101 Cannibalisations: understanding the prominence of cannibalism in Victorian discourse through *The Times Digital Archive*

Master's Thesis for Faculty of History
Leiden University

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Word Count: 17,978

Dedicated to Billie-Rose Sanderson

Contents

Introduction - p3

Part 1: The Uncivilised World

1. Creating the savage other - p12

2. Using this 'other' to justify imperial aims and civilising mission - p16

i. Eye for an eye - p16

ii. Civilising mission - p20

3. The Good cannibal'/the missing link - p24

4. Curing of cannibalism used to prove success of civilising mission - p27

5. Debates over accusations of cannibalism - p31

Part 2: The Civilized World

1. Asserting the imperial world order - p37

2. 'White cannibalism' - p42

i . Not quite cricket - p42

ii. Survival of the hungriest - p45

Conclusion - p47

Introduction

A search of the British Newspaper Archives finds that between 1850 and 1899, there are 92,641 hits for the term 'cannibalism', nearly double that of its closest competitor, 1900-1949, which has only 51,634 hits.[1] This begs the question, why were the Victorians so obsessed with those who consumed their fellow man? This thesis will propose that the answer to this lies in the connection between the discourse of cannibalism, and the ability to promote and maintain a desired imperial world-order.

As already evidenced, there is an overwhelming number of articles on the subject of cannibalism during this period, therefore I chose to focus on just one newspaper, The Times. As one of Britain's "oldest and most influential newspapers", it seemed quite an obvious choice, especially when one considers that "by the mid-1800s it had become a widely respected influence on British public opinion".[2] This last point is most important, as one of the main reasons for using newspaper archives as a source is that it allows for an insight into the collective psyche of a nation, in a way many individual histories cannot. The reason for picking 101 articles to base this study upon was that it is a great enough number to be considered representative of the prevailing views of the era, while still being a manageable enough number to consistently evaluate in a thorough historical manner. The selection of these particular articles was based upon their relevance to the search of 'cannibalism' within the search-engine utilised by the Times Digital Archive. With regards to the methodological framework for my paper, the majority of my work will entail a literary analysis of these Times articles, with some ideas of indicative frame analysis also utilised to help guide the theories and connections drawn.[3] In particular it will focus on metaphors and imagery used to embellish accusations of cannibalism, often situated around ideas of dichotomy. Some of the most prevalent of these are the contrast between savage and civil, human and animal, and man and child. The issue of authorship is also considered, as many articles seek to use the mouthpiece of doctors, scientists and academics to give weight to their views.

With regard to whether these accusations of cannibalism were actually grounded in truth, I tend to follow the lead of Cătălin Avramescu, who thought that, "whether cannibals existed or not is a fact of marginal importance".[4] Put bluntly, I do not have the means to carry out a complete verification of every accusation of

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[1] 'Home | Search the Archive | British Newspaper Archive' <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk>
[2] 'The Times | History & Facts', *Encyclopedia Britannica* <https://www.britannica.com/topic/The-Times> [accessed 26 June 2020].
[3] Marlou Schrover and Tycho Walaardt, 'The Influence of the Media on Policies in Practice: Hungarian Refugee Resettlement in the Netherlands in 1956', *Journal of Migration History*, 3.1 (2017), 22–53 <https://doi.org/10.1163/23519924-00301002>.
[4] Cătălin Avramescu, *An Intellectual History of Cannibalism* (Princeton: University Press, 2009), pp. 2–3.

cannibalism included. As we shall see in the following theory section, many scholars far more experienced than myself have spent lifetimes trying to verify these claims, and even then these findings are often disputed. Therefore, I find it is best to follow the general scholarly consensus which is that whilst there may have been instances of customary cannibalism throughout history, these were likely not very widespread. Furthermore, a cursory glance at the articles included in my research reveals that little faith should be placed in much of what is written regarding cannibals. For example, one article which apologizes to its readers for previous allegations of cannibalism amongst the Athabaska Indians informs them that "The reports of cannibalism are utterly discredited".[5] Most importantly for this study, there is no doubt in the literature that western authors throughout history have greatly exaggerated instances of cannibalism for their own gain.[6]

[5] 'Foreign And Colonial News', *The Times*, 8 April 1890, p. 3, The Times Digital Archive.
[6] Patrick Brantlinger, *Taming Cannibals: Race and the Victorians* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011), p. 31.

State of the Theory

When discussing the theoretical groundwork laid out by modern scholars on cannibalism, and in particular the western discourse that surrounds this topic, one tends to start with William Arens and his ground-breaking work, 'The Man-Eating Myth'.[7] However, it is worth acknowledging that four-hundred years before this, Michel de Montaigne was already arguing from the perspective of cultural relativism that the Europeans who encountered cannibals in the New World could well be considered to be the more barbarous culture.[8] In more contemporary times, Arens is undoubtedly the place to start when thinking about how we conceptualize cannibals, as almost all the work on the discourse of cannibalism coming after this pays tribute or takes a shot at his work. He was one of the first to set out the thesis that cannibalistic discourse was utilized by westerners to classify others as savages who were fundamentally less human than themselves. The reason for his work's lasting infamy is that, as the title suggests, he proposed that customary cannibalism has never existed regularly in human history, and that our conceptions of this practise today all come to us through the myth that has been propagated by western societies throughout time. 'The Man-easting Myth' has created a divide which has characterised all of the subsequent literature on cannibalism; there are those that follow his thinking and see cannibalism as a cultural concept created by western thinkers, while others seek to disprove this by evidencing consistent customary cannibalism throughout history. As already stated, this work is less focused on the historical truth behind anthropology, and thus belongs to the Arens school of thought, seeking to understand cannibalism as a western idea imposed upon others.

Following on from Arens, Cătălin Avramescu is another who has concerned himself primarily with the representations of cannibalism rather than the act of anthropophagy itself, examining in his 'Intellectual History of Cannibalism' how the philosophical concept of man-eating has changed over time, and paying particular attention to its use in theories of natural law during the enlightenment.[9]

Maggie Kilgour's seminal study of cannibalism within western literature focuses on the metaphor of cannibalism as an example of the western urge to take an outsider and indoctrinate them into one's own culture.[10] Frank Lestrigent also concerns himself with cannibalism as it has appeared in European literature, in

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[7] W. Arens, *The Man-Eating Myth: Anthropology & Anthropophagy*, Oxford University Press Paperback (Oxford: University Press, 1980).
[8] Michel de Montaigne, *The Essays of Michel de Montaigne* (New York: Heritage Press, 1946).
[9] Avramescu, *An Intellectual History of Cannibalism.*
[10] Maggie Kilgour, *From Communion to Cannibalism: An Anatomy of Metaphors of Incorporation*, Ebook Central (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1990).

particular that which addressed the New World.[11] His focus on 16th Century thinkers such as Montaigne in particular, analyses the use of cannibalism as a mirror for one's own society, as these writers were faced with such a constant stream of violence back home that they couldn't help but compare the natives they encountered with their own European 'savages'.

