

Connecting Guatemala, Australia and the World: Violence in Horacio Castellanos Moya's *Senselessness* and Mark McKenna's *Looking for Blackfellas' Point*

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OVER thirteen-and-a-half thousand kilometres separate Guatemala City and the Bega Valley on the far south coast of New South Wales. However, the five or so years leading up to the new millennium saw both places host particularly significant attempts to recover and to thwart the recovery of the historical experience of war and the government-sponsored oppression of two Indigenous populations.

Guatemala's thirty-six-year civil war officially ended in 1996, with the Guatemalan government and a group representing the various left-wing rebel forces signing the final peace accord. During the Guatemalan Civil War, the staunchly anti-communist United States-backed military sought to eradicate leftist elements in the country. Barbara Harff and Ted Robert Gurr call the Guatemalan military's campaign an episode of 'repressive politicide' ('Toward' 364). Repressive politicides are 'mass murders targeted at political parties, factions, and movements because they are engaged in some form of oppositional activity' (Harff and Gurr, 'Toward' 363), and in Guatemala, as in much of Latin America, this violence is bound up with ideas about race that are informed by the historical process of *mestizaje*, the mixing of Indigenous and European peoples ideologically aimed at combining cultures rather than segregating them or forcing one to assimilate to the other. The ideology of *mestizaje* in Latin America is fraught. According to Richard N. Adams, it 'allowed idealizing the indigenous past without having to accept the present indigenes; at the same time it affirmed the identification with European civilization and culture' (177).

Until recently, Guatemala's Indigenous peoples – particularly the Maya – made up most of the country's population, and they still make up around forty percent of the population. Despite the ideology of *mestizaje* promoting homogeneity, nobody predicted the total disappearance or assimilation of the Maya in Guatemala in the twentieth century as European settlers predicted the extinction of Aboriginal Australians during colonisation. While Australia, like Guatemala, is multicultural, most of its multiple cultures are non-Aboriginal. Australia's multiculturalism is a product of settler colonialism, which Patrick Wolfe calls 'first and foremost a project of replacement . . . governed by a logic of elimination' (96). Specifically, Australian settler colonialism 'strives for the dissolution of Native societies' (Wolfe 96). While Aboriginal Australians make up around three percent of the population, Wolfe writes that 'the ongoing requirement to eliminate the Native alternative continues to shape the colonial society that settlers construct on their expropriated land base' (96). Though defined by Cold War politics rather than colonialism, there was a crucial racial dimension to Guatemala's repressive politicicide. Specifically, the Guatemalan military's focus on the mountains and rural areas where leftist guerrillas were operating served the dual purpose of also eliminating highland Maya communities.

In its 1999 report *Guatemala: Memory of Silence*, the Commission for Historical Clarification (CEH) concluded that 'agents of the State of Guatemala, within the framework of counterinsurgency operations carried out, between 1981 and 1983, acts of genocide against groups of Mayan people who lived in the four regions analyzed' (Rothenberg 189). Leading up to the CEH's report, many people involved in various efforts to collect evidence of the state-sanctioned violence against the citizens of Guatemala were themselves victimised. For example, the report *Guatemala: Nunca Más (Guatemala: Never Again)* was compiled by the Human Rights Office of the Archdiocese of Guatemala (ODHAG) and published in 1998. *Guatemala: Nunca Más* recorded the testimony of hundreds of survivors of, and witnesses to, the massacres perpetrated during the Civil War and was instrumental to the CEH eventually declaring the actions of the Guatemalan military 'genocide'. *Guatemala: Nunca Más* was presented by Monsignor Juan José Gerardi Conedera, then Auxiliary Bishop of Guatemala. Two days following the report's presentation, Bishop Gerardi was found bludgeoned to death in his home, assassinated by members of the military. *Senselessness* by Honduran-Salvadoran writer Horacio Castellanos Moya, originally published in 2004 and translated from Spanish to English by Katherine Silver in 2008, intervenes in the turbulent moment of Guatemalan history when narratives of acknowledgment assail those of denial, and the agents of historical violence aggressively try to push the past back.

Across the Pacific Ocean, governments and stakeholders were responding to increasingly loud calls to acknowledge and apologise for the systematic dispossession of Aboriginal Australians since European invasion. Australian historian Mark McKenna recounts the wave of responses from governments and stakeholders towards the end of his 2002 book *Looking for Blackfellas' Point*, focusing on the Bega Valley, the southern portion of Eden-Monaro, a federal electorate in the south-eastern corner of Australia. In the town of Bega, a crisis was taking place. Despite 'the formal political process of reconciliation in Australia' beginning in 1991 (McKenna, *Looking* 202–03), the Bega Valley Shire Council was holding fast to a comforting story that had formed in the area as one of the more recent iterations of a narrative of denial that had developed since settlement. McKenna describes a belief in the community that 'the deliberate murder of "Aborigines" happened everywhere but in the promised land of the Bega Valley' (*Looking* 203). McKenna writes that the approach 'was one way of trying to reconcile the dispossession of Aboriginal Australians with the need for a glowing account of the region's history' (*Looking* 203). By 1997, reconciliation was a pressing issue Australia-wide, both politically and socially:

In May 1997, The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission released its report *Bringing Them Home: The National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families*. In the months following, governments, churches, community organisations and individuals across Australia debated the question of whether to apologise to Aboriginal people for the hurt and damage Australian governments had caused by removing Aboriginal children from their families. (McKenna, *Looking* 207)

The Bega Valley Shire Council debated its response to *Bringing Them Home* and decided against apologising, refusing to accept culpability (McKenna, *Looking* 209–10).

Both *Senselessness* and *Looking for Blackfellas' Point* enact the process of historical recovery. At the same time, they represent and critique the narratives of acknowledgment and denial that emerge and coexist during periods of violence. While Castellanos Moya's book is fiction and McKenna's is nonfiction, both react against the limitations of these labels. Tom Griffiths writes, 'Historians and novelists do not constitute inviolable, impermeable categories of writers' (159). Rather, 'History and fiction have often played complementary roles in shaping debates about dispossession and cross-cultural violence in Australia over the past century' (159). Indeed, Griffiths includes *Looking for Blackfellas' Point* among a handful of stories published in the 2000s that 'aimed

to remind us of the intimacy and familiarity of the frontier, of its visceral, violent reality, and also of its alternative human potential' (160). McKenna uses memoir to look at over one hundred and seventy years of violence against Aboriginal Australians but to avoid what Griffith's calls 'the aridity of the "counting the dead" debate' that was reducing the frontier conflict to a numbers game between historians and conservatives (160). Despite laying what McKenna nominates 'the groundwork for the politics of reconciliation' (*Looking* 223), he concludes that the frontier violence described in his book has yet to be duly acknowledged. Reading *Looking for Blackfellas' Point* suggests that the early instances of bloodshed and the massacre of Aboriginal Australians that McKenna records are typical of Australia's colonisation. Moreover, open warfare and active violence became a system of dispossession upheld at every level of government, from the British imperial overseers who enacted the violence, to the Bega Valley Shire Council, which endorsed it retroactively: an unacknowledged genocide of Aboriginal Australians.

