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### Abstract

If globalisation can be described as an evolution of imperialism on a global scale, as postcolonial theorist Bill Ashcroft suggests, what does that mean for contemporary writing about animals? This paper examines how questions of globalisation inflect the representation of animals in postcolonial fiction, taking the examples of Julia Leigh's *The Hunter* (Australia), the recent film of the same name, and Laurence Fearnley's *Butler's Ringlet* (New Zealand). Their approaches differ in that both versions of *The Hunter* emphasise dangers associated with globalisation, whereas different reactions are in tension in *Butler's Ringlet*. However, I argue that in each case responses to animals figure as a strategy in the negotiation of globalisation, and encourage reassessments of local species relations in the process. I explore the implications of this approach to animals in terms of comments by Zygmunt Bauman about the potential for pluralism within globalisation.

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**Keywords:** *species relations, globalisation, fiction, postcolonial, pluralism*

Human power relations in multiple contexts perhaps inevitably affect natural environments and nonhuman species as well as human groups. As is the case for humans, the results of this can vary. Fredric Jameson observes that the phenomenon of globalisation has the potential to result in ‘a postmodern celebration of difference and differentiation ... a kind of immense cultural pluralism’ (56-57), but that if the assimilation that characterises economic globalisation also applies culturally, ‘what will be affirmed ... is the worldwide Americanization or standardization of culture’ (Jameson 57). In this latter respect, globalisation echoes the dynamics of cultural colonisation on a worldwide scale. However, Bill Ashcroft also argues that postcolonial strategies of resistance ‘are recapitulated on a global scale in local communities throughout the world’ (207). This paper explores ways in which these aspects of globalisation – assimilation, pluralism, and resistance strategies – inform representations of nonhuman animals in literature written by the descendants of European settlers. I examine the contrasting examples of Julia Leigh’s *The Hunter* (novel and film), from Australia, and Laurence Fearnley’s *Butler’s Ringlelet*, from New Zealand.

### Animals and Place

A lasting side-effect of imperialism, in many different locations, has been that postcolonial settler societies have experienced cultural identity crises requiring the negotiation of displacement and external influence. European settlers initially struggled to come to terms with landscapes and wildlife that defied their expectations and their Europeanising efforts (Curnow 20; Keneally 11, 22). Consequently, ‘[w]hite European settlers ... faced the problem of establishing their “indigeneity” and distinguishing it from their continuing sense of their European heritage’ (Ashcroft et al. 34). One way in which animals could inform this task is suggested by Elleke Boehmer: ‘The first and most obvious strategy was to ground ill-fitting cultural equipment in the ‘new’ geography by incorporating indigenous referents, local plant and animal imagery, and details of local habits and customs’ (207). This kind of strategy, I suggest, is also deployed in contemporary postcolonial literary responses to globalisation. Moreover, I find that nonhuman animals are being presented not just as imagery but in ways that promote attention to their lives, so that such literature both reflects and contributes to the increasing attention to real animals in a variety of contexts, popular and academic.

*The Hunter* and *Butler’s Ringlelet* differ considerably in their representation of globalisation, but animals are in both cases associated with responses to it. In Leigh’s 1999 novel and the recent film of *The Hunter* (Nettheim, 2011), fears about globalisation are presented in the form of a threat to an indigenous species, the Tasmanian ‘tiger’ or thylacine. Thylacines have been officially extinct since the 1930s, but in the narrative a single female thylacine has survived into the present, only to be pursued as a resource for an international biotechnology company. However, the hunter’s

relationship with her is associated with a desire to abandon his detached global identity, and her fate emphasises the importance of resistance to appropriative globalising trends. In *Butler's Ringlet*, globalisation is presented as commodifying Aotearoa New Zealand, and global economic interest outweighs the interests of animals in an agricultural context. However, through a growing appreciation for certain animals, the protagonist overcomes his discomfort with international mobility. In each text, it is notable that the representation of animals as facilitating humans' relation to place is also used to advocate new and better relations with animals themselves.

### Globalised Animals

Nonhuman lives as well as human cultures were subject to the European colonisation of Australia and New Zealand, which involved extensive appropriation and relocation of flora and fauna. In the texts under discussion here, animals are presented as similarly subject to globalisation, showing how the continuity between the phenomena of imperialism and globalisation also impacts upon other species.