Jahoda Gustav seeks to better undersand the origins of modern day ideas of prejudice and racial discrimination in his work.[12] In doing so he finds that the trope of the native cannibal features heavily in the way in which westerners have conceptualised those different from themselves as wholly 'other', mostly through its use in the trope of savage-as-beast. He also believes that contemporary pop culture and academic texts continue to support the idea of the 'other' as less than human.

Francis Nyamjoh's collection of essays from two years ago is a radical reimagining of our modern conception of cannibalism.[13] Like Gustav, they believe that western culture has much to answer for when it comes to our preconceived notions of cannibalism and the 'other', and levels the accusation that even today all humans are cannibals, just not always in a strictly literal manner.

Taking a slightly different approach, many scholars have sought to verify and better understand acts of cannibalism, away from the discourse which describes such acts. Peggy Reeves discusses anthropophagy within many historical contexts such as Aztec human sacrifice and as part of Fiian culture in the 19th Century, in order to challenge preconceived notions about the function of this deed.[14] Laurence Goldman's collection of essays on the 'Anthropology of Cannibalism' mostly focuses on disproving Aren's theory that customary cannibalism was never prevalent in a human society, using the example of New Guinea as the basis for this.[15] Bill Schutt's work is one of the most contemporary in this collection, and takes the stance that cannibalism is not actually as much of a taboo as many may consider it today.[16] As a zoologist he uses evidence from many animal species, but also includes a cultural history of cannibalism within human societies to indicate that the practise has been a part of our society for far longer than we might imagine.

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[11] Frank Lestringant, *Cannibals: The Discovery and Representation of the Cannibal from Columbus to Jules Verne* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997).
[12] Gustav Jahoda, *Images of Savages: Ancient Roots of Modern Prejudice in Western Culture* (London: Routledge, 1999).
[13] Francis B. Nyamnjoh, *Eating and Being Eaten: Cannibalism as Food for Thought* (Oxford: Langaa RPCIG, 2018).
[14] Peggy Reeves Sanday, *Divine Hunger: Cannibalism as a Cultural System* (Cambridge: University Press, 1986).
[15] Laurence Goldman, *The Anthropology of Cannibalism* (Westport, Conn.; London: Bergin & Garvey, 1999).
[16] Bill Schutt, *Cannibalism: A Perfectly Natural History* (North Carolina: Chapel Hill, 2017).

Historiographical Intervention

It is worth also recapping the existing scholarship on cannibalism as a historical practise throughout time. Beginning with the Middle Ages, studies of cannibalism within this period emphasise how even before the discovery of the new world, western authors were already using allegations of man-eating against 'Others' such as the Mongolian invaders of the 13th Century.[17] There is also quite a large corpus of work on medicinal cannibalism within this timeframe, analysing how the corpse medicine that was prevalent in Europe affected the medieval and early-modern mind-set.[18] From a non-western perspective, there are also several works which tackle representations of cannibalism in Islamic cultures, demonstrating that it was not just a European tendency to manipulate cannibal discourse.[19]

Cannibalism in the discovery of the new world is an abundant field of literature, as after-all, the term itself comes from Columbus' first voyages. Accounts of Europeans such as Columbus and their first encounters with native peoples are brought together in Whiteheads's work, 'Of Cannibals and Kings: Primal Anthropology in the Americas: Latin American Originals'.[20] Kelly Watson's work focuses more on the discourse behind these accounts, which she sees as intrinsically linked to both imperial power and gender.[21]

Even closer to the period of study in this thesis, we have the comprehensive collection of essays that is 'Cannibalism in the Colonial World'.[22] This sets out how cannibalism has been imagined in a range of wetsren media, tackling the implications of this discourse for colonial studies, and ultimately trying to get to the bottom of the western fascination with the subject.

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[17] Daniel Baraz, *Medieval Cruelty: Changing Perceptions, Late Antiquity to the Early Modern Period*, Conjunctions of Religion & Power in the Medieval Past (Ithaca, N.Y.; London: Cornell University Press, 2003), pp. 75–122.Heather Blurton, *Cannibalism in High Medieval English Literature*, New Middle Ages (Palgrave (Firm)) (New York ; Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Merrall Llewelyn Price, *Consuming Passions: The Uses of Cannibalism in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, Studies in Medieval History and Culture (New York; London: Routledge, 2003).

[18] P. Himmelman, 'The Medicinal Body: An Analysis of Medicinal Cannibalism in Europe, 1300-1700', *Dialectical Anthropology*, 22.2 (1997), 183–203; Louise Christine Noble, *Medicinal Cannibalism in Early Modern English Literature and Culture*, Early Modern Cultural Studies (New York, N.Y. ; Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); Richard Sugg, *Mummies, Cannibals, and Vampires: The History of Corpse Medicine from the Renaissance to the Victorians* (London: Routledge, 2011).

[19] Robert Glend István T. Kristó-Nagy, *Violence in Islamic Thought from the Qur'an to the Mongols: Legitimate and Illegitimate Violence in Islamic Thought Volume 1.*, Legitimate and Illegitimate Violence in Islamic Thought ; Volume 1. (Edinburgh University Press, 2015), pp. 200–224 <https://doi.org/10.3366/edinburgh/9780748694235.001.0001>; Shahzad Bashir, 'Shah Ismaʿil and the Qizilbash: Cannibalism in the Religious History of Early Safavid Iran', *History of Religions*, 45.3 (2006), 234–256.

[20] Neil L. Whitehead, *Of Cannibals and Kings: Primal Anthropology in the Americas*, Latin American Originals, 7 (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2011).

[21] Kelly L. Watson, *Insatiable Appetites - Imperial Encounters with Cannibals in the North Atlantic World* (NYU Press).

[22] Francis Barker, Peter Hulme, and Margaret Iversen, *Cannibalism and the Colonial World*, Cultural Margins ; [5] (Cambridge: University Press, 1998).

A final work which is perhaps the closest to my own in both topic and time-frame is Patick Brantlinger's 'Taming the Cannibal'.[23] This is the third in a trilogy of books dedicated to exploring themes of empire and race in Victorian Britain. Due to the fact that Brantlinger touches on many of the same themes as myself in this work, his book is referenced the most frequently out of any scholar within this thesis, and I tackle some of his proposals using my own research. While acknowledging these similarities, I believe that my work is necessary as it offers a more comprehensive account of cannibalism itself in the discourse of the Victorian era, rather than evaluating it as part of a wider investigation into race. As far as I am aware there are no existing monographs on cannibalism in the Victorian era from a historical standpoint. There are multiple works on the prominence of cannibalism within Victorian fiction, as well as those discussing its prevalence in legal disputes of the era.[24] The analysis of the novels in particular contains many of the same themes as the most prominent theory; there are discussions about its use to contrast the savage and civil world, as well as how accusations of cannibalism served to project Victorian society's own deepest fears and repressions onto another culture. Yet none of these detail the history of the discourse through the period. I hope that this work will offer a new understanding of Victorian Britain through the lense of one of its most fascinating taboos, as well as serving as an in depth look at the discourse of cannibalism within a society over a fixed period of time .