While McKenna advocates exposing historical injustice, the unnamed narrator-protagonist of *Senselessness* is a writer from El Salvador who wants as little to do with the violence in Guatemala as possible. Nevertheless, he accepts an offer to edit 'a project that consisted of recovering the memories of the hundreds of survivors of and witnesses to the massacres perpetrated in the throes of the so-called armed conflict between the army and the guerrillas' (*Senselessness* 5–6). On the one hand, *Senselessness* represents what Nanci Buiza calls 'the diluted power of human rights reports, which often drown the victims' testimonial voice in statistical and historical data' (159). Confronted with 'lists of massacres and victims' names' (15), the narrator reimagines the violence recounted by the victims and, during a psychotic episode, even begins to re-enact the violence meted out by the soldiers. At one point, the narrator decides to 'release all restraints on [his] imagination' and turn a particularly gruesome testimony into a magical realist story (60). This episode represents a desire for stories that reiterate an exotic and exceptionally violent Latin American Other for audiences in the Global North to distance themselves from and define themselves against. By the end of *Senselessness*, however, Castellanos Moya has foreclosed any avenue, literary or historical, for avoiding or denying the visceral, violent reality of the genocide.

This article uses Lacanian psychoanalysis to look past the enormous contextual differences between the colonial frontier massacres that took place in Australia from 1788, and the politically-motivated mass murders and the consequent genocide of the Maya in Guatemala during the second half of the twentieth century, to locate important commonalities. Across time and space, it establishes a connection between murderous impulses in Australia and Guatemala

to supplement historical and postcolonial approaches to genocide with a global view that positions the subject at the centre of violence. Specifically, in *Looking for Blackfellas' Point* and *Senselessness*, it identifies a libidinal investment in an Other as the site of the excessive enjoyment that Lacan calls *jouissance*. Often translated as 'enjoyment,' *jouissance* designates an experience that exceeds merely taking pleasure in something. It designates the obscene lengths to which the subject must go to sustain desire in an object, or at least in the scene of its attainment by another. *Jouissance* is the excessive enjoyment ascribed to the Other who appears to possess the object of desire at the subject's expense. However, Néstor Braunstein complicates the pursuit of *jouissance*: 'Let us be clear: the *jouissance* of the Other is not in the Other (who anyway does not exist) but in the subject himself' (111). The subject invents an Other to fulfil the lack that traumatises it. Either as exceptional victim or exceptional victimiser, the Other is excluded from the community of desiring subjects that organises its enjoyment around the projection of transgressive *jouissance* elsewhere. Lacanian psychoanalysis holds such a projection responsible for phenomena ranging from love and hate to all varieties of discrimination (Cottrel 91).

Specifically, this article is informed by what Derek Hook calls 'the "racism as (the theft of) enjoyment" hypothesis' (244). This holds that the subject's inevitably doomed pursuit of enjoyment can be sustained or even replaced by an individual or collective effort to imagine the possibility of enjoyment elsewhere, as the exclusive domain of the Other. In the case of racism, Hook writes that 'the fact that we cannot attain the *jouissance* we feel we deserve results in perceptions of an unhindered, illegitimate, and underserved enjoyment on the part of cultural others' (247). Hook has defended this Lacanian hypothesis from charges of ahistorical, depoliticising psychological reductionism by noting that '*jouissance* is . . . more a *sociological* than in any way *psychological* concept' (262). Moreover, Hook notes that the hypothesis provides 'a provisional frame that challenges the analyst of racism to identify the various interconnected components of a prospective libidinal economy', including 'the narrative frame of ideological fantasy' (263). This article will argue that it is precisely such a narrative frame that Castellanos Moya's narrator constructs in *Senselessness* and that McKenna discovers while looking for Blackfellas' Point.

In the Bega Valley, McKenna unearths a narrative of denial in which either Aboriginal Australians or humanitarian 'city blow-ins' are cast as villains (*Looking* 147). This points to a national narrative where Aboriginal Australians are either victims or victimisers, but always exceptional. Castellanos Moya places his narrator in Guatemala, where humanitarian efforts are underway to achieve restorative justice for the Maya victims of the genocide. However, the narrator's intense libidinal investment in the Other's suffering reveals not only the

limits of *mestizaje* as a process of reconciliation, but also allows Castellanos Moya to criticise how libidinal investments in Latin America as a site of literary *jouissance* trap the region between magic and violence. Renata Salecl writes, ‘Lacan’s theory suggests an understanding of the problem of violence and speech that differs from that of structuralist and post-structuralist theories primarily because he does not give way on the issue of responsibility’ (118). This article argues that, beneath context, at the level of desire, lies a collective responsibility for the production of Others of and for whom violence is to be expected.

‘A stupid and dangerous bout of enthusiasm’

When the narrator of *Senselessness* discovers almost one thousand one hundred pages of single-spaced text lying on his desk, he is reassured because ‘three hundred of those pages were lists of massacres and victims’ names and the other eight hundred were very well written’ (15). *Senselessness* charts the dissolution of its narrator’s efforts to deny the impact of this ample evidence of violence while it reveals his complicity in the violence at the level of desire.

The narrator of *Senselessness* is forced to flee El Salvador after disparaging the country’s president. Strapped for cash and owing to ‘a stupid and dangerous bout of enthusiasm’ (5), he accepts an offer of five thousand dollars to edit a human rights report. This report is never identified as *Guatemala: Nunca Más*, nor is the setting of *Senselessness* ever identified as Guatemala. Yet, as Frans Weiser writes, ‘Castellanos Moya is careful to provide enough political and geographical allusions to suggest Guatemala City as the setting’ (4), while Christian Kroll-Bryce writes, ‘Even if not explicitly mentioned, it is clear that Castellanos Moya’s novel alludes to the Guatemalan peace process’ (382). However, not naming Guatemala represents Castellanos Moya’s aversion to a libidinal investment in Latin Americans as Other and Latin America as a place of exception where magic and violence predominate.