Both the novel and film of *The Hunter* address the question of extinction, one of the most devastating results of human mobility for other species. The historical demise of thylacines, the species central to these two texts, may be attributable to a combination of hunting, disease (probably introduced), the destruction of the original environment and native prey species, and the introduction of other carnivores (Paddle 202). What this list implies is that, although significant efforts were made in some quarters to protect the species, its disappearance originates with European imperialism and settlement in one way or another. In the novel of *The Hunter*, international interests and intervention are again responsible for the death of the surviving thylacine. The biotechnology company that wants to obtain the thylacine's genetic material remains largely invisible, in a way that recalls characterisations of globalisation as amorphous and lacking any kind of centre (Bauman 59). The company is referred to only as a biotech multinational. There is no mention of its name, or any particular chief or headquarters anywhere. Moreover, its goals in terms of the thylacine appear to be part of a biotechnological cold war, hinting at international conflict in the offing:

[T]he developers of biological weapons were able to model a genetic picture of the thylacine ... declared capable of winning a thousand wars. Whether it will be a virus or antidote ... there is no question the race is on to harvest the beast. (Leigh 40)

The film specifies that the biotechnology company (here suggestively named Redleaf) wants a toxin that is found in the thylacine, so the animal's body is clearly to be the source of a weapon. In both versions of the story, the company's approach to the thylacine recalls Val Plumwood's description

of instrumentalism of nature, treating the animal as ‘one whose being creates no limits on use and which can be entirely shaped to ends not its own’ (Plumwood 142). The eventual death of what may be the last thylacine also emphasises the vulnerability of species endemic to small geographic locations, and the loss that an oblivious or otherwise detached global perspective might cause.<sup>1</sup>

In *Butler’s Ringlet* globalisation is not presented in such destructive terms. However, the novel again reflects the fear that global perspectives may reduce local differences to commodities. This does not involve an external appropriation of resources, as in *The Hunter*, but rather New Zealand’s marketing of itself for international consumption. Fearnley addresses two main ways in which this occurs. The first of these is tourism. Although tourism is a complex phenomenon which can function in a variety of ways, the most negative characterisations of tourism present it as a predefined, mediated, and performed consumption of a particular locality. In *Butler’s Ringlet*, Warwick and Dean, who are farmers in rural New Zealand, both display frustration at the increasing ‘pre-packaging’ of their country by the tourism industry. For instance, Warwick resents the ways in which the landscape is increasingly mediated by advertising. He starts to feel that ‘someone had decided that only by signposting the roadside could a location be rendered visible’ (174). Dean refuses to help tourists who are looking for scenery from Peter Jackson’s films of *The Lord of the Rings*. He too apparently resents the impression that New Zealand has been rendered ‘invisible’ beyond the meanings signposted in their guidebook. Both Warwick and Dean appear to feel that the marketing of their country to a global audience imposes upon what they consider ‘authentic’, by dictating how it is to be perceived. Dean, however, later comes to participate in the commercialisation of the local when he decides to produce organic beef for export.

Agricultural export is another New Zealand industry that capitalises on images of the country’s natural environment. For instance, Philip Armstrong finds evidence of local awareness of “‘concerns about animal welfare” as a major factor in influencing consumer choice in overseas markets’ and of resulting calls for ‘a re-branding of New Zealand animal produce as not just clean and green, but as “not-mean”’ (114). Fearnley appears to engage with such ideas in *Butler’s Ringlet* when Dean decides that he wants to try organic methods. He is interested in the impressions of Warwick’s wife, Sabine, who for him, represents an international perspective because she comes from Germany and now lives there again. She says to Dean:

I feel safer eating New Zealand lamb than German organic meat ... when I think of how animals in New Zealand live and then compare it to how European animals live ... New Zealand meat just strikes me as ... what’s the right word? (154)

Dean here supplies the word ‘safer’, meaning healthier for humans to consume. However, because he interrupts Sabine, the reader is invited to look for an alternative. If she also means that New

Zealand meat seems more *humane*, this would suggest a consumer preference informed by welfare concerns: rightly or wrongly, Sabine may think that animals used for meat in New Zealand have better lives. However, Dean's response concentrates on the country's 'clean and green' image: '[i]f overseas people thought New Zealand meat was safer than locally grown stuff, then imagine how they'd respond to New Zealand organic meat' (154). Welfare never quite surfaces, so instead an entrepreneurial attitude to animals and to New Zealand is perpetuated as part of Dean's plans to compete in the global market.