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[23] Brantlinger, *Taming Cannibals.*

[24] Harry Stone, *The Night Side of Dickens: Cannibalism, Passion, Necessity*, Studies in Victorian Life and Literature (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1994); Alistair Robinson, 'Vagrant, Convict, Cannibal Chief: Abel Magwitch and the Culture of Cannibalism in Great Expectations', *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 22.4 (2017), 450–464; Allan C. Hutchinson, *Is Eating People Wrong?: Great Legal Cases and How They Shaped the World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Andrea Hibbard, 'Cannibalism and the Late-Victorian Adventure Novel: The Queen v. Dudley and Stephens', *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920*, 62.3 (2019), 305–327; Martine Hennard Dutheil, 'The Representation of the Cannibal in Ballantyne's "The Coral Island." Colonial Anxieties in Victorian Popular Fiction', *College Literature*, 28.1 (2001), 105–122; A. W. Brian Simpson, *Cannibalism and the Common Law: The Story of the Tragic Last Voyage of the Mignonette and the Strange Legal Proceedings to Which It Gave Rise*, King Penguin Books (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1986).

Outline of Thesis

In this thesis I will proceed to demonstrate how the discourse of cannibalism was utilised to promote and preserve an imperial world view. The first part of this work will assess the savage in the colonial world, which was mostly Africa and the Pacific, as these were the most popular spheres of western expansion during the Victorian era. I will illustrate how British colonial discourse first created a cannibal 'other', which they then utilised to justify their own imperial ambitions, be this through using direct accusations of cannibalism to justify a reciprocation in violence, or by posing the existence of cannibals in colonial territories as an existential threat that required nullifying through a civilising mission.

The following part of this discussion of cannibalism on the boundaries of imperial expansion examines the apparent inconsistency that arises in articles that present cannibalistic cultures who already appear to display signifiers of civilised society. I will argue however, that these outliers can actually be used to explain what Patrick Brantlinger has identified as a key contradiction in racist imperial ideology, namely, the widespread belief that indigenous peoples are innately inferior to their colonial masters while at the same time believing that they could be civilised to the extent that the two would be indistinguishable from each other.[25]

The purported success of this civilising endeavour in 'curing' these cannibals is the next subject of investigation. This success was used to further justify Britain's ambitions for its colonies, as well as giving grounds for the entire process to be repeated elsewhere. So well oiled was this machine of cannibal discourse production, that even when these endeavours supposedly failed, and the natives relapsed back into their 'primal state, the process simply started over, as these new accusations of cannibalism provided further fuel for the idea that an even stronger hand was required from the imperial overlords.

A section on the frequent debates that arose in 'The Times' over accusations of native cannibalism follows this. These often featured multiple readers writing in to the editor to contest depictions of cannibalism, yet they shouldn't be confused with attempts to discredit the imperial effort to smear indigenous people with the label of cannibalism. Instead, they largely sought to prove that the native people that they were familiar with were not guilty of such heinous crimes, yet had little issue with tarring neighbouring tribes with the cannibal brush. Thus in a way, these defences were the most clear indication of the arbitrary manner in which Victorian colonists

[25] Brantlinger, *Taming Cannibals*

identified indigenous populations as cannibals; using its removal to praise those in their favour, just as they had branded it upon those who were not.

The following part will deal with depictions of cannibalism in supposedly ‘civilised’ cultures as opposed to instances within indigenous societies. In much the same manner, Victorian writers utilised the power of cannibalism as a signifier of uncouth society to brand rival polities as beneath them in the racial hierarchy. This was often an expression of colonial anxiety, as the states besmirched in such a manner posed a threat to Britain's position of status in the world and the very ideals at its core.

Even closer to home, the next portion of my thesis considers occasions when cannibalism is called upon in everyday Victoiran discourse as a point of reference, or to further embellish a piece of rhetoric. The constant drawing of this comparison between British civilised society and the savage world of the supposed cannibal further emphasises the diametric opposition that the British public saw between themselves and these ‘others’.

My investigation ends with an examination of what I have termed ‘white cannibalism’. This addresses articles within my research which contain accounts of cannibalistic actions carried out by largely British, but sometimes American, members of the caucasian race who would not usually be associated with such barbaric activities. I propose that these instances posed a grave danger to the imperial discourse that was built around associating cannibalism with the savage ‘other’. To rectify this, these accounts either sought to qualify these heinous consumptions due to extenuating circumstances and misleading evidence, or accepted the verdict of cannibalism, but contended that those who carried it out, almost always of the lower classes, were of a different caucasican subrace altogether.

Part 1 - The Uncivilised World

1. Creating the savage 'other'

"We must, however, be patient and strong and just, remembering of 19 centuries of Christianity, while the native has inherited the tendencies of at least 50 centuries of heathenism and its accompanying triple tyranny of cannibalism, polygamy, and slavery." - Dr. Gaul, The Times, 1896[26]

The sentiment expressed by Dr Gaul in this passage is ubiquitous of many Britons in their attitude towards the indigenous peoples they sought to colonise during the Victorian era. In many ways the idea that a foreign colonial power had primacy over native populations has existed since the discovery of the new world and the occupation of pre-columbian civilisations by the Spanish explorers. Many scholars have identified how European imperial powers have used the trope of cannibalism to create a savage 'other' with regards to native populations they encountered.[27] The Victorians in this respect were no different. Where they evolved this discourse is in taking what was a cultural contrast and making it into a racial one based upon preconceived notions of civility. They viewed their own society and those who occupied the higher echelons of it as the pinnacle of this civility. Consequently, aboriginal inhabitants of places such as Africa and Pacific islands who fell under their imperial perview were branded as the complete opposite of civilised man. For a Victorian, this could only ever be conceived as one who would cross all boundaries of courtesy and gentility, and indulge in eating their fellow man.

The creation of a savage other was accomplished in multiple ways. First, those conceptualising these cannibals often sought to distinguish them from the lay native. When the royal mail steamship Cleopatra arrived in Britain from the west coast of Africa in 1861 it brought news that "'Another of those horrible cannibal feasts so degrading to Africa has again occurred in this river during the stay of the mail, and under the very eyes of the white men."[28] By despairing of the impact this event had on the character of the continent as a whole, the author indicates that they feel that most of its other inhabitants would not debase themself with such activities. Furthermore, by recounting that the victims of this feast were "some unoffending negroes, captured from a neighbouring tribe" they create a contrast between the harmless and innocent native, and the barbaric tribes who wished both their fellow Africans and the colonial invaders ill. In other cases, authors of these articles sought to

[26] 'The Matabele Revolt', *The Times*, 3 April 1896, p. 8, The Times Digital Archive.
[27] Francis B. Nyamnjoh, *Eating and Being Eaten:* p. 2; Nyamnjoh, p. 99, Andreas Buhler's view; W. Arens, *The Man-Eating Myth: Anthropology & Anthropophagy*, Oxford University Press Paperback (Oxford: University Press, 1980); Cătălin Avramescu, *An Intellectual History of Cannibalism* (Princeton: University Press, 2009).
[28] 'West Coast Of Africa', *The Times*, 14 March 1861, p. 9, The Times Digital Archive.

portray the difference between cannibalistic tribes and their friendly neighbours through the mouthpiece of the latter. In the account of the steamship Nevada, we are told that a microneisian island whereby there are “Strange stories of cannibalism, tales of savage idolatrous practices, [and] poison valleys" holds a “weird and frightful reputation among the native inhabitants of the adjoining ones.[29] The fear that these indigenous peoples felt about their cannibalistic neighbours is also portrayed in an article detailing the Zanzibari Arrab traders and their relationship with their own savage contemporaries. These Zanzibari’s are required to enlist large numbers of Manyema cannibals as part of their ivory and slave trade, but we are told they are none to happy with this arrangement. In the article they take great offence to the “wild beast ferocity” and “diabolical” cruelty of these Manyema, and “express horror and disgust at the bare idea of association with them”.[30]By placing this aversion to the cannibal tribes in the mouths of those who were supposedly acquainted with them, our Victorian authors once more showed their reading public that these cannibals were not your ordinary Africans.

