'empowers memory-making in its endeavour to contest organized forms of social amnesia. Cinematic revisitation enables the drawing together strands of history that had previously been considered separate'.

With its emphasis on 'heterotopiac spatiality' (Pezet 2022, 120), the elements of 'cultural amnesia' embedded in this movie are pulled to the surface narrative. These are representational 'places of memory where each individual

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leaves a personal signature' (ibid). Where these historical memories are the result of cultural trauma, these representations become conjoined mirrors of the monstrous, which are metonymically revealed in an array of porous and doubled spatial configurations. These interconnected strings of metaphor home in on 'the anguish of transgression, zones of both deficiency and excess open abyssal non-relations' (White, Faramelli, and Hancock 2018, 10).

It is through a heterotopian slide of spatial representations in this movie that this eight-year-old girl gradually and systematically touches on the Tasmanian and Australian colonial past, finally becoming the central blood-soaked infusion of cannibalism. Not only is this the 'absolute marker of savagery and primitivism' (Githire 2015, 5), it is typically emblematic of the last resort of resistance towards repressive authority. In heterotopian texts the shift to the finale is often cyclical and is reached through bursts in what has been termed 'Gothic moments' (Wheatley 2006, 7). Similar to the 'tell-tale gaps' in hardcopy literature these brief blips of the uncanny as Gothic excess and violence initially 'drip feed' onto the surface, which gradually coalesce and build into memory patterns of spatial touchstone similarities. In cinema this building of a scaffold of visual pathways leads to the complete and violent breakdown of the familiar veil of normality that allows the monstrous to narratively explode.

As briefly touched on previously, the slide into this patterning in this movie is the path trodden by markers of the feminine. The surface level of this gendered film commences with a focus on two white couples venturing into the wilderness of south-west Tasmania. Within the first few minutes of the movie, it becomes clear that, like the British colonialists before them, the two males, Jack (Nathan Philips) and Matt (Leigh Whannell) represent the total unpreparedness of the British to cope with the Tasmanian landscape and their arrogance in believing they could tame this wilderness. On the other side of the cinematic coin, the two women are portrayed in the same light as the convict women who were forced onto these wild shores. Bec (Melanie Vallejo) is oblivious to the actual nature of the wilderness and is often portrayed as being more interested in sex with Jack. Nina (Mirrah Foulkes) is the direct opposite. Her sister disappeared in this wilderness eight years beforehand, with the last contact a letter and photograph of a thylacine [Tasmanian tiger]. Like her missing sister, as a scientist she is aware of her surroundings and seeks to understand and appreciate the web of the Tasmanian natural world. However, as the film moves forward, it becomes clear that while she appreciates the beauty of the wilderness, she is Gothically and heterotopically aware that, as Botting states, 'nature informs the entire cruel rationality: "she" is cause, law, reason, energy; she is locus of creation, destruction, and absolute indifference' (2017, 28).

The south-west area that frames this narrative and the cannibalism of Alexander Pearce is the Gothic heart of an Australian Gothic Island state. As Nina, Matt, Jack, and Rebecca venture into this epitome of wilderness, they increasingly encounter living human remnants of Pearce's escape, who either

want them to leave or to consume them. One of this group is a young prepubescent female who literally and mimetically enables the shedding of blood to seep into the surface narrative. As revealed in the memorabilia hanging on the walls of the decrepit buildings, this group carefully guard the spatial representations of the false ideologies, repressed trauma, and socio-cultural fears of the original British colonisers.

As a shadow, this eight-year-old female is emblematic of the slithers of darkness ever present in Gothic narratives, especially those related to colonialism. These often humanesque foci are disturbed creatures in themselves, acting visually as multidirectional deformed discourse linkages between historical and contemporary populations and places: 'suspended between space and time and belonging to neither. ... traces and shadows both of the past and of the future, expressing the way in which the certainties of yesteryear are corroded by fears of today and tomorrow' (Gomel 2014, 64). Further, as Mukherjee points out, all colonial-based narratives must also be read as cartographic formations and understood through a reflexive analytic process of linearity and circularity. This reflects the underlying epistemological framework of English cartographic-based colonialism and their use of this axiological lens that facilitated an understanding of:

the dominating order of the empire.... It is through these theoretical practices that mentally constructed spaces steadily acquired identity with physical and social space. The articulation of colonial space which worked with representations became a crucial feat in sustaining the bases of power, control and governance, first of the empire and later for the nation.

