

Uncanny Anthropocene: The Ecogothic in Peter Weir's The Last Wave

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My paper examines Peter Weir's *The Last Wave* (1977) that falls into the genre of what has been termed the 'Ecogothic'. The Ecogothic has been defined as exploring the intersections between Gothic studies and ecocriticism, and often represents 'Nature' as a kind of character, a haunted house. In the context of topical concepts such as the Anthropocene and climate fiction, it is fascinating to draw attention to this genre and critical angle. Unlike much of speculative fiction, the Ecogothic does not necessarily situate climate change into the future. Rather, it connects the ecological problems of the Anthropocene to the past, present and future by animating the history of environmental damage with spectres of various kinds, by dramatizing colonial ecocide, or by staging it as the return of the repressed. My paper will define the 'Ecogothic' aesthetic in relation to the (post)colonial Gothic genre and Ecocritical theory in order to contemplate its usefulness in the context of this film.

Bio

Kathrin Bartha is currently undertaking her PhD on the Ecogothic within the Joint PhD programme between Monash University (Melbourne) and Goethe University (Frankfurt). She graduated from Freie Universität Berlin. Her research interests are Postcolonial studies, the Gothic and Ecocriticism. She has published on German-Jewish memory, Australian literature, and migrant experiences.