Another way that authors within these articles sought to distinguish the truly barbaric cannibal from the common savage was in detailing the purpose of their cannibalism. In one such article, Father Augouard, a Catholic missionary who founded a station among the Oubanghi tribe, comments that “while in certain parts of Africa cannibalism only exists as an incident of war to deprive the vanquished of even the honour of burial, in the Oubanghi country human flesh is an article of regular consumption, not a day passing without a village immolating some victim destined to provide a feast”.[31] So convinced was Father Augouard of the Oubanghi’s love for the taste of human flesh, that he even claimed that they “prefer it to any food far superior to that of animals”. Here we have a distinction being made not just between cannibal and non-cannibal, but even between tribes of man eaters themselves, demonstrating to the readers of these articles just how perverse the customs of these cannibals were. In a similar vein, an article from ‘The Wellington Evening Post’, which was featured in ‘The Times’, describes an act of anthropophagy committed by “the cannibal, Tito-kowaru, exceeding in villainy anything yet heard in New Zealand since the very first days of its colonisation”.[32] The heinous crime committed was the slaughter of British settlers, and subsequent moulding of their flesh into potted meat. Again, what really distinguishes the true brutality of this crime was its purposelessness. In the author’s eyes, Tito-kowaru was not eating these Europeans for any religious gain, to settle an old score, or to project his own majesty. Instead he simply consumed them to sate his own savage appetite.

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[29] ‘THE PRINCE OF WALES.-Yesterday the Prince’, *The Times*, 4 April 1873, p. 7, The Times Digital Archive.
[30] GRAHAM WILMOT-BROOKE, ‘To The Editor Of The Times’, *The Times*, 20 September 1888, p. 3+, The Times Digital Archive.
[31] ‘High Court Of Foresters.-The Second’, *The Times*, 6 August 1890, p. 9, The Times Digital Archive.
[32] ‘The Robbery On The London And North-’, *The Times*, 1 January 1869, p. 7, The Times Digital Archive.

As expressed in the opening quote by Dr Gaul, part of the othering process was placing native societies at the bottom of the scale of civilisation, while the Victorian writers own society was placed at the top. By contrasting the 19 centuries of christinaity with at least 50 of heathenism, Gaul shows how far removed these two societies are from each other, and of course one of the major features of these many years of heathenism is cannibalism. The association of cannibalism with the primordial stages of civilised existence is expressed in several articles, where it appears as an easily accessible way in which to denote how far behind an indigenous culture is. Captured in 'The Times', an address to the royal geographical society from Mr Du Chaillu on the subject of the west African interior describes the inhabitants of this land as being "very low in the scale of civilization, cannibalism being common among them, and women being employed as beast of burden."[33] Whilst cannibalism isn't the single denominator of savage status, just as in the account of the steamship Nevada idolatrous practices also feature as markers of barbarity, it is apparent that all Victorian conceptions of primal civilisation seem to necessitate cannibalism. In other articles the authors go as far as to suggest that this cannibalism was the defining highlight of this existence, with an account of the New Zealand war detailing how the natives had seemingly forever been in a state of turmoil, "eking out a scanty living by some feeble attempts at fishing and tillage, relieved by occasional cannibalism".[34] This disparaging view of indigenous civilisation is shared within an article discussing the potential war in the territories of the Royal Niger Company. In giving an account of the land and people of this territory, that was to become Nigeria, they describe the inhabitants of the coastal neighbourhood as "pagan natives of low type who, as was lately demonstrated after the outbreak at Brass, had not finally risen above the cannibal stage."[35] Two things are apparent here. Firstly, in both of these articles the author has viewed native society as being frozen in time, unable to ascend the ladder of civilisation because of their own inherent vices. This is a trope that has been apparent in even some modern anthropology, whereby European mindsets struggle to comprehend a contemporary society so far from their own, and thus choose to view this culture as a fossil from their distant past, rather than a living organism which is constantly changing just like their own. Secondly, in this static state these tribes are defined primarily by their cannibalism.

A final indictment of how Victorian authors associated cannibalism with native societies to prove their degeneracy comes from a 'Times' review of Mr A. Henry Savage Landor's book 'In the forgotten land'. Following an account from Lando of a sky burial which descends into the entire congregation stripping their loved one's corpse to their bones, the author of the times article comments that "After this, what shall we say of their organized government, their religion, their arts and crafts; their monasteries, their nunneries?". [36]This

[33] 'The King Of Delhi's Prison Island.-The', *The Times*, 23 March 1858, p. 5, The Times Digital Archive.
[34] 'Nobody at Home Turns with Any Satisfaction To', *The Times*, 19 January 1864, p. 6, The Times Digital Archive.
[35] 'Nigeria', *The Times*, 8 January 1897, p. 6, The Times Digital Archive.
[36] 'The Disturbances At Sierra Leone', *The Times*, 18 November 1898, p. 6, The Times Digital Archive.

strikes at the core of what it means to create an ‘other’ out of a contemporary society. No matter the accomplishments or apparent civilised aspects of a society, the author of this discourse gains the power to disregard all this as meaningless.

2. Using this 'other' to justify imperial aims and civilising mission

As established, creating an 'other' so wholly different from their European selves was a method in which Victorian writers were able to disenfranchise indigenous communities throughout the British Empire from any notion of civility. This however was only the beginning. Next they sought to utilise this exaggerated conceptualisation to justify their own imperial ambitions. These shall be explored in two parts. In the first, we shall examine cases whereby a direct connection was made between acts of cannibal violence and retributive colonial sanctions. The second will feature a more general existential threat of this cannibal being to the civilised globe as a whole, which was used to justify the western notion of a civilising mission.

i. Eye for an eye

'The truth, as experience, it may be hoped, will at last convince every one, is that without the operation of a miracle the savage nature is not to be so easily eradicated. It may be dormant for a time, but it only slumbers, and is always ready to burst forth with the ferocity of a wild beast. There are two sides to the disposition of a savage, the conjunction of which we have hitherto wholly unalike to realize." - The Times, 1865[37]

This passage is embedded in an article discussing the 'atrocious murder' and alegeded consumption of Mr Volkner, a missionary who was working to convert Mauri's in New Zealand, an incident that would become a cause celebre for the settler communities stationed on the island.[38] The horrific nature of this killing which the article describes as having "all the most revolting circumstances of cannibalism" and the fact that it was committed by the missionary's very own congregation, lead to a hysterical level of hand-wringing amongst Victorians both in the colony and the metropole. As evidenced in the opening quotation, acts of supposed cannibal violence were linked to what we have already established as a common belief in the base nature of native peoples who were wholly other to their western counterparts. This idea of a native dual personality, whereby the barbaric and savage 'true' nature of an indigenous people at best lay dormant under the surface, was constantly used to stir up fear and anguish amongst settler communities and amongst those who watched anxiously from the homeland. Because these cannibals could supposedly strike at any time it was not hard for

[37] 'Intelligence More Horrible than That Which Has', *The Times*, 7 July 1865, p. 8, The Times Digital Archive.
[38] 'The Death of Carl Völkner - Pai Marire | NZHistory, New Zealand History Online' <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/classroom/the-classroom/historic-events-activities/the-death-of-volkner-classroom-activities>.

newspapers to frequently report upon outbreaks of native violence, and create the idea that these constant savage incursions had to be dealt with firmly by the colonial authorities.