(Mukerjee 2021, 205, 268)

The intertwined process of circularity and linearity is enacted within the spatial tracing of this prepubescent and androgynous-looking female as she enters a physical spiralic directionality. She often appears to be a parallel character, and at times a silent reoccurring back-story presence. Thus, for much of the movie 'she is and is not' herself. In this sense of uncertain spatial vector, she is the silent monstrous that 'holds together and at the same time sets in motion a series of spatial, temporal, ideological and affective dimensions of marginality and liminality' (Pitroli and Zubak 2022, 6). In anthropological-narrative terms regarding the monstrous, she represents what Bratlinger (2003, 179) calls 'survivals, or traces of the past that linger on into the present to reconstruct the past'. Seeming to have the potential to kill and to eat human flesh, she begins to step into the same vein of the silent serial killer trope. Despite her deep connection and relationship to the intersection of spatio-geographical trigger points of attacks on humans, the plot connections in this movie reveal her role is to play a wait and watch game, and to 'bring out all the folds of time relating to a place' (Westphal 2011, 143).

Paratextual Pointers: The Sliding Emergence of the Cannibal

The first segments of the movie are a paratextual, intertextual, and metonymic linkage to the prepubescent young female, and the indelible 18th-century colonial frames of thought carried to the southern continent. While the fear of sailing to the other side of the world is understandable, Wagner contends that colonial thought was a palimpsest layered with apocalyptic visions, which he termed as ‘terminal images’ (1982, 20). Overall, theirs was a cartographic and geographical consciousness, an ontology that viewed the entire known and unknown world as theirs for the taking. Entwined in this perspective was their use of ‘cartographic images and national iconography in general, which depicted British territory as female’ (Mukerjee 2021, 106). While there was a seeming rape and penetration embedded in this visual mindset, it was also offset by a deep fear and uncertainty of the female body. Underpinning this was the bipolar colonial perspective that while they hoped ‘the so-called primitive races will soon vanish from the earth’ (Bratlinger 2003, 199) there was connected to this a white supremacist anxiety of the times ‘about white, or more specifically English, racial degeneration’ (Bratlinger 2011, 3). These British apocalyptic fears were especially expressed in the literature of the times, in themes of the fear that English violence in the colonies would be revisited on itself, and there would be cultural ‘suicide by internal barbarism’ (Bratlinger 2016, 178).

As is the purpose of paratext, the first section of this triptych reveals the ‘sense of the inner rhythm of the text, ... an intertextual ripple of the narratives storyline towards itself’ (Angelaki 2023, 9). The first brief component reveals a map of Tasmania showing the site of Sarah Island, which metonymically contains all of the British fears. As the southernmost point of their Australian occupancy, and as occurred in their sites of other southern possession, this locational coordinate became a self-fulfilling prophecy known as a place of ultra-violence and deprivation. Such was the carnage wrought on the convicts sent there, both the prisoners and free settlers who arrived shortly after cartographically ‘referred to this isolated island as Transylvania’ (Buckman 2008, 155). Tasmanian lore has it that this label was specifically coined from Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*, and the first diary entry of Jonathan Harker.

Slipping into a close-up perspective, the second section of paratext shows a close-up frame with the name Alexander Pearce being listed in neat colonial cursive script. In his seminal work, Bergson maintains any visual capturing of spatialised time or reference to an unseen person is a ‘ghost of a space, haunting the reflective consciousness’ (Bergson 2010, 99). Specifically, this kind of specific framing showing writing in action as an ordered process activates the ‘temporal and spatial coordinates of dominant spatial geographies’ (Brousseau 2017, 14). Hence, this form of focus behaves in the same way as film, situating an actual person in a close relationship between the view, the viewer, and the screen simultaneously creating spatio-temporal coordinates. The ordered

list and neatness of the script stands in direct contrast to the chaos, horror, and monstrosity of Tasmania's Gothic landscape. However, two other elements of oppositional axiological impressions are also embedded in this textual flow. While instances of this form of condensed on-screen-script aims to reveal the stability of the dominant culture and to eliminate societal differences and points of disorder, in a heterotopical sense in excluding the broader horizon lines as spatial orientation, this brief insertion exophorically speaks to another narrative of possible of rebellion.