Castellanos Moya has been praised for challenging the assumptions of his readers in the Global North about Central America: ‘For a world readership that had grown used to seeing Central American locales both exoticized and pathologized, and had often yielded to simplistic stereotypes of the region and its people, the supple talent of Castellanos Moya has served as a bracing surprise’ (Birns 111). These simplistic stereotypes of Central (and, more broadly, Latin) America present a double bind for Latin Americans. On one hand, the Latin American Other is defined by the expectations and prejudices of audiences in the Global North conditioned by magical realism, exemplified by Gabriel García Márquez’s *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967). Speaking of a Latin America where the Cold War was hot and the War on Drugs still rages,

and where neoliberalism was first imposed and continues to reign, Castellanos Moya says, ‘Our reality has not been magical’ (‘Our Reality’). While there is a disproportionate level of violence in Latin America, the Latin American Other is also defined by the expectation of an exceptional violence. This is exemplified by Pablo Escobar and Joaquín ‘El Chapo’ Guzmán, by the Medellín and Sinaloa Cartels, and by military dictatorships and paramilitary death squads. Most recently, rhetoric surrounding a Central American migrant caravan headed for the United States conflated immigrants and Islamic terrorists, while US President Donald Trump called the immigrants ‘the worst scum in the world’ (Silverman). *Senselessness* steps back from these kinds of representations, even when it addresses violence and the legacy of magical realism.

The primary narrative of denial in *Senselessness* is not that which the perpetrators and profiteers of the military regime in Guatemala are willing to kill to maintain, but the narrator’s own identity. The narrator initially derives disinterested aesthetic enjoyment from descriptions of atrocities ranging from torture and cannibalism to infanticide. The first words of *Senselessness* are not the narrator’s. Rather, they belong to a Kaqchikel Maya man who witnessed the murder of his wife and four children. ‘*I am not complete in the mind*, said the sentence I highlighted with the yellow marker and even copied into my personal notebook’ (1). Regarding her decision to italicise the lines of testimony in her translation, Katherine Silver says, ‘These sentences are italicized to emphasize the fact that they have been decontextualized; when the narrator copies them down in his little notebook and obsessively reads them to himself or most inappropriately shares them with others, they become further decontextualized’ (7). The narrator takes the testimonies out of the context of the Truth Commission and obsesses over repeated images of violence, fascinated by the ‘soldiers and paramilitary men who had with relish cut to pieces their so-called compatriots’ (2). As the sentences, which the narrator likens to ‘concentrated capsules of pain’ (18), move further away from testimonial subjects such as the Kaqchikel man, the narrator and his notebook exceed the attempt to provide closure by recording, transcribing, classifying and analysing testimonies. The narrator and the soldiers approaching each other in their desire to transgress reveals what often goes unmeasured and unmanaged in historical projects like *Guatemala: Nunca Más*. In *Senselessness*, beyond the context of the Guatemalan Civil War, it is possible to discern what is symptomatic in violence against the Other.

The Maya and Latin American Other

After the Civil War, human rights activists in Guatemala were encouraging a process of ‘Mayanization’ to counter what Karine Vanthuyne calls ‘the

racial myth of the “Inferior Indian”’ (196). Vanthuyne writes, ‘Historically, Indios/Indígenas in Guatemala have been characterized as traditional, antimodern, and backward, while Criollos [Spanish-descended, white Guatemalans], and later on Ladinos [non-Indigenous, mixed-race Guatemalans], have been defined as Western, modern, and civilized’ (207). This image of an Other produced genocidal aggressiveness during the Guatemalan Civil War. Vanthuyne writes that ‘while indigenous people make up 40 to 60 percent of the Guatemalan population, 83 percent of the people killed in the internal armed conflict were indigenous’ (195). Vanthuyne outlines the process by which human rights organisations sought to convert the differences that saw the Maya Other persecuted into their source of pride: ‘Their traditions are no longer seen as symptomatic of a fundamental inferiority; rather, they should be read as proof of existence of an authentic alterity, one that legitimates their claims to the rights of the People: language rights, spiritual rights, socioeconomic rights, and self-determination rights’ (207–08). Concerned that this ‘authentic alterity’ is imposed from outside and elides the day-to-day experience of average Indigenous people, Vanthuyne writes that ‘this shift from an age-old image of the colonized, dominated “Indian Other” to one of overt “Mayan pride” is fraught with tension’ (196). It is a story about the diverse ethnic groups that comprise Guatemala’s Indigenous population that sustains the Maya as Other.

Senselessness takes place against the backdrop of efforts by humanitarians to champion the Maya Other – creating what Vanthuyne calls ‘a community of people connected through their suffering’ (199) – and counterattacks by those who consented to or carried out the genocide. However, the narrator approaches the report that is probably *Guatemala: Nunca Más* not as a humanitarian, but as a man of letters. In *Senselessness*, the narrator not only begins to empathise with the Other but also enacts violence against the Other that transgresses the stable pleasures of poetry and sex in ways that bear all the hallmarks of perversion and *jouissance*.

Arguing that the narrator resorts to imagination to supplement the report when it fails to stimulate him, Buiza writes, ‘It is important to note that such a lack of detail is a symptom of the diluted power of human rights reports, which often drown the victims’ testimonial voice in statistical and historical data’ (159). Michael Taussig says something similar about attempts to study violence in Colombia. Taussig writes, ‘Most books on violence published in Colombia . . . are statistical encounters with death and consist largely of squabbles with other people’s measurements Obsession with measurements obliterates even the glimmers of such an understanding of the desire to transgress’ (86–87). The narrator is obsessed with imagining rather than measuring violence. He and the soldiers are alike in their desire to transgress, and on this ground it

is possible to discern what often goes unmeasured and unmanaged in work on violence. By decontextualising the report and then reimagining it, the narrator models an intense libidinal investment in the Other's suffering.