On three separate occasions, two of which occurred in the Congo and the other which took place in Fiji, we have articles reporting that colonial authorities used rumours of cannibal disturbances to justify their own incursions into native territory. In the case of the Congo, we have a report from the Steamer Leopoldville stating that "four Belgian commercial agents have been killed and eaten by the natives of the Upper Ubangi", and as a result of this "Ex-Major Lothaire has started with 300 men to punish the cannibals'.[39] While on another occasion, reports that the Bakumu tribe had "given themselves up to cannibalism" to the extent that it was "a daily occurrence" resulted in "the occupation of the rebel villages" by colonial forces. While these were not British forces, these newspaper articles clearly see the apparent righteousness in an imperial show of force as a response to alleged cannibalism. Fiji was itself a British dependency, and here too the article proudly proclaimed that although "cannibalism was revived, together with other heathen practices" this was dealt with swiftly by the colonial government, as "Sir John Thurston, the Governor, proceeded against the tribes at the head of an armed party, and quelled the rising."[40] In each of these cases, the relapse into cannibalism amongst these natives is associated with a general resistance to colonial authority. By establishing this connection, it allows our authors to present the mere accusation of cannibalism as a casus belli for subsequent colonial acts of violence. Andreas Buhler has highlighted how the translation of colonised people into savages was a common means by which colonial powers were able to justify their own violence and the "brutality of colonial conquests".[41] This helped to explain away any guilt these European oppressors may have felt over using methods which could be described as contrary to their self-professed 'civilised' nature.

However, justifying one off punitive measures was just the beginning. Victorian authors were able to further distort the idea of legitimate retribution so that outbursts of man eating fever amongst native populations could even be used as the smoking gun for regime change. Evidence of this comes from two accounts of the deposition of King Koko by the Royal Niger Company. Both of these come in the aftermath of a native attack in the capital of Akassa whereby there were reports of the consumption of captured prisoners. One account has the British Consul Harris visiting an island used for native sacrifices and subsequently discovering "a large quantity of human remains from a cannibal feast held by the Brass men in celebration of their temporary success at Akassa."[42] The same account reports that an expeditionary force of roughly two hundred men and five steamers

[39] 'News in Brief', *The Times*, 14 December 1898, p. 5, The Times Digital Archive.
[40] 'News in Brief', *The Times*, 10 July 1894, p. 5, The Times Digital Archive.
[41] Nyamnjoh, *Eating and Being Eaten,* p. 103.
[42] 'A CANNIBAL FEAST.-A Reuter Telegram, Dated', *The Times*, 12 April 1895, p. 4, The Times Digital Archive.

was sent by the Royal Niger Company to try and restore "amicable relations" with King Koko. While this account partially veils the true meaning of this incursion in supposed pleasantries our other article cuts to the chase, and tells us that "in consequence of this behaviour he [King Koko] has now been deposed." [43]

Perhaps the most frightening way in which cannibalism was linked to colonial objectives, was its use to justify not simply certain operations, but an overall attitude of racial distrust and disdain towards indigenous populations in future discourses. In several cases our authors use graphic details of cannibal violence to attack the idea that any humanity should be shown towards these colonial subjects. In our opening quote we see evidence of this, as the author rallies against those who they feel advocate too much leniency towards the natives, and hopes that the brutality of the crimes they report "will at last convince everyone" of the danger they pose. [44]The author ends their diatribe by hoping that more effective and resolute measures can be taken by the colonists against natives in future and that they are no longer "rendered ineffectual by an inopportune display of consideration for the vanquished." Similar sentiment is shown in neighbouring Fiji, whereby an article describing a massacre of two settlers by mountain tribes is used to bemoan the actions of other colonists in the region who had told their labourers not to take up arms against the inhabitants of the mountains.[45] The blame for the death of this couple, who were taken off "no doubt for a cannibal feast", is laid squarely at the door of those who would propose pacifism instead of violence as the solution to native relations. A final account from the western Pacific detailing the "difficulties which Europeans still have to encounter in their dealings with uncivilised races" summises the dangerous way cannibal discourse was utilised to attack any notion of indigenous humanity. As with our other accounts, they begin by attacking what they see as a preconceived partisanship towards the natives saying "We have heard a great deal of the other side of what may be called the Native question in these regions". They go on to give what they see as their side to the story, namely that these savages should not be treated with one iota of respect or civility, and to emphasize this, list several indiscretions committed by these savages, of which multiple feature cannibalism. In doing so, they label an account of an elderly British settler being "attacked, killed, and eaten" as "characteristic of the south seas" creating the impression that man-eating attacks were the norm rather than the exception in these parts. They end by bemoaning that the difficulty they find in properly punishing native communities for such actions, and proposing that perhaps the colonial authorities need to start making some examples with their punishments to show the natives that they are not to be trifled with. Afterall, "It must not be forgotten that these particular regions are among the most backward of the Pacific islands."[46] Here the connection between accusations of

[43] 'House Of Commons', *The Times*, 12 June 1896, p. 6+, The Times Digital Archive.
[44] 'Intelligence More Horrible than That Which Has'.
[45] 'Massacre In Fiji', *The Times*, 22 May 1873, p. 10, The Times Digital Archive.
[46] 'Remarkable Unanimity Prevailed Last Night In', *The Times*, 12 June 1880, p. 11, The Times Digital Archive.

cannibalism and the willful neglect of native humanity is made abundantly clear; those who have allegedly eaten their fellow man deserve to be treated without compassion.

ii. Civilising mission

Multiple scholars have theorised that the European conception of the savage 'other' has a dual personality.[47] In this regard the cannibals examined in the previous section would be described as "savage-as-beast"; humans who are closer to animals, and pose an immediate threat to westerners whom they come across. This section will examine the other aspect of this, the savage-as-child. While most scholars seem to identify cannibalistic tendencies as being a feature of only the savage-as-beast conception, I believe that many Victorians saw the cannibalism that blighted their colonial subjects as something to be trained out of the offending societies, just as one would train a bad behaviour out of a child. While the following examples do not advocate violence as strongly as in the previous section, whereby cannibals were seen as more of a direct threat,this should not be mistaken for a kindness on the behalf of the colonisers. If anything, the so-called 'civilising mission' proposed to enlighten these natives often ended up being more akin to cultural genoicde.