Barrows has demonstrated that this form of intertextual insert was a common written modality in colonial horror narrative, such as found in the work of Rudyard Kipling. While signifying a 'comfortable precision' with the societal *status quo*, at the same time it signifies a 'refusal to allow the errant back into English society' (Barrows 2016, 52). He further contends that however ethereal this process of signification was, it at least partially conjoins a representation of a life that lay in another space and country as a component back story. Though not appearing explicitly on paper, it was deemed nonetheless just as tangible. In the same way, in today's semiotic cinematic forms a visual focus on writing is a discursive referent to those suffering complete dislodgement from a dominant cultural power. This results in 'unheimlich displacement' (Sugarman 2022, 153), where a character's existential psyche drifts in the hope of finding stasis and a sense of attachment in their surroundings. In a mimetic sense, the young nameless female represents Pearce's sense of dislodgement and prefigures the psycho-social state of the clan she finds herself living in.

The filmic handwritten note then cuts to a scene of a convict running from uniformed guards and dogs. Eventually a guard corners the escapee and names him as Pearce. The escapee spins around and in a vampiric-like act tears out his entire neck in a single bite. With other soldiers approaching he kicks the bloodied neck to a waiting thylacine that devours it. While clearly a reference to one of the escapes of Alexander Pearce, according to Auerbach this form of vampiric act is a signifier of 'an assertion of ownership' (1997, 71). However, for Pearce this was a false hope as soon after his final escape he was eventually hanged and his body sent to America where it was dissected.

This paratext locates this film in the context of refocusing cultural memory and national pain. It is the emblematic outcome of European arrival that set Australia on a disturbing trajectory. 'Empires move outward in space as a way of moving forward in time; the "prospect" that opens up is not just a spatial scene but a projected future of development exploitation' (Mitchell 1994, 17). The problem is that unresolved pain, either personal or national, eventually breaks out in violence. Shot with a sepia filter, this third phase of paratext gives the impression of a newspaper article fading with time and the associated loss of importance. This first section commences with the famous 21 seconds of actual restored footage of the thylacine in Hobart Zoo. Wandering around its fenced enclosure it is clearly distressed. While the most

obvious implication is the total extermination of thylacine itself wrought by graziers and pastoralists, the small cage in which it is confined also speaks exophorically to the space outside of the enclosure. In an heterotopian perspective, all caged or enclosed spaces represent a process as well as a place. In these sites corporality becomes an intrusion and a means of decentring, and where exterior and interior 'pass through one another and reflect one another' (White 2018, 81). While this short paratext is also a clear link to the British concept of *Terra Nullius* and the belief that nothing in Australia was of any value, this brief excerpt of entrapment is also a mirror double of the British fear of their own self-extermination.

From Paratext to Cinematic Text: Sounds of Silence

At the conclusion of the paratext, the notions of heterotopic disorder, confusion, and forestation become fused with silence in the narrative flow. In all the ensuing dialogue, the towering environment and young girl speak a mute mimetic connection of disorder, as death and cannibalism begin to occur as the four friends encounter both the young girl and her adult companions. As Nixon emphasises, meaning in any text 'resides not only in its contemporary relevance but also in its historical resonance' (Nixon 2022, 2).

It is also generally accepted that any use of silence or silenced humanity in Australian cinema indicates a site of monstrous exclusion, trauma, and absence of meaning. Another point that begins to subtextually focus on the young girl is that spaces of quietness can also be indicative of a monstrous return, one that that will fill a social void with the unexpected or uncanny — historical resonance with this is found in that court and colonial records of the period called Pearce 'the quiet man' (Collins 2004, 34). However, in yet another facet of this polyvalent narrative resonance to the silence, in Gothic texts strings of silence indicate the return of the repressed; a form of the original mute being will inevitably resurface. This creature will have a deep sense of absence and seeks to 'mark restored borders with sense, subjectivity and order' (Botting 2008, 28). This shift comes as a portent of dire issues, as this narrative monster also represents the need for the repressed contemporary society to be restarted in order that authentic social structures could possibly be reclaimed. In touching on this point Colebrook makes it clear that from a heterotopic perspective, societal 'unmaking and return to a clear slate' (2018, 161) of a societal group in a post-repression stage is unpredictable: 'Action, unlike making, is messy; it does not fabricate according to a model, and because it does not issue in a distinct product it cannot be reversed or erased' (Colebrook 2018, 161).