In these ways, *Butler's Ringlet* and *The Hunter* present globalisation as linked to commodification. Global industries, whether scientific, touristic, or agricultural, appear in these texts as fostering detachment from and commercialising the local, with negative consequences for animals. However, the protagonists also begin to overcome the problems of attachment and detachment associated with global mobility, and in the process, animals feature as both assistants and potential beneficiaries.

## Anchors

In the novel of *The Hunter*, the agent sent by the international biotechnology company to hunt the thylacine is characterised in a way that recalls what Zygmunt Bauman calls the 'tourist syndrome' of contemporary life: 'being in a place temporarily and knowing it, not belonging to the place' (Franklin 207). The novel's protagonist, an agent known only as 'M', is both geographically and emotionally detached, 'anchored by neither wife nor home, nor by a lover nor even a single friend' (Leigh 15). He seems to experience this as liberty. He is not envious of people who do have anchors of some kind, and is disdainful of their emotional dependence and of the symbols of it. He has known men 'who wouldn't go on a job without their lucky love-struck spoon' (34), and intends never to let himself fall in love: 'that's where those boys went wrong, they let it happen' (34). Instead of love or luck, M chooses to rely on his own precision, and instead of tokens, he carries coffee which he buries and then digs up again as a reward at the end of a hunt (25). As an agent without an anchor, M is global and globalising, willing to go anywhere and to appropriate the natural resources of any location. Martin David, the protagonist in the film version, reveals this determined independence through his refusal to work with anyone else. Whereas in the novel the fact that M has been sent alone makes him nervous, in the film, Martin insists, '[t]wo men is a security risk'. His contact says, '[i]t must be very nice for you. Not to need anyone'. However, in both texts he displays both a capacity and a desire to form emotional ties, and the animal and the local become interrelated in a way that encourages resistance to the metaphorical tourism associated with globalisation.

During the course of his mission, M shows signs of putting down roots in Tasmania after all. In the novel, his attachment to place is catalysed by the empathy which he develops for the thylacine. He seems unable to prevent the necessary speculation about his prey from developing into identification with her. Here, I read the novel as exploring the relationship between ‘reason’ and ‘sentiment’ where animals are concerned. One of M’s hunting tools is his imagination: ‘[i]f I have imagined you here ... then here I should set my snares. My imagination is my companion, my man who does the hard yards and reports back what he has seen’ (55). This tactic opens up a more empathic relation to his prey. He finds himself wondering, ‘[h]as she ... descended to picking at carrion? Is her striped and honeyed coat short and dense like that of a Doberman’s, or has it fallen to maggot-ridden mange?’ (66). M’s sensitivity to the thylacine, which is intended to help him find and kill her, is here translating into a capacity for sympathy that is at odds with the detachment he believes himself to possess. He is quick to correct himself when he begins to wonder like this; as a hunter, it is potentially counterproductive for him to think of the thylacine suffering physically or emotionally. However, this does not mean it is unrealistic to suppose that she might be, and M’s repressed reflections serve to foster empathy on the part of the reader.

When his prey remains elusive, M’s nascent relational capacities are transferred towards his Tasmanian host family, the widowed Lucy Armstrong and her children. As with the thylacine, he tries to understand their perspectives and motivations. He finds himself attracted to Lucy, and the more difficult the hunt becomes, the more he is drawn towards the family. After an undocumented eight weeks away, he requests a return trip to Tasmania, and it becomes apparent that he has developed an anchor in the Armstrong family. M still tries to rationalise, but cannot resist the thought ‘that maybe one day he might like to grow old on a farm, with loved ones around (loved ones!)’ (132).

In the film, Martin’s growing attachment to life among the Armstrongs instead fosters his compassion for the thylacine. The only evidence of him speculating about the thylacine’s life is when he says, ‘I wonder if she’s the last one, alone, just hunting and killing, waiting to die’. However, Martin becomes increasingly part of the family, getting distracted from the hunt and inspiring jealousy in Lucy’s neighbour, Jack Mindy. It is Lucy who raises the idea that the thylacine is ‘probably better off extinct. If it’s alive people will always want to find it, hunt it down’. Ultimately, Martin comes to agree with her. Though it occurs in different directions in each version of the story, his relationship with his prey and with the family influence one another, until he reaches a point where he wants to abandon his detached, global existence in favour of local belonging.