One account which makes the connection between cannibalism and a childlike state of existence is a one which details the plans for a British protectorate over New Guinea. In describing the actions of a British ship and its commodore, who had been landing at points along the coast of the island to enlighten the native peoples of their future under the protectorate, it recounts how the vessel had landed at Milne Bay just after a cannibal feast had taken place. The commodore addresses the head of this feast, saying "he felt sorrow that on his first visit to this part of New Guinea he should have heard of a fight between some of the natives and of cannibalism. Queen Victoria expected her children to give up that sort of thing."[48] Here it is clearly expressed that cannibalism was viewed by the British colonists as a relic of primitive civilisation that would not fit in their modern empire, and by having this said by the maternal figure of Queen Victoria no less, the patronising imagery of a parent scolding a child is clear to see.

While it is clear that these authors saw those who live on the fringes of their empire as in need of a civilising hand, the question arises, who would provide this? Many of the opinions voiced in our articles come emphatically to the conclusion that it was the burden of the white man.[49] At the Brussles anti-slavery congress of 1889, multiple speakers discussed both the past and future of various societies. A Haitian man, Benito Silvain, highlighted the progress made "by the black race in America and elsewhere", before proclaiming that "The great future before Africa would render the civilization of the black race there both necessary and

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[47] Gustav Jahoda, *Images of Savages: Ancient Roots of Modern Prejudice in Western Culture* (London: Routledge, 1999); Avramescu.
[48] (FROM OUR CORRESPONDENTS.), 'Australia', *The Times*, 26 January 1885, p. 3, The Times Digital Archive.
[49] 'Niger Coast Protectorate', *The Times*, 4 November 1895, p. 6, The Times Digital Archive.

advantageous for Europe."[50] The speaker here clearly sees the future of the African people as being a primary concern to the Europeans who were so active on the continent. Another speaker at this conference, Captain Roget, "explained the intimate relationship between slavery and anthropophagy.", before declaring that the "pitiless and cruel character of the Arabs" made them totally unfit to serve as the medium between the black and white races. The speaker here clearly sees man eating as something which must be cured from the continent, but believes that its close links to slavery which he views as proliferated by the Arab mediums means that they as a race are unfit to be the ones to guide these natives towards the promised land of civilisation. There were those who took this a step further and saw the burden of enlightenment as resting on the shoulders of civilized humanity as a whole. In a letter from Dr Emil Holuh, an Austo-African explorer and "eminent authority on questions connected with African colonialism" which was published in a 'Times' article the author makes an argument for the colonising of Dahomey by the French government.[51] He believes this is imperative because, "The entire submission of Behanzin [King of Dahomey] is dictated not only by the interests of France, but by the laws of humanity, and will be approved of by the whole civilized world, which for decades past has been horrified at the barbarism and cruelty exercised on thousands of human beings". Holuh is expressing the belief that the colonising of these native peoples is not something which should be carried out by a single state, but instead by the entire civilized world, as it is all nations of the world which will benefit from eradicating crimes such as cannibalism from the globe. No matter who is appealed to, the authors of these calls to action often appeal to the idea of cannibalism and barbarity being rife amongst indeigenous people, as it helps to drive home the direness of the situation, and the size of the task at hand.

When discussing the need to civilize native populations, Vuctorian thinkers also weighed up their chances of success in this goal. An article from the Church Congress of 1898 contains the thoughts of the Bishop of Melanesia, who was dealing with the 'question of the church in relation to aboriginal races, and confining himself to those he had come personally in contact, the race of the south sea islanders".[52] He describes how, as 'horrible' as many of the barbaric customs of these races were, (chief among them the practise of cannibalism), he believed they were 'ripe' for Christianity, and the inevitable civilizing influence this brought with it. He preaches that although you would not expect this due to the 'debased customs' of these populations, the lack of civilized society meant that there was nothing to give resistance to foreign ideas being introduced. While the Bishop preaches of these ease with which western civilization, through the medium of Christianity would take hold in these lands, there were some who took a more cautious approach. An article discussing the future of the Oil Rivers district , and the Niger region (modern Nigeria) in particular, addresses the 'African question',

[50] 'The Brussels Anti-Slavery Congress', *The Times*, 1 May 1891, p. 5, The Times Digital Archive.
[51] 'The French In Africa', *The Times*, 16 June 1893, p. 5, The Times Digital Archive.
[52] 'The Church Congress', *The Times*, 1 October 1898, p. 10, The Times Digital Archive.

regarding how best to civilize the inhabitants of this British protectorate.[53] They warn that, due to the current consular administration leaving 'tribal laws and intsiutions untouched', and because so recent was the 'introduction of anything like civilized government', features of primitive society such as cannibalism and domestic slavery are still abundant. Therefore they argue that turning this region into a direct crown colony could ''come too soon to a country where barbarous institutions would have to be recognized, or suddenly and violently uprooted'. Just as those who argued for civilization rather than conquest, those who urge caution here were not doing so out of kindness for the natives who would bare the brunt of this decision. If anything, the idea that these indigenous societies were so behind that of their European counterparts that they could not handle the full force of western civility, is even further entrenched in racist and imperial ideology.

Another who expresses their doubt as to the native capacity for civilization is the author of an article discussing the progress of the war in New Zealand. They voice the opinion that the plight of the natives is all of their own making, and that they are ultimately a lost cause when it comes to any sort of cultural enlightenment. They conclude that, "this unfortunate race, like all others tainted with cannibalism, like all other races incapable of unity, religion, and permanent peace, is its own enemy, and is running its appointed and suicidal course".[54] While this was perhaps more of a minority view than the general consensus that saw cannibalism as indicative of the challenge to be overcome when civilizing native peoples, it does demonstrate that there were some who thought that people who were so wholly 'other' from themselves had no chance of even survival in the modern world, never mind the opportunity of civilization. Indeed, Patrick Brantlinger has identified the existence of this discourse of victim-blaming in his own work, whereby native populations on the verge of extinction are told that aspects of their society such as cannibalism are the cause of this.[55] As with the point earlier in this thesis about how accusations of cannibalism were used to distract from the widespread and disproportionate use of violence by colonial powers, the key to this discourse is dissolving Europeans of their own guilt.