Linking the young girl's silence and concepts of 'return and unmaking', the movie shifts into the narrative proper, with a scene showing the arrival of Matt and Nina in Tasmania and their meeting with Jack and Rebecca. As an Irish zoologist, the impetus for Nina's journey is that her sister had sent a photo of a thylacine's paw print eight years previously, before she too

vanished in the wilderness. Their departure by four-wheel drive into the wild to hunt for evidence of a thylacine continues the Irish connection to Pearce, but also as redoubling of a thread already marked as death in a Gothic wilderness. As Botting notes, any form of redoubling in Gothic narratives 'signifies duplicity and an evil nature' (1995, 68). The mention of the thylacine is also repeated as a Gothic double, which when specifically connected to death seems to 'assure immortality and then promises death' (Smith 2000, 151). The journey out of civilisation by the four friends is heavily nuanced by further references to the Tasmanian elements of forest and riverine wilderness. As indicated previously these foci are uniquely marked as being not only being dark in nature, but also totally unruly spaces that nurture darkness. The meeting zone of rivers and forest in this part of the world are almost impenetrable, representing the inescapable presentness of the past.

Another set of redoubling is also embedded in this linear journey. The metanarrative written across Australian literature and film is often underpinned by masculinity; however, Tasmania is different. While the laconic male of the outback, bush, and desert metaphor underpins the mainland landscape narrative, the Tasmanian trope of masculinity is at best ambiguous. Often located within a wild landscape schema, which is perceived to be Gothic in nature, the male figures inhabiting this space are often framed being hyper-masculine where violence is the cultural capital. However, they also appear as being cowed by the seeming enormity and impenetrability of the terrain. With the core meaning the 'centrality of Gothic spaces is the relationship to the feminine body' (Halberstam 1995, 156), the resurrection of the silent and repressed figure briefly outlined in previous paragraphs is subtly being revealed as being feminine.

The end of the forest road for the group is at a ferry crossing. In Australian cinema, this place typically signifies a place of lawlessness, a site of frontier escape as resistance against authority. Despite the trials and ordeals, these thresholds should lead into a new form of existence, and as Collins points out, in Australian cinema this crossing over a definitive border is 'often in the company of a doppelganger or double' (2019, 38). In other words, the audience is able to clearly project and identify with the protagonist and sense a pathway and feel of place. In this instance, the still, dark water and lack of anything that bears a resemblance to modernity on the other side of the river sets up an emotional barrier, a mood of indifference and a borderline of foreboding. As Conley proposes, quite often in cinema death is personified, symbolically qualified, or 'contemplated at the edge of a river' (2007, 33).

While waiting to be taken across Matt notes that there is a blood-like substance in the water's edge, which Jack informs him is simply liquid from the T-trees that line the riverbank. With the forest on the other side marked as feminine, the T-tree seepage marks this river as feminine abject and sets up a hegemonic bloodline border. While typically this represents a demarcation line between a sense of the clean and unclean, as this blood reference is already in a site of isolation and a zone marked as a place of the Other, this area is

being framed in what Al-Mousawi (2021, 2) has termed, in other contexts, ‘a two-tiered ontology’. In other words, human components have been spatially labelled along an imaginary line separating the affluent north and a degenerate of less-than-human south. This mind-frame border metaphorically ‘dramatizes two modes and experiences of space and time that unfold in the same site but neither meaningfully mix nor collide’ (Al-Mousawi 2021, 3). However, once these border zones are crossed, there is conflict and violence.

Adding to this feminine indicator of blood in this zone of uncertainty, Rebecca goes into the dense forest to urinate while waiting for the ferry. However, she becomes suddenly frightened and scurries out to the waiting group. In another form of ‘feminine as abject’ signage, as she clambers out there is a close-up shot of a headstone set in the bush at the ferry staging zone. The headstone bears the inscription marking the site where the colonial soldier in the paratext was killed by Alexander Pearce.