By noon of his first day at work, the narrator has left his office at the archbishop's palace for a nearby bar. Over beers with his only friend in Guatemala, a self-styled poet named Toto, the narrator takes out his notebook and recites three lines of testimony. Toto warns the narrator that 'editing one thousand one hundred pages of stories about Indians obsessed with terror and death could break even the strongest of spirits' (19). Toto, the narrator tells us, was listening 'as if I had read him those sentences out of my notebook to convince him of the righteousness of a just cause I was committing myself to' (20). Rather, he says that 'what I really wanted . . . was to show him the richness of the language of his so-called aboriginal compatriots, nothing more, assuming that he as a poet might have been interested in their intense figurative language and curious syntactic constructions' (20). The narrator, a Ladino, embodies the Eurocentric tendencies of *mestizaje* ideology that Adams describes (177). He interprets the testimonies of the Maya as the raw materials for adaptation to European cultural standards and sets out to recontextualise them as literary fiction.

The narrator's most concerted attempt to recontextualise the report begins when he recalls 'one testimony that seemed like the plot of a novel I had once read and that on that Sunday morning came back to me along with an urge to take it on and release all restraints on my imagination' (59–60). He is encouraged by the fact that 'no such novel existed, only the desire to write it, to turn tragedy on its head, to turn myself into the suffering ghost of the civil registrar in a town called Totonicapán' (60). While alive, this unfortunate civil registrar is tortured by machete-wielding soldiers for refusing to turn over Totonicapán's register of the dead to their lieutenant. The narrator's novel 'would begin at the precise instant the lieutenant, with one stroke of the machete, split open the head of the civil registrar as if it had been a coconut from which he would remove the delicious white pulpy flesh' (61). The narrator says that 'the restless soul of the civil registrar would start to tell his story . . . for I am not a total stranger to magical realism' (61). While the narrator would magnify the reality of violence in his story, *Senselessness* does not elsewhere exaggerate events that took place in Guatemala. Instead, Castellanos Moya takes the testimony of victims 'virtually verbatim' from *Guatemala: Nunca Más* (Weiser 4).

Buiza suggests that '[the narrator's] desire to write a novel about a grieving soul shows that he is beginning to understand the kernel of the victims' pain' (161). However, the story of the civil registrar of Totonicapán is suffused with

both the narrator's pleasure and his enjoyment. He is pleased to be able to make the registrar's testimony more literary, but again he is destabilised by excess. The narrator tries to maintain a certain distance from the violence by imagining the registrar's head as a coconut, but a disconcerting admission undermines his efforts. Splitting open the registrar's head, the lieutenant 'would remove the delicious white pulpy flesh, not the bloody palpitating brains, which may also seem appetizing to some palates, I must admit without any bias' (61). The narrator not only begins to understand the victims' pain, but also begins to share the soldiers' enjoyment, or *jouissance*. Glyn Daly writes, 'If pleasure functions in terms of balance, achieving discrete objectives and so on, enjoyment is destabilizing and tends towards excess' (80). The narrator's idea for a story shows him emphatically identifying with the victims and simultaneously heaping violence upon a document of violence.

Ileana Rodríguez argues that the society which Castellanos Moya depicts in *Senselessness* is perverse and representative of what the Guatemalan people endured at the end of the twentieth century. Rodríguez understands perversion 'in the strict sense proposed by psychoanalysis'; specifically, that 'perversion is a mental structure, not a type of social behavior', but argues that 'it completely interferes with and disturbs the constitution of the social link' (93). Rodríguez writes, 'The pervert resists the law, and the only law he accepts is a set of fantastic rules that he creates himself. Perverts enjoy transgressing, and only transgression accounts for their enjoyment' (93). As evidence of enjoyment in transgression, Rodríguez cites the narrator's description of the Kaqchikel man watching 'as soldiers of his country's army scornfully and in cold blood chopped each of his four small children to pieces with machetes', and the narrator's wondering at 'the mental state of thousands of soldiers and paramilitary men who had with relish cut to pieces their so-called compatriots' (2). In the expressions 'scornfully' and 'with relish', Rodríguez identifies 'the indices of *jouissance*' (95). She contends that the perverse mentality of the army not only resisted the law but replaced it with its own set of fantastic rules and abandoned Guatemala to *jouissance*. Alongside these adverbial indicators of *jouissance*, Castellanos Moya's narrator is most clearly affected by the implications of cannibalism in the testimonies.

Assailed by stories of terror and death, the narrator goes on a date with a colleague named Pilar. During dinner, the narrator reads several lines of testimony to an unenthusiastic Pilar, including: '*While the cadavers they were burning, everyone clapped and began to eat*' (36). Jean Franco writes that 'in the civil war in Guatemala, cannibalism was more than a trope. It was a practice imposed by some members of the army' (52). The soldiers' transgressions begin to affect the narrator when he discovers that Pilar has taken him to a vegetarian

restaurant and tells us that ‘only a mind accustomed to absurd abstractions and fashionable activism could prefer that insipid food to a good cut of tender juicy meat’ (35). After dinner, the narrator tells us that ‘a good romp in the hay, if it were possible, would calm my nerves and gratify my senses after a week of being shut in a room reading about cadavers and torture’ (41). However, when Pilar invites him upstairs for a nightcap, the pleasure of consensual sex is destabilised by the cannibalistic *jouissance* contained in the testimonies. Climbing the stairs behind Pilar, the narrator describes his ‘greedy eyes on her swaying ass I was tempted to grab’, but tells us that ‘I deferred my attack until we were in the kitchen and after she had taken a couple of beers out of the refrigerator’ (42). As they undress one another, the narrator describes kissing Pilar and ‘then tightly squeezing her lovely buttocks, which would soon have to become meat to sink my teeth into, which I longed to do’ (42). The narrator’s objectification of women re-enacts the violence meted out by the soldiers who turned the Kaqchikel man’s children ‘into palpitating pieces of human flesh’ (2), exceeding his desire for sexual gratification and further destabilising him.

Daly writes, ‘What *jouissance* bears witness to is not the unbearable difference of the Other but, on the contrary, an unbearable sameness’ (82). While the narrator’s empathy for the testimonial subjects manifests in a fear of his own persecution, the distance between him and the soldiers closes. Examples include him imagining a colleague massacred alongside actual victims during a ‘highly inexplicable and circumstantial association of ideas’, feeling ‘the strongest possible revulsion’ for an odour emanating from another sexual partner’s military boots (51, 82), and contracting a venereal disease. The latter induces ‘the vertigo of someone who has crossed a forbidden boundary, for until then I had believed that men were divided into two groups, the dirty and the virtuous’ (104). The divide between the narrator and the soldiers collapses during a psychotic episode when he becomes a lieutenant (later general) whose name appears throughout the testimonies in connection with the most heinous crimes.