However, he does not realise his dream. When the Armstrong family disappears after an accident, he is devastated, and, by default, he returns to the hunt and kills the thylacine. Interestingly, the novel and the film versions of the story diverge at this point. In the novel, the

death of the thylacine marks the end of M's attachment to Tasmania. As he walks away towards his 'sweet warm hidden coffee' (170), it is clear that he has broken his human and animal ties to Tasmania, and is returning to his former global way of life. In the film, however, Martin ultimately kills the thylacine in order to end her suffering. This means that although her fate remains the same, Martin's relationship to the thylacine in the film inverts M's relationship to her in the book: it is founded on a sense of compassion inspired by Lucy, so his ties to the thylacine and the Armstrongs remain intact. He burns his bridges with his employer instead, calling to say that 'what you want is gone forever' and that he is 'going to see the sights'. He then proceeds to do exactly the opposite. Instead of falling back on his detached state of 'not needing anyone', he seeks out the Armstrongs' young son Bike, the surviving member of the family, presumably to start a new 'anchored' life. This contrast between the two versions of the story illustrates that the protagonist's relationship to the thylacine has an important impact on how he understands his relationship to the Armstrongs, and thereby on his position in terms of belonging versus global existence.

Warwick, the main character of *Butler's Ringlet*, is the opposite of M/Martin in terms of his initial relationship to place. He has a very strong attachment to his home in rural New Zealand, and he struggles to reconcile this with the effects of global human mobility. His hybrid German–New Zealand family has become separated, torn between his love of New Zealand and his wife Sabine's love of Germany. His friend Dean sees Warwick as '[l]ike a bloody rock or a mountain. Impossible to shift' (50). He has remained in New Zealand because 'it was possible to love somewhere as much as someone' (56). Over the course of the narrative, Warwick must find a way to reunite his bicultural family or risk being abandoned. Again, animals are significant in the representation and negotiation of these problems, and positive species relations are advocated in the process.

Warwick has begun collecting moths and butterflies, a hobby that is interwoven with his decision not to follow his wife and son Ecki to Germany. The practice of killing flying insects and pinning them down symbolises his own immobility and derives from his sense of distance from his family: '[s]earching for moths, he had felt some sort of connection with his son, his wife. It was as if, by staying up all night, he could keep in touch with them, be a part of their daily lives' (94). However, Ecki's questions about his methods make Warwick feel that his collection is unscientific and thus unjustified: he is not really interested in the moths at all. This leads him to compare his actions to colonial practices:

Occasional images of nineteenth-century naturalists would spring to his mind: men who killed and collected vast quantities of insects or birds in what seemed like total disregard for the impact on the environment. To be located among that group of people, now, in the twenty-first century – worse, to have taken so many insects for no apparent reason – struck him as shameful. (144-45)

Here Warwick is wary of the contemporary perpetuation of imperialist attitudes; this is the same threat that Ashcroft sees at work within globalisation, but articulated in relation to animals. Later, Ecki raises concerns about whether using a sugar solution to attract moths will hurt them, and decides the process is unscientific. 'He couldn't fully understand why, but Warwick felt ashamed. He felt a weight descend upon him: the certainty of having let his son down' (208).

Just as Warwick's collection stemmed from his refusal to leave New Zealand, his sense of shame over the moths now helps him to realise that 'his decision not to go to Germany was shameful. That his reason for staying behind was wrong' (208). The process of learning to see nature in new ways, under Ecki's guidance, helps him to countenance the idea of international mobility. Although he has previously visited Germany with Sabine, Warwick had at the time refused to appreciate the merits of its different ecology. In a European forest, Sabine commented, '[i]t's funny... to be surrounded by so much nature. I mean, you'd never hear so many birds or see all those flowers and mushrooms and deer and things in New Zealand, would you?' (179). However, Warwick 'couldn't shake from his mind the knowledge that in under ten minutes they could be standing alongside a six-lane road' (179). He has refused to accept the forest as a genuine wilderness. 'The German forest, he maintained, had been a fallacy. It was no more a place for nature than a safari park or animal enclosure in a zoo' (180). Now, however, he acknowledges that New Zealand is not an untouched world either: '[s]igns traced every inch of the Milford road, developers wanted to build a gondola over Key Summit ... Another few years and the whole area would be nothing more than exclusive wilderness lodges and customised dolphin-watching tours' (180). Finally, Ecki tells Warwick about the butterflies and birds in the same German forest which he had dismissed: '[y]ou can spend hours walking around and no-one knows you're there... I love it there. It's got everything' (213). Warwick realises that:

He had been used to large, open spaces – landscapes he could take in at a glance. He hadn't yet learnt how to move across small areas of ground. It was something he had learnt only once he had started searching for moths and butterflies. (213)

Although these searches involve killing until Ecki introduces him to new methods, this formulation nevertheless presents an ability to appreciate different scales, articulated as coming from new perspectives on animals, as helping to come to terms with new environments, and therefore with international mobility.

## Animals and Pluralism

If animals in these texts help humans to negotiate the experience of global culture, there is no question that they are being used to advance human ends. This is a problem faced in literary representations of animals generally. John Simons observes:

to write about a fox is a very different act from hunting one to death with hounds, but it is, none the less, a use of the animal for a means designed to further the aims of the human even where the intention is to alleviate the suffering of foxes. (87)

To this extent, even overt resistance to anthropocentrism is somewhat undermined by what might be termed literary instrumentalism. Yet if this is inescapable when representing animals in literature, then, as Simons suggests, sympathetic representation must still be better than none. However, Susan McHugh argues that the role of fictional animals is more complex than this. She uses an analogy with chemistry to illustrate that ‘interactions exceed any straightforward struggle over who is most important, even over who has agency’, and that ‘other creatures become important not just as supplements to human subject forms but rather as actors joining us’ (3). In the context of globalisation too, human–animal relations are more complex than simply appropriation or advocacy. The ways in which contact with animals assists in the negotiation of globalisation could theoretically be co-opted by globalising forces, perhaps to present a more positive façade. However, a significant feature of the representation of animals in these texts is that they are more than just vehicles.

The novel and film of *The Hunter*, by centring on the thylacine, clearly benefit from its pre-existing commodification and construction as a creature of legend, yet they convey a clear environmentalist message. The dominant ethos of the novel’s anti-hero protagonist runs contrary to that advocated by the book itself. Leigh keeps the real villain (the biotechnology company) and the eco-hero (the missing naturalist Jarrah Armstrong) largely out of sight. This allows her to complicate the remaining positions, presenting M with a degree of sympathy and the Armstrongs’ environmentalist friends with irony. M’s detachment starts to look like an incomplete defense against emotional suffering. The reader is also likely to experience frustration with two marijuana-smoking environmentalist characters who are supposed to be looking for the thylacine so she can be monitored. Instead, they agree that they would ‘tell the poor thing to run like the wind’ (155), but only after they had photographed her to split the profits: ‘[m]ate, you’d get a truckload of cash’ (156). In this novel the characters are never boxed into simplistic categories of good and evil. In terms of globalisation too, there is no straightforward divide between global and local relations to animals. However, there is no question of the novel’s ethical position. The authorial distance from the characters is always a distance from their relationships to the thylacine: from M because he kills

her, and from the environmentalists because they fail to save her. What the reader is encouraged to want, but cannot have, is the thylacine's escape. In this way, the novel underscores the need for protection for other species by *refusing* to represent it: the desperate lack of any effective conservation measures works as an urgent call for action. The drama of the novel is achieved through reader engagement with the thylacine herself, who becomes a figurehead for an environmentalist ethic.

The same ethic is more straightforwardly expressed in the film. The biotechnology company becomes more visible and more immediately frightening when a replacement agent appears and directly threatens Martin's life. Lucy's husband Jarrah remains out of sight, but her environmentalist friends are presented without irony, and, as previously outlined, Martin kills the thylacine out of kindness and rebels against the biotechnology company. This makes a much clearer, if somewhat more melodramatic distinction between 'good' and 'evil', yet allows Martin to make a clear shift in alignment from one to the other. Whatever the protagonist's final relationship to the thylacine, both versions of *The Hunter* use the species to make an urgent call for conservation of and compassion towards other animals.