The cannibalistic aggression begins to emerge as soon as the four young people are on board the ferry and Matt notices a young, disheveled girl, sitting down and singing the Pieman Song. Matt tries to engage her in conversation, and she bites him. The ferry operator roughly pulls her into the back of his cabin. There is no hint of their relationship other than the male has a semblance of control. From this point on she does not speak again in the movie, and so becomes: ‘a murmuring absence, out of which things may emerge, a space not of simple absence, limit, opposition, inversion, transition, or discontinuity, but where a language to infinity may appear in a flash, darkly, and brilliant in a moment of transgression’ (Botting 2017, 32). Once on the other side the group of four find themselves in a dilapidated village called Sarah. While this reference was a none-to-subtle attempt at a connection to Alexander Pearce, there is also a linkage to the paratext in that all who live in this village are also trapped. By extension, the young girl is trapped within an inner drive that appears to be perfectly acceptable in her context of situation. In a heterotopic sense, she is space where meaning has collapsed, which is reinforced when the four friends are leaving. As they begin to put their gear into the inflatable boat to go upstream, Nina notices that she has left her camera in the car. Once found, she begins to return to her friends by the boat, but notices the young girl is fixated on a litter of puppies being bludgeoned to death by an older woman. Covered in the dog’s blood the woman tells Nina: ‘The mother and father were brother and sister. I told them this would happen’. While clearly a reference to the inbred nature of Sarah, the young girl’s fixation with this killing and Nina’s repulsion is also commensurate with the instability that occurs when blood, boundaries, and bodies from different worlds encounter each other without finding common ground or consensus.

More so, the young girl’s engagement with the death of young animals represents the beginning preoccupation of many emerging serial killers. Clearly, she has begun to demonstrate a sense that any bodily form is a mere spatial surface to be broken into or penetrated. Deeply psychosexual in nature, once again the elements in the paratext resurface, emphasising the

focus on sexuality and identity being equated with forced enclosure, blood-letting, and complete disassociation from her emotions.

When Nina gets back and they begin loading the boat, she notices that Jack is carrying a crossbow. When challenged he makes a comment, 'when in *Deliverance*-land you have to be prepared'. This statement, with its psycho-sexual inferences of backwardness and inbreeding, not only pulls the heterotopic framing of *The Dying Breed* into a broader international cartographic and spatial significance, it also reveals the purpose of heterotopic framing and that of horror cinema. In connecting the concepts of the 'deeps souths' from the northern and southern hemispheres, these cinematic references highlight the actual foundational aspects of the surface crises experienced by both cultures through colonial occupation. Drawing on the work of Holohan (2015), these representational spaces symbolise deep unresolved issues of power and power struggles. Cinema is the primary modality that allows the portrayal of a space in crisis, focusing on its metonymic nature,

of repetition and restoration into crisis through its encounter with an external world characterized by ceaseless flux. However, the starkly visual nature of this opposition within the film functions to make this conflict all the more explicit and reveals just what is at stake in the desire to demarcate a space that may be called 'home'.

(Holohan 2015, 186)

In another direct transtextual visual reference to *Deliverance*, the four friends find a manmade dam that is not shown on their map of the river, which blocks their journey up the river. Avery argues that these forms of spatial omissions are 'ghostly matters', representing 'something more, where meaning — comprehension — and force intersect' (2008, 31). She further asserts that spatial deletions are linked to people who have been overlooked, forgotten, or deleted from history.

This sense of human omission becomes compounded and emphasised as when the group look upwards, they see a male form on top of the embankment portrayed in the same silhouetted form as the hillbillies on the cliff tops in *Deliverance*. Just as in the earlier film the group's call to the figure overhead is also ignored. In a split-second sweep the male figure disappears, replaced by what looks like the young girl. From a heterotopial and spatial perspective this looking above, lack of connectivity, and vague images speaks to the holistic colonial idea that in this region their religious and cultural perspectives had been inverted. The first colonists believed that they had been sent to the Biblical abyss: 'the dark chaos, a gaping void' (Bronfen 2008, 30).