The penultimate chapter of *Senselessness* finds the narrator holed up in a spiritual retreat centre ‘chewing over those parts of the report that had made an impact on me’ (123). In his isolation, the narrator is possessed by an image repeated several times in the testimony of an infant being swung against beams and killed:

I stood up, I became Lieutenant Octavio Pérez Mena, the official in charge of the unit assigned to the massacre, I returned to the hut of those fucking Indians who would understand the hell that awaited them only when they saw flying through the air the baby I held by the ankles so I could smash its head of tender flesh against the wood

beams. (125)

Arguably, Lieutenant Octavio Pérez Mena is Castellanos Moya's allusion to Otto Pérez Molina, president of Guatemala from 2012 until 2015, when corruption charges forced his resignation. Pérez Molina has been accused of committing numerous human rights violations during his time in the Guatemalan Army where he served, among other things, as Director of Military Intelligence. However, the unbearable sameness of the seemingly innocent narrator and the architect of genocide represents the non-contextualisable within context itself: a desire to transgress that is not inhuman, which is to say 'Other', but all too human.

By the end of *Senselessness*, the narrator is drinking at a bar in what is probably Germany, having fled persecution in the country that is probably Guatemala. Here, the narrator is amazed to discover that 'leaning against the bar to my right and drinking was General Octavio Pérez Mena himself' (140). Pérez Mena is not present in the bar, but is an apparition. Nevertheless, having experienced the unbearable sameness of himself and the General in the ahistorical desire to transgress, the spectre affords the narrator a scapegoat. Indeed, buoyed by drink the narrator projects the mounting guilt that accompanied his growing empathy for the victims onto the General by shouting two lines of testimony at him: '*They were people just like us we were afraid of*' and '*We all know who are the assassins*' (137, 139–41). While these refrains serve as a narrative of denial for the narrator, they offer readers no such absolution.

Directed at Pérez Mena, '*We all know who are the assassins*' refers to the fact that he then walked free despite overwhelming evidence against him (139–41). However, it is clear to the reader that the narrator's scapegoat is another stretch of his imagination. Outside of context, at the heart of the Global North, the refrains that the narrator screams into the freezing night after leaving the bar carry a message for readers who would replace reality with their own set of imagined rules and abandon Latin America to *jouissance*. As the enjoyment that audiences in the Global North take in a place of exception is contingent on the production of an Other who peoples it and produces the stark contrast between magic and mundane, 'vanilla' and violent, settler enjoyment of Australia is contingent on the production of an Aboriginal Other.

'Just another colonist'

In 1993, McKenna purchased a plot of land along the banks of the Towamba River. While unpacking books and belongings, McKenna felt like 'just another colonist arriving in a distant land' (*Looking* 4). McKenna was compelled to undertake the research culminating in *Looking for Blackfellas' Point* by cognitive

dissonance. A socially-conscious historian of, among other things, Aboriginal history, McKenna was repeating the settler experience of acquisition. In real estate terms, the move was a tree change: ‘Like many urban Australians, I had long dreamt of escape from the city to the bush. Escape from traffic, pollution, queues, constant din and the property ladder to silence, peace and the pleasures of a more natural environment – the city slicker’s rural idyll’ (2). At some point between 1993 and 1996, McKenna was admiring the view of the Towamba River when a friend informed him that a stretch of the river replete with boulders and calm rock pools was known as ‘Blackfellas’ Point’. As the name suggests, McKenna’s rural idyll included a spot similarly cherished by Aboriginal Australians. McKenna writes, ‘I found it difficult to grasp that in the relatively brief time since the arrival of the first squatters in the 1830s, one civilisation seemed to have so utterly displaced another’ (5). In *Looking for Blackfellas’ Point*, McKenna seeks to understand the displacement that occurred in the local area and Australia at large.

Coming to terms with ‘a dearth of knowledge concerning [the area’s] indigenous past’ (5), McKenna encounters stories about frontier violence. McKenna writes, ‘Stories of the killing of Aboriginal people pervade pioneer memories in the Eden-Monaro . . . Memories of “massacres”, “shootings”, “reprisals” and the poisoning of milk and flour by squatters are commonplace’ (41). Despite the apparent abundance of such stories, McKenna describes debates about what constitutes events such as massacres, let alone genocide, and confronts various narratives of denial. While looking for Blackfellas’ Point, the ideological fantasy that successive generations of settlers in Eden-Monaro have kept alive begins to reveal itself to McKenna, and it can be traced in his subsequent book.

In one instance, McKenna describes competing narratives regarding a granite rock face known as Jingera Rock that interrupts bushland about thirty kilometres from the town of Eden in the Bega Valley. McKenna writes, ‘Some local residents today claim that Jingera Rock is the site of a mass shooting of Aboriginal people. No date. No names. No details. Just a story that lives’ (43). However, McKenna encounters another story about Jingera Rock, recorded in the *Bega District News* in 1938: sometime in the distant past, a massive landslide buried many Aboriginal people and formed the mountain’s sheer granite escarpment. This myth is part of a broader narrative of denial: ‘Here, Jingera Rock is still a place of Aboriginal death, but on this occasion death is a result of natural catastrophe. In Aboriginal culture as represented by Europeans, and settler culture generally, striking landmarks can sometimes be used to explain the disappearance of Aboriginal people’ (44). Another attempt to naturalise the disappearance of Aboriginal Australians that McKenna encounters in Eden-Monaro is the belief that ‘Aboriginal people “died away” after “contact with

whites” – passive and primitive victims of disease who bowed to the inevitable; extinction in the face of a superior civilisation’ (66). Lastly, McKenna describes the popular belief that black-on-black (contrasted with white-on-black) violence accounted for the disappearance of Aboriginal Australians. Ultimately, McKenna is most interested by ‘the way in which settlers in southern Eden-Monaro managed to transform these stories into myths which absolved colonists of any wrongdoing in the dispossession of Aboriginal people’ (70). With time, these stories became tinged with guilt and a level of culpability, but nevertheless always stop short of acknowledgement.