Whilst few would take the idea of a 'civilizing mission' at its word to begin with, this section ends with a couple of articles that really emphasise how hollow this sentiment was. Firstly, we have an annual report on the Niger Coast Protectorate which was published in the Times, demonstrating that there was a fall in import and export trade in the region. When discussing this, a spokesman for the protectorate defends demands to end the liquor trade in Africa, as he believes that there are ''worse evils than drunkenness, such as cannibalism, human sacrifice, ordeal by poison, &c, which, so long as they exist in the Protectorate, will require to be met by a

[53] 'One African Question Follows upon the Heel', *The Times*, 16 January 1890, p. 9, The Times Digital Archive.
[54] 'Nobody at Home Turns with Any Satisfaction To'.
[55] Brantlinger, *Taming Cannibals*, p. 2.

strong and independent Administration. To maintain this Administration a revenue is necessary".[56] Here it is clear where the colonial administration's priorities really lie. For all the talk of the great civilizing desire to help one's fellow man, these colonists prize one thing far above this: money. What is interesting is that cannibalism is once more used as part of this discourse; again it serves as an easy way in which to conjure up images of savagery and barbarity in an instant, which then allow the administration to rule as they see fit, as long as they promise to curb this man-eating urge. A further appeal to the prevalence of cannibalism in colonial Africa is made in an article containing news from the Royal Mail steamship Lagos in 1866. Here the Majesty's consul Mr Livingstone visits both Bonny and New Calabar to try and reconcile the turbulent tribes there. Ostensibly, this visit is because some Creeka men made a 'raid upon New Calabar, and captured a large number of prisoners, upwards of 100 of whom were killed and eaten at a cannibal feast'.[57] Yet in another part of the article we find the far more likely reason for the Consul to wish to reconcile these tribes, than a simple desire to see their subjects get along, as it is recorded that, the quarrels of these tribes has 'for some time greatly interfered with the palm oil trade'. Again cannibalism is mentioned because it sold far better to British readers to tell them that their government was intervening in Africa on behalf of the civilized world as a whole, rather than the truth which was they were only there for the trade and wealth it brought home to Britain.

[56] 'Niger Coast Protectorate'.
[57] 'West Coast Of Africa', *The Times*, 11 October 1866, p. 10, The Times Digital Archive.

3. The Good cannibal/the missing link

As already evidenced, there were some who thought that the cannibalistic nature of certain native societies meant that they were a lost cause with regards to any potential civilisation.[58] This strikes at the heart of the colonising paradox identified by Patrick Bratlingler; to the European mindset, the savage tribes they encountered were so wholly other from themself that they could never possibly achieve any level of civilisation close to their own, yet still many of the time constantly spurred on the idea that these same natives could be taught all the aires and graces of cultured society just as well as themself. In this section I endeavour to demonstrate a possible solution to this paradox. Namely, that not all cannibal discourse presented native tribes as the opposite of their colonial counterparts, and that indeed, they sometimes highlighted aspects of these societies that were possibly civilised,therefore creating a link between the wholly 'other' and the 'tamed savage'

To begin with we have an account that points out a very minor way in which some cannibals were reported to have conformed somewhat with European manners. In a report gathered from Australian newspapers on the latest developments in Fiji, with regards to the rebellious mountain tribes, a 'Times' article describes white settlers working alongside native government forces. An interesting situation arose when dealing with the dead bodies of rebels that were encountered. While the missionaries amongst them had buried these bodies, the natives amongst them had dug these up, and them "with several other bodies, to a respectable distance from the whites and cooked, the bukola lali (cannibal drum) being beaten all the time, inviting those who might feel inclined to come to the feast."[59] The idea of taking these bodies "to a respectable distance" shows a level of respect and awareness from the cannibals of their white counterparts' opinion of their practise. Therefore this could be used to suggest a starting point from which to build a working relationship between the cannibal and European.

Praise of a cannibal society is offered even further in our next article. In an account of an expedition across the Australian continent by the Forrest Brothers we are told that they come across a race who they describe as "fine, well built men, but cannibals". Whilst the anthropophagic diet of these people seem to be acknowledged as a drawback this does not stop the writer from offering some praise of the indigenous people. Furthermore they also recount that "the natives did not attempt to molest the travellers". Again, while this is the merest expectation of any society that could be considered civilised it still contrasts with many other accounts which seek to show cannibals as a constant danger to other humans.

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[58] 'Nobody at Home Turns with Any Satisfaction To'.
[59] 'CANNIBALISM IN FIJI.-Australian Papers State', *The Times*, 8 November 1873, p. 4, The Times Digital Archive.

Perhaps the most positive testament we find with regards to a cannibal society comes from an article outlining the cruise of her majesty's ship the Basilisk on the shores of New Guinea. The vessel surveys parts of the island and reports very positively from an imperial standpoint on the natural harbours and gold deposits that it finds. When describing the inhabitants of the island we are told that "the officers and men of the Basilisk seem to have mixed freely with the inhabitants in this part of the coast, and found them to be the most friendly, quiet and peaceful people, and nearly all unarmed."[60] This is further emphasised by an anecdote of an officer losing his way in the bush, but being taken back to the ship safely by the natives and apparently treated like a king on his way, which the report states "speaks volumes to the kindliness of the race". In illustrating just how enamoured these sailors were with the islanders they even describe themselves as getting along "like brothers". When surmising the whole experience, the report concludes that "in short, though they appeared to do a little cannibalism among themselves, it does not seem that white men have anything to dread from them." As undoubtedly the most positive testimony in this collection regarding cannibals this article helps to illustrate that not every Victorian saw the eating of human flesh as a disqualifier for a potential amicable civilisation. The fact they describe these natives as being like brothers places these cannibals on a level of equality unheard of in most of our articles, and points towards a trope of savage-as-friend to stand alongside savage-as-beast and savage-as-child.

These next couple of articles contain descriptions of societies that were cannibalistic but have since left this habit behind, thus while not exemplifying the praise of a fully anthropophagic indigenous culture they do still demonstrate a further link in the perceived racial hierarchy between savage cannibal and civilised Europeans. Our first article details a congress of orientalists, who were addressed by a Mr. M.Claine who read a paper on his recent explorations in Sumatra. Claine describes to the congregation the people he encountered in this land who he calls the "Bataks Karo Independants" and who he divides into four separate but alike tribes.[61] He describes them as being "all more or less cannibal, but the Karo Bataks have not for many generations practised cannibalism, and, though much the least known, are by far the most interesting of all the inhabitants of the island. They are much better looking, of medium height, well proportioned, and have very agreeable and polite manners." Claine concludes this appraisal by saying that "They exhibit every mark of a pure and ancient race." The praise heaped on these Karo Bataks is matched by a Mr R.Walker on the Fijian people, who addresses a paper to the Royal Historical Societyon the island and its people. He describes the natives as "a generous, open-hearted race, in whose eyes hospitality was a cardinal virtue. Cannibalism was at one time rife among them, but

[60] 'New Guinea', *The Times*, 11 September 1873, p. 8, The Times Digital Archive.
[61] 'Congress Of Orientalists', *The Times*, 4 September 1891, p. 6, The Times Digital Archive.

this now was a thing of the past."[62] As with the Sumatrian account, particular attention is paid to the fact that cannibalism is no longer practised and this in turn is used as a spur to lavish more praise upon the relevant tribes people. It is also noteworthy that Walker connects the religious belief of the Fijian people to the "mosaic chronicles" and their system of land tenure to "that of the ancient Egyptians", just as Claine believes that his Karo Bataks are descended from an ancient race. In both cases the authors utilise the idea that their natives, who in many other accounts may be considered savages, show signs of some antique and civilised lineage. This allows them to ascribe a degree of civility to these indigneous races while not contradicting their own preconceived ideas of racial hierarchy, which would usually have such people at the bottom.

[62] 'THE NEW MINISTBRS.-Mr. Francis Clare', *The Times*, 19 December 1884, p. 6, The Times Digital Archive.