With heaven figuratively in high positions and hell bellow, the four friends are in the allegorical place signifying elimination, a non-space that represents the epitome of 'illness and felicitous affect, allowing a glimpse of the forever-out-of time space, ... where subjectivity is made as much as human life is lost' (Botting 2017, 55).

This sense of ‘forever-out-of time’ begins to narratively reach a crescendo from this point. In the same way searching a map for a specific point coalesces topographical 3D and 2D dimensionality, similarly because of the limitations of cinematic duration a situation of crisis occurs as all the associated heterotopic factors are emptied into an instance of acute immediacy. In *The Dying Breed* this occurs at a point of spatial disconnection. The narrative returns to the four friends retracing their river journey, finally coming ashore close to the dam wall in the wilderness. Trudging into the dense rainforest, a storm forces them to shelter in a series of caves, which appear to be a labyrinth of disused colonial mineshafts. These subterranean spaces once again link to the notion of the abyss, and as Gomel (2014) points out are equated with the opposite of the high positioning of embodied spatial mapping; the underground is heterotopically said to be ‘carnavalesque, oozing, primitive, bestial and devolved’ (182).

During the night Nina hears a noise and both she and Matt search outside and in torchlight see a thylacine. They awaken their companions, and Nina goes to retrieve her camera but finds the young girl standing in the dark. She takes her with her for safety and the group go into the surrounding bush. Finding nothing, Matt, Nina, and Jack return but Bec has been separated from them as has the young girl. In the torchlight Nina finds she is covered in blood, which she realises was on the foliage where she was searching for Bec.

In trying to return to the others, Bec is confronted by a disheveled male, who pushes her against a tree and tears out her throat. As the young girl watches, he then begins to eat large sections of her torso. Realising Bec has not returned they all move back to the forest, and in their search discover pools of blood. Finding the spot of the attack further coalesces this movie into smaller spaces and denser mimetic connections. As Botting (2017, 37) states, these confluences become a ‘cruel mimicry’. The place where clearly Bec was torn apart revisits Pearce’s savagery in the paratext, and moving over other plot points of cannibalistic carnage in this spiral towards a conclusion, the three friends meet one of the males from Sarah who leads them back into the mine tunnels to find their friend and the perpetrator. The young girl disappears from these frames. With all the metonymic associations of birth and rebirth, and the shedding of feminine blood, these tubular spaces propel the three friends out to the surface to find a small, dilapidated shack in the bush. Searching through this space, they find remnants of bodies, with Bec’s dismembered body strung up on butcher’s hooks. In a fit of rage Jack turns and falls into a man trap — a colonial device designed to capture escaped convicts. Nina runs back into the tunnels, followed by Matt. Eventually cornered on a bridge by two males, she escapes by falling backwards into the river below. Linking the appearance of the young girl on the dam wall and her ensuing disappearance and silence, Nina’s silent plunge to her death now symbolically connects these females to the trope of disappearance, which according to Bartoloni can be equated to cultural trauma and ‘relations of domination, cohabitation, absorption, oppression, erosion, marginalization’ (2015, 146).

In the final section of the movie, Matt has been interviewed by the police in Sarah, but having subsequently been drugged and tied to a chair is seen facing the young girl. As he turns his head, he sees Nina tied face down on a table and about to be raped by the males of Sarah. The young girl opens her mouth, and as the words, 'I'm hungry' escape it she lunges at Matt, seeking to tear chunks of flesh from his torso.

Conclusion

The young girl's change to cannibalism fits within Melby's assertion that wilderness-related cinema is a bifold representation of both 'resistance to the obsessive will of the film's protagonists' within 'a paradigm of psychological struggle' (2010, 7). Thrown into this underpinning sense of resistance and cognitive issues, this young girl's cannibalistic transformation is indicative of the result of the unresolved fears of the colonial powers that gave metaphoric birth to her invasive anarchy and revolt.

She is a form of monstrous prescience, a warning to the dominant culture in which she is trapped. *The Dying Breed* is narratively indicative of the wilderness effect on individuals and culture, in that without a stable social network the human psyche becomes disorientated and prone to kill. Left untreated and alone the human state becomes even more 'disordered, confused and wilder' (Nash 2004, 2).

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