In 1970, commemorations of the bicentenary of then Lieutenant James Cook’s first sighting of the east coast of Australia generated neither enthusiasm nor anger in Eden-Monaro. Instead, McKenna writes that ‘the people of southwestern New South Wales were content to see Cook as the first sign of “civilisation”’ (93). McKenna concludes, ‘Because so much of settler history has been built on denuding the land of an indigenous presence, there was little chance of settlers viewing history from an indigenous perspective’ (93). Indeed, McKenna quotes conservative estimates suggesting that the Aboriginal population in Eden-Monaro dropped from between four thousand and five thousand in 1788 to less than seven hundred by 1850 (45). Nevertheless, McKenna writes that ‘history is much more than something that can be reduced to facts and numbers. The weight of the past can sometimes be felt, revealing itself as an underlying truth which successive generations have kept alive’ (45). Ultimately, putting together *Looking for Blackfellas’ Point* left McKenna feeling ‘ambivalent’ about the land he owns and the state of the nation (221). In Eden-Monaro, McKenna encountered ambivalence (as the term is used in psychoanalysis) to describe the simultaneous feelings of love and hate for the same object. The network of stories collected by McKenna, which not only account for the ‘dearth of knowledge concerning Eden-Monaro’s indigenous past’ (*Looking* 5), but also cement the community’s progress, represents an intense libidinal investment in Aboriginal Australians as the Other.

The Aboriginal Other and ambivalence

The stories of environmental and evolutionary catastrophe and of blood-thirsty savages that McKenna encounters in Eden-Monaro represent Aboriginal Australians as either exceptional victims or exceptional victimisers. From the perspective of Lacanian psychoanalysis, these racist fictions are one way that society reframes the subject’s constitutive lack as temporary loss, culminating in what Lacan calls the *objet petit a*: the object-cause of desire. It does not exist in reality but persists in fantasy. Adam Cottrel writes that the *objet petit a* forms ‘a fictional coherence and consistency that appears to fulfil the lack

that constitutes social reality' (90). Australian settler society is contingent on the production of an Aboriginal Other with unfettered access to the *objet petit a*, and thus on a fantasy of possession that denies subjectivity to victims of the dispossession that inaugurated white Australia.

Lorenzo Veracini traces the fiction by which settler collectives, which he calls 'traumatised societies par excellence', disavow their past and affirm their future: 'A settler society is commonly articulated as a circumstance primarily characterised by the absolute or relative lack of violence and involving the fantasies of communities devoid of disturbances or dislocations, and a situation where the transplanted settler collective would *get back* a *jouissance* that was historically taken away' (364–65). Lacan describes 'the envy that makes the subject pale before the image of a completeness closed upon itself, before the idea that the *petit a*, the separated *a* from which he is hanging, may be for another the possession that gives satisfaction' (116). Similarly, Veracini depicts the settler encounter with an Indigenous presence:

The painful discovery of the Indigenous 'other' produces then aggressiveness *and* disavowal; a circumstance where a forceful drive to disavow is paralleled by a drive to eradicate. As Indigenous people ostensibly enjoy a prior and meaningful relationship with the land, their presence painfully upsets a settler libidinal economy focusing on 'unspoilt'/untouched circumstances and providential gifts. (370)

This drive to eradicate is reified in the hundreds of Aboriginal massacres that occurred during the spread of pastoral settlement in Australia as well as in the episodes of ethnic cleansing that marred the last century. However, Slavoj Žižek and Salecl identify two less obvious modes of racism, both of which this essay argues are evident in white Australian attitudes towards Aboriginal Australia.

The first mode of racism appears sympathetic to the victims in places of exception, but relies on and reinforces a neat divide between us and them. Žižek describes 'the multiculturalist perception' that transforms a foreign place into 'the terrain of ethnic horrors and intolerance, of primitive irrational warring passions, to be opposed to the post-nation-state liberal-democratic process of solving conflicts through rational negotiation, compromise and mutual respect' (*Fragile* 4). The subject secures its fantasy of peace, tolerance, and rationality by attributing *jouissance* to the Other as exceptional victim and victimiser. This category includes the myth of Aboriginal self-destruction:

Perhaps the most common way of explaining the sudden decline in the Aboriginal population in Eden-Monaro, well into the late nineteenth

century, was to blame Aboriginal people for killing one another in ‘black massacres’. To emphasise the violent nature of indigenous societies, newspapers also carried repeated reports of ‘Aboriginal cannibalism’. (McKenna, *Looking* 67)

This narrative of denial that foregrounds the Other’s self-destruction extends beyond the nineteenth century into the twenty-first century, where it cuts across cultural and political boundaries.

In 2007, the supposedly violent nature of Aboriginal communities was the impetus for then Prime Minister John Howard’s Northern Territory ‘intervention’, which saw the Australian Defence Force and Federal Police deployed to remote Aboriginal communities. Writing twelve years after *Looking for Blackfellas’ Point* was published, McKenna notes the historical irony of the Howard government’s intervention:

‘Intervening’ in the lives of Aboriginal people is precisely what governments of all persuasions had been doing since Australia was settled by the British in 1788. Yet again, as with the missions and government ‘protection’ initiatives in the 19th and 20th centuries, the claim was made that ‘the intervention’ was necessary for ‘the good’ of Aboriginal people. (‘Blackfellas’ Point’)

To this day, newspapers cast Aboriginal people in the mould of the savage; the infamous Bill Leak cartoon showing a drunken Aboriginal father unable to remember the name of his son is but one case in point. James Carson describes debate about the cartoon between those celebrating its ‘courageous’ social criticism and those calling out its callous stereotyping as a controversy that replicated ‘the fundamental limits that racism and colonialism impose upon one’s self, one’s society and one’s capacity to imagine outside of the constraints that language imposes’. Both Howard and Leak saw themselves as advocates for victims: the former by confronting the cycle of exceptional violence directly and the latter by drawing attention to it. However, Salecl writes, ‘The pain of the victim constitutes the ontological proof of the existence of the Other for the racist’ (112). Insofar as the *jouissance* of the Other is our own, their suffering bears the traces of our *jouissance*.