*Butler's Ringle* appears somewhat less decisive in its approach to animals. Human relations with each other and with place are accorded more significance than animals, and there is certainly a sense in which animals are being used as representatives of place, yet there is a real advocacy of animal welfare at work. In Warwick's case, an instance of compassion is inspired by sheep in a trailer:

A disjointed jigsaw of noses and eyes had worked their way through the small gaps along the side of the trailer, faces disassembled and squashed, twisted as one to face the road. On top of the trailer, throbbing from the heat, was a mass of woollen hummocks, their line broken by the occasional raised head of a wide-eyed animal. (150)

This passage conveys an awareness of the sheep's physical suffering and fear, and the impression of their fragmentation seems to symbolise their approaching fate. However, there is never any suggestion that this inspires Warwick to reflect upon his own agricultural practices, which go unexplored in the novel. Dean always gets out of his truck to kill possums, because '[t]hat was the way to kill a possum – the decent way' (8). This hardly amounts to meeting on equal terms, but it suggests that some ways of killing animals are more honourable than others. Yet, like Warwick, Dean does not examine such issues in relation to his farming either. These tensions result in a certain incompleteness in the interrogation of human–animal relations.

However, Ecki's position with regard to animals in non-farming contexts is unambiguous in its opposition to exploitation. Ecki reveals that there is no good reason for Warwick's moth

collection, and it contrasts with his own non-interventionist bird-watching. Ecki carefully records what he has seen in a notebook, and only collects fallen feathers. When he goes to an aviary with Sabine in Switzerland, he is disturbed to learn that an eagle owl and a capercaillie housed next to each other are naturally predator and prey:

It had struck him as cruel that the people in charge of the aviary had put the owl and the capercaillie within sight of each other. Every day the owl would have seen its prey only a few metres from where it perched, and every day the capercaillie would have felt the eyes of the owl watching it. (113)

This response to captive birds makes one of the novel's most overt objections to thoughtless treatments of animals. The difference could be because Ecki is a child, or simply because Fearnley is repeating typical compartmentalisations of agricultural and other animals. However, given the level of attention that is given to human–animal relations in a variety of contexts, I suggest that the novel's position is not so much ambiguous as tentative in its opposition to animal suffering. While animals are not placed on centre stage as they are in *The Hunter*, there is a real concern at animal suffering, and the caution with which this is expressed may be due to the fact that it constitutes a challenge to far more mainstream attitudes. Fearnley is not echoing popular sentiment regarding extinct or endangered species: she questions widespread and broadly accepted practices like the killing of so-called pest animals and the treatment of farmed animals in a country dependent on agriculture. Thus, *Butler's Ringlet* raises concerns about human–animal relations without presenting simple answers.

Overall, the texts under discussion present interactions with animals as helping to establish belonging in local environments. This would imply a potentially significant role for them in helping to negotiate the experience of globalisation for postcolonial cultures. At the same time, the authors display genuine discomfort at human–animal relations and in particular, animal suffering, so that this use at least co-exists with a 'pro-animal' ethic. Concern is expressed over humans' increasingly global identity and the commodification of animals that can occur in the pursuit of global interests. *The Hunter* illustrates the vulnerability of very localised species in the context of human detachment from place, and the urgency of environmentalist and conservationist efforts. *Butler's Ringlet* is not concerned with extinction, but invites reflection on how global human mobility can and should affect our relationships with animals.

The attitudes to animals that are conveyed in these texts open up another possible interpretation of Jameson's ideas about the positive potential of globalisation. His description is of a celebration of difference and cultural pluralism, by which he means multiplicity of human cultures and ethnicities. There are elements in each of the texts which expand this towards an ecological

celebration and protection of diversity of species. As part of negotiating the negative cultural potential of globalisation, they illustrate the relevance of interacting and identifying with animals, in a way that presents animal lives as significant in themselves. This approach suggests the possibility of a cultural identity that includes animals not just as symbols but as members of a kind of *interspecies* global pluralism. Exactly what form this might take remains open, but it underscores that, whatever the effects of globalisation, ‘the global’ cannot, by definition, be limited to the human.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Ironically, Leigh was accused in some quarters of being appropriative and insensitive towards Tasmania. The text indeed conveys little sympathy for Tasmanian society, portraying aggressive logging workers and ineffective hippy conservationists. However, the novel’s frustration with these groups could alternatively be interpreted as a frustration with human attitudes more generally.

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