4. Curing of cannibalism used to prove success of civilising mission

So far, we have witnessed how the Victorian discourse on cannibalism was used to create a wholly 'other' savage (although sometimes less so to maintain a semblance of connection to these people), which was then used to justify imperial and supposedly humanitarian ambitions. The final step in this process was celebrating the natives who were apparently 'cured' of their cannibalistic urges, and consequently could take another step towards the enlightened world. These shining examples were held up as both evidence of a successful colonial policy, and to a larger degree as an example of the excellence of the white race, which could so altruistically raise up those around them. Meanwhile, such success stories also functioned to further fuel the colonial machine, as success in one region of the world simply encouraged the idea that it could be achievable in another, until the entire globe had succumbed to the grace of western civilization.

Beginning at the start of the conversion process we have a couple of accounts of the first steps cannibalistic societies took towards the western notion of civilisation which often manifested in promises to abandon their anthropophagic diet. A reuter telegram from Liverpool, recording recent news from the royal mail steamer Bonny, which has been situated in West Africa, details particulars about a successful British treaty with the Okrika people. 'The Times' article containing the details of this records that the "Okrikans promise to give up cannibalism and human sacrifices of every kind; the country to be governed by a council of chiefs under the supervision of consular officers."[63] It is notable that this dietary requirement is prioritised above even a democratic government, clearly demonstrating western priorities with regards to the civilisation process of these native peoples. A correspondent from the Congo state, records a similar dealing between a Belgian army officer and his new Bangalan recruits, who he believes will "make excellent soldiers".[64] To enable this to happen however, he finds that it is first necessary to "make them abandon their habit of cannibalism". Again it is evident that foregoing cannibalism is at the forefront of these colonists minds when dealing with those they seek to civilise. In this case in particular it is interesting that the connection is made between a lack of cannibalism and military supremacy. Ordinarily, one of the few perceived benefits of cannibalism is the ferocity it gives its participants in battle, largely due to the notion that the cannibal is far closer to a beast than man. This creates the impression that perhaps those seeking to convert these natives were so fixated on the connection between cannibalism and the savagery which they were seeking to 'cure', that they prioritised it over anything else, without rationale or reason. Especially since these are news articles we are dealing with, it could be argued that

[63] 'WEST COAST OF AFRICA.-A Reuter Telegram', *The Times*, 6 July 1896, p. 12, The Times Digital Archive.
[64] 'The Congo', *The Times*, 17 November 1886, p. 5, The Times Digital Archive.

changing the diet of these cannibals took primacy because this is what appealed most to Victorian readers, who saw cannibalism as a defining characteristic of the 'other' situated on the fringes of their civilised world.

Next we have some accounts of the early stages of the development from cannibal society into supposed sophistication. An interview with Reverend Pattern, who had spent several years among New Hebridean cannibals, demonstrates that this process was not without its flaws. He details how to his day, "cannibalism exists on every island that is not christian".[65] However he had found some success on his island whereby "since the introduction of pigs, these animals to a great extent have been substituted for human beings". He then goes on to add that "still cannibalism is regarded with religious significance, the people believing that by devouring a man they secure a triumph over his spirit". This frankness with regards to the task facing those who set out to convert these cannibals is shared by a contributor to 'The Times', who describes the arduous missionary work carried out in Fiji. He argues that, "The truth is that in Fiji, as elsewhere among the islands under missionary influence, a large proportion of the heathen become well disposed towards the missionaries, relinquish some of the grosser customs of their savage state, such as cannibalism &c., and become nominal Christians."[66] He is quick to qualify this achievement however, by stating that " the missionaries do not claim them as converts unless they exhibit more unmistakable signs of that change of heart and life which accompanies true conversion to God." Again it is evident that those who have lived amongst the cannibals are reluctant to make any bold claims about total conversion, as they realise what a herculean task this really is. One account that offers a more positive portrayal of the conversion process is that from the Honolulu gazette, detailing the state of the Marquesas islands, which was featured in The Times. Praise is bestowed on the fact that even the heathen clans respect the person and property of the missionary and the decsion of the Frnech government to enact "wholesale laws against murder, wars, cannibalism, sorcery, &c., which, on the leeward islands, are beginning to take effect, and are exerting a salutary effect in checking these evils.'[67] However, they do concede that "'on the windward islands the wild independence of the pagan tribes still remains unawed by civilized law.' These accounts, which depict the struggles of the missionary in their attempts to spread civilization to native lands, serve to valorise these intrepid proselytizers and induce baited breath amongst those watching from the metropole. If every account returning home detailed the ease with which indigenous populations were weaned off their cannibalistic lifestyle, then the conception of the savage 'other' would quickly crumble. As it was, accounts such as these offered enough hope to suggest that conversion was a future possibility but contained still enough resistance to demonstrate the unflinching wildness of supposed savages.

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[65] 'Seven Years Among New Hebridean Cannibals', *The Times*, 18 April 1900, p. 3, The Times Digital Archive.
[66] A FIJI COTTON PLANTER., 'A Convert', *The Times*, 30 May 1870, p. 8, The Times Digital Archive.
[67] 'CHRIST'S HOSPITAL.-On the 21st Inst., Being St', *The Times*, 10 September 1867, p. 7, The Times Digital Archive.

When we have accounts that do celebrate the taming of cannibalism they often compare this feat to other existing historic cannibalistic societies to demonstrate just how far those in question have come. An account of the Gambler Isles, detailing the geography and nature of its inhabitants throughout recent history takes care to illustrate just how wretched the indigenous society was, which French missionaries encountered when they landed in 1854. We are told that they found "the inhabitants of the Gambler Isles given up to every excess, and wallowing in all the miseries of savage life. The wretched tribes, abandoned to the horrors of cannibalism, were tormented on one side by famine, and on the other by the fear of serving as provender for their chiefs!".[68] Since this state of primordial suffering the article recalls the hard work of these missionaries in instructing the people of "the arts of civilisation", and it is notable that cannibalism is no longer present in a description of these cultures.

Following this, we have two articles whereby the recent conversion of the Maori people of New Zealand is compared favourably to their less civilised South Pacific neighbours. One article uses the success story of the Maoris to attack Prime Minister Gladstone's warning that "the cost and loss of life which were incurred in the wars with the Maoris may be reproduced in the Fiji Islands'.[69] He disputes this claim, viewing the example of New Zealand as a civilising triumph due to the fact that "Forty years ago the inhabitants, though by nature manly and intelligent, were cannibals and pagans, and the elements of civilization were unknown.". Whilst at the time of writing, although it is possible that "the native race may disappear, the existing tribes have adopted chrstianity and civilized institutions and practices, and a prosperous society of Englishmen occupies regions which were previously a useless wilderness." Whilst primarily using this example to argue for further colonization in Fiji, what is most apparent and dangerous in this rhetoric is the way the author carelessly discards the human costs of such endeavours. Even when they themselves seem to be aware that their 'civilising mission' has brought a native race to the edge of extinction, they are willing to turn a blind eye to this in the name of spreading western civilisation. An article on the subject of "Cannibalism in Australia" also seeks to compare the conversion of New Zealand's cannibals