The second mode of racism resembles love more than hate for the Other, but again reinforces the divide between us and them. Žižek describes ‘the reverse racism which celebrates the exotic authenticity of the . . . Other . . . who . . . still exhibit[s] a prodigious lust for life’ (*Fragile* 5). This mode of racism works through ‘the elevation of the Other as leading a life that is more harmonious,

organic, less competitive, and aiming at cooperation rather than domination' (Žižek, *Violence* 126). Neil Harrison writes that 'teacher images of Aboriginal people are predictably polarised around an idealisation on the one hand, and a discourse based in suffering and deficiency on the other' (6). Likewise, Frances Peters-Little writes that the 'noble savage' of colonial discourse 'oscillates between the *noble* pole and the *savage* pole' so that 'Europeans were able to revere or wish to preserve the *noble* while despising and hoping to destroy the *savage*' (19). While the discourse based in suffering and deficiency obviously contributes to the myth of Aboriginal self-destruction, certain idealisations of Aboriginal people reconcile them to precarious lives. Peters-Little identifies a tendency to represent Aboriginal people as 'patrons of nature's gifts' (19). These images 'uphold the notion that "real" Aboriginal people have a natural affinity to the land, in other words, like native flora and fauna, with very little need for anything that may exist in the modern world' (Peters-Little 22). Thus, Aboriginal people are intimately part of the natural cycle of destruction and regeneration from which 'enlightenment' has effectively delivered (or unfortunately divorced) us. As it is precisely this 'prior and meaningful relationship with the land' that upsets the settler libidinal economy (Veracini 370), such idealisation perpetuates envy of and aggression towards the Aboriginal Other.

In Eden-Monaro, residents responded aggressively to the idealisation of Aboriginal people as patrons of the land on which the residents' prosperity depended. When a proposed woodchip mill and the promise of a long-overdue commercial boom drew opposition from conservationists, McKenna writes that a divide emerged 'between locals and city blow-ins' (*Looking* 147). The locals fulminated against a libidinal investment in the Aboriginal Other by conservationists opposed to the mill. McKenna describes reports on the dispute in the metropolitan press in which 'Aboriginal leaders like Guboo Ted Thomas were presented as mystical figures bearing secret knowledge' (142). One such *Canberra Times* feature article 'cast Thomas as the Australian version of the Hollywood American Indian, spinning hippie-like words of wisdom to his hapless western interrogators' (142). According to McKenna:

Reports such as these implied that non-material relationships with the land were specific to Aboriginal culture. Non-Aboriginal Australians could only stumble helplessly behind in ignorance or push dismissively past in bulldozers. There were dangers in this stereotype for both sides of the debate. Aboriginal culture could only be made sacred through the bush, and non-Aboriginal culture was condemned to permanent alienation, being denied a spiritual connection to the land. (142)

The reports and the responses to them on the far south coast of New South

Wales illustrate the duality of idealisation and envy in the settler libidinal economy at large.

Sam Hutchinson writes that it is ‘the idea of attaining an imagined lost fullness of the nation that creates the affective bonds between its citizens’ (51). Again, this social bond between subject-citizens is contingent on the Other:

The necessity of maintaining the fantasy of the possibility of fullness results in a paradox whereby the ‘other’ is both accused of stealing the nation’s *enjoyment*, while at the same time their constant presence is required to uphold the fantasy. In other words, if the blocking blamed on the ‘other’, as necessary scapegoat, were to be overcome, a new ‘other’ would need to be positioned as that which prevents the (impossible) attainment of a full and utopian society. (51)

Hutchinson identifies the transference of Otherness from Aboriginal people to humanitarians at home and abroad who threatened the affective bonds between settlers. He writes that ‘the humanitarian threatened the sustaining rituals of settler *enjoyment*, but at the same time allowed settlers to close ranks against those who were perceived to intrude on their fantasy’ (59). Similarly, the residents of Eden-Monaro closed ranks against the conservationists and Aboriginal people who threatened the forestry industry. McKenna writes, ‘In the summer of 1986–87, more than a thousand people were arrested in the forests’ (*Looking* 145). Likewise, a 1997 New South Wales Government report described ‘a lot of anger in the community with a potentially explosive quality. People are taking things into their own hands and white community assaults on Aboriginals have increased’ (149). By the time that *Looking for Blackfellas’ Point* was published in 2002, Eden-Monaro had established itself as an embattled community awaiting fulfilment.

McKenna finds the following refrain at the heart of the ideological fantasy that sustains the community of Eden-Monaro:

We are not the colonisers.

We are not the receivers of the spoils of war.

We are not living on stolen ground.

We are the victims of neglect.

We are the battlers.

We are the people of ‘the forgotten corner’, waiting for Eden to arrive.
(154)

All of the elements of fantasy are here: the theft of enjoyment by an Other (Aboriginal or cosmopolitan/humanitarian), the promise of fullness to come and, in the meantime, the effective masking of founding violence by a sense of victimhood. Attempting to address a ‘dearth of knowledge concerning Eden-Monaro’s indigenous past’ (*Looking* 5), McKenna’s experience reveals that stories *about* Aboriginal people, whether they idealise or demonise, ultimately sustain the Aboriginal as Other. The task ahead is to suspend the sustaining rituals of settler enjoyment to enable Aboriginal people to assert their subjectivity: ‘Until Aboriginal people can be satisfied that they possess a greater sense of political, economic and social justice in Australia, my sense of ambivalence about the nation remains’, McKenna writes (221).

Conclusion

This article has drawn Guatemala, Australia and the world together to reveal a murderous impulse that transcends contextual differences and to position the subject – via the libidinal economies of non-Indigenous Guatemalans, of cultural consumers of Latin America and the Global South, and of Australian settlers and their descendants – at the centre. Both *Senselessness* and *Looking for Blackfellas’ Point* confront an excess of imagination that constitutes a libidinal investment in the Other without contributing to it.

Both McKenna and Castellanos Moya explore the affordances and limitations of writing history. Griffiths writes, ‘Historians immerse themselves in context . . . As well as gathering and weighing evidence, piece by piece with forensic intensity, they sensitise themselves to nuance and meaning’ (10). McKenna, a historian, encounters a ‘dearth of knowledge concerning Eden-Monaro’s indigenous past’, lamenting that ‘when I walked the land, it seemed as if I had only my imagination to conjure up the past’ (*Looking* 5). Instead of evidence to gather and weigh, McKenna finds something closer to literature than history: narratives of denial where Aboriginal Australians are imagined as anything from bloodthirsty savages, cannibals and victims of primeval natural forces to an authentic alterity, mystical figures bearing secret knowledge and patrons of nature’s gifts. Where frontier violence is acknowledged, McKenna writes, ‘Responsibility is rarely claimed’:

Settler oral history that tells of frontier violence and mistreatment of Aboriginal people is often generic in form. It speaks of Aboriginal people being ‘mowed down’ or ‘wiped out’, but rarely identifies the names of those responsible. Within the many stories that acknowledge wrongdoing on the part of settlers, there is often an inbuilt protection mechanism, a convenient element of forgetting. (‘Blackfellas’ Point’)

Left to his imagination, McKenna steps back, acknowledging that an absence of information about Aboriginal Australia and responsibility for their suffering must be addressed by Aboriginal voices and subjectivity.

