

caste' stockman Joe and the traditional 'Aborigine' Marbuck in Charles Chauvel's film *Jedda* (1955). Obviously these binaries are illusions, but their structure is more effective and more complex than their falsity. This reading draws on Daniel Hempel's generative paper 'Colonial Melancholy in Australia: Subjects, Environments and Peoples,' delivered at the Australasian Association for Literature's 2017 Conference. Hempel's nuanced theoretical reading shows how the temporal structures implied in articulations of colonial melancholy consistently imply and invoke the telos of the coming utopian settlement that will inevitably destroy what precedes it. As such elegiac turns like Thomas Mitchell's descriptions of the Murray-Darling,³ or Freudian tremors like those in Lawson's *The Bush Undertaker* or the 'knob of skull' in Slessor's *South Country* emerge with little ethical content. Formerly these textual patterns have been read as cracks or errors within colonial discourse (Lee, 22) but Hempel's more rigorous model of dialectical criticism shows that colonial articulations of conscience are often complications of, rather than gaps within, the substructure of colonial discourse.

Drawing on this dialectic the most indicative aspect of the antinomian dichotomy between the noble/debased and faithful/bloodthirsty is not its objects but its structure. Antinomies are mutually impossible—the struggle between Chingachgook and Magua clears the path for the manifest destiny of Cora and the nativised Natty Bumppo. Just as the apparent melancholy of the tamed wilderness, or the pillow of a dying race, is not a critique of colonialism but the conceptual labour itself, there is a deeper sense in which the brittleness of these binary tropes is not the weakness but the object of colonial discourse. The critical point of the Faust myth is the inevitable descent and these facile roles are not meant to be liveable or tenable; their actors are not meant to live.

The last methodological or theoretical point to emphasise here is that the illusory, forked and antinomian structure I have described is not unique or particular to the representation of Aboriginal or Indigenous peoples. Other forms of historical and theoretical scholarship have shown comparable and related linguistic problems—with other effects—in other structures of exploration literature and the broader conceptual tendencies of modernity. Robert Dixon and Paul Genoni have traced textual and temporal contradictions in the composition, curation, and publication of exploration writing. (This latter term brackets both primary accounts written by explorers, and secondary hagiographic or fictional stylings, and the distinction between the two can be tenuous given that many explorers also wrote fiction, Driver, 10.) Dixon notes that the explorer operated as a curious conceptual synecdoche of national time: 'the inland explorer had also to become the historian of his nation's past and the prophet of its continental destiny' (80). Conversely, Genoni locates a contradiction at the heart of exploration authorship itself, between the parallel narratives required to serve the contradictory interests of the imperial enterprise and the reading public: 'these two texts were in opposition' (37-38). Both of these analyses align with Adriana Craciun's Foucauldian argument in 'What is an Explorer,' where she reads the explorer as a false historical object, like the Romantic genius—a consumer product overwriting the diverse hierarchies of labour. I emphasise these arguments to indicate that the historical epistemologies my argument seeks to unsettle are already unstable.

Finally, any discussion of the global Indigenous in a colonial text should engage with the problems of linguistic subjectivity itself, which, in the pseudo-secular, Cartesian, positivist sense, is a relatively recent and far from stable object. The paradigmatic moment of the post-structural turn—in English—was Derrida's delivery of 'Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourses of the Human Sciences' at Johns Hopkins University in 1966. There he elaborated the slippery but powerful concept of *différance*, positioning the history of structure itself as a series of substitutions and metaphors that confect the illusion of presence, or certainty, through