There are important contextual factors that influence the state of denialism that defines Australia's settler colonial condition. Particularly relative to the situation in Guatemala, where the Civil War is fresh in the population's memory and where there are still thousands of survivors who can tell their stories, the frontier wars in Australia are, for the most part, beyond living memory. However, 'Invasion is a structure, not an event' (Wolfe 97). The descendants of survivors of the frontier wars continue to tell their stories while they and other Aboriginal Australians face the policies of assimilation and routine accusations of racial inauthenticity that constitute 'the continuing operations of the logic of elimination' (Wolfe 97). Such racism is a present condition, and indeed the very precondition of Australian public life.

In a way that informs this context of irreconcilable race relations, McKenna evokes ambivalence, which in psychoanalysis refers to simultaneous feelings of love and hate for the same object. Just as Australia has been denuded of an Aboriginal presence that contradicts the terms of its 'settlement' with evidence of invasion and genocide, Aboriginal Australians have been denuded of their subjectivity by non-Aboriginal Australians treating them – politically, culturally, and socially – as objects of love and hate. While Aboriginal Australians remain the object of settler ambivalence, they are denied a place at the table where decisions are made about their lives, by turns caricatured and patronised by the media, and attacked for interrupting the providential gift of 'unspoilt' land in the 'New World'. McKenna's stepping back from the heated, libidinal debate between white Australians about Aboriginal Australians suggests that Aboriginal voices must first be heard for restorative justice to be done. Indeed, Bruce Pascoe's 2014 book *Dark Emu*, which has done much to redress the dearth of knowledge about Aboriginal Australians' agricultural and spiritual achievements prior to European invasion, concludes, 'The opportunity to be involved in the future of the country will release Aboriginal people from some of the shackles of colonialism. The country will still be colonised. The dispossessed will be included, not just in the vote or constitution but in the general Australian psyche' (228).

Unlike McKenna, Castellanos Moya, a creative writer, had ample evidence of the Guatemalan military's acts of genocide against the Maya in both *Guatemala: Nunca Más* and *Guatemala: Memory of Silence*. In *Senselessness*, the narrator's office at the archbishop's palace, where he discovers one thousand one hundred pages of what would become *Guatemala: Nunca Más*, represents an archive:

‘One of the primary launch pads for the historian’s time travel’ (Griffiths 14). Griffiths writes:

The act of pilgrimage to a repository, the rituals and protocols of access, the reverent quiet of the room, the whispered request to the librarian and the donning of white gloves are all purifying preparations for silent communion with fragile paper, where the magic begins. Then there are emanations from the documents themselves, which the historian sometimes exposes to the light for the first time since they were preserved. (14)

The narrator, as we know, is not a historian but a writer who is ‘not a total stranger to magical realism’ (*Senselessness* 61). In *Senselessness*, the magic begins when the narrator releases all restraints on his imagination and becomes the suffering ghost of a civil registrar, turning himself into a victim before the desire to transgress exceeds his sexual appetite and turns him into Lieutenant Octavio Pérez Mena.

When the narrator’s *jouissance* bears witness to an unbearable sameness between dirty and virtuous, victim and victimiser, and self and Other, a final stretch of his imagination conjures Pérez Mena as a necessary scapegoat. In identifying Pérez Mena (and, by proxy, Otto Pérez Molina) as an assassin, which Samuel Steinberg calls ‘a moment of political commitment, useless commitment, comic, pathetic, even’ (190), the narrator of *Senselessness* moves the needle, however infinitesimally, toward reparative justice. However, he abnegates his own responsibility for reproducing the suffering of the Other. Presenting *Guatemala: Nunca Más* at the Cathedral of Guatemala City on April 24, 1998, two days before his murder, Monsignor Juan Gerardi cautioned: ‘The story of people’s suffering cannot be treated as if it were a page in a book’ (Human Rights Office xxxiii). The narrator’s embellishing the pain of victims like the civil registrar of Totonicapán not only ‘constitutes the ontological proof of the existence of the Other for the racist’ (Salecl 112) but reinforces it.

The most significant step towards restorative justice in *Senselessness* is not the narrator’s naming Pérez Mena. More significant is how the narrator’s desire to reimagine the testimonies as magical realism mirrors a desire for stories that reiterate the exotic and exceptionally violent Latin American Other. While Castellanos Moya says: ‘Our reality has not been magical’ (‘Our Reality’), Latin America as a place of exception stages *jouissance* for the Global North without disturbing the imaginary boundary between their reality and our own. Through fiction, Castellanos Moya disturbs these boundaries, revealing the subject’s own libidinal investment behind the *jouissance* of the Other

and depicting the perils of reimagining and reifying violence against the Other, Maya, Latin American, or Aboriginal. Here the difference between McKenna's nonfiction and Castellanos Moya's fiction emerges, allowing Castellanos Moya to approach something outside of historical and human rights discourse by way of his narrator's ignorance (wilful or otherwise).

Castellanos Moya does not disparage *Guatemala: Nunca Más* as an attempt to redress injustice. He faithfully transcribes the victims' testimonies and clearly juxtaposes the callous attitudes of Ladino elites like the narrator and Toto towards the testimonial subjects with the altruism of the narrator's colleagues at the archbishop's palace. Rather, it is Castellanos Moya's narrator who lacks the restraint of someone like McKenna and unleashes his imagination on the testimonies. While the narrator of *Senselessness* is eager to reimagine the historical data he confronts in the report, McKenna reflects Australia's settler colonial condition and the culture of forgetting that has bequeathed historians like himself an impenetrable silence on which the nation's identity and enjoyment is based. Rather than reproducing the suffering of the Other, McKenna exhorts white Australia to claim responsibility for its *jouissance*. The way that non-Aboriginal Australians' enjoyment of the nation depends on an Aboriginal Other needs to change for the work of truth and reconciliation commissions like Guatemala's Commission for Historical Clarification (CEH) to take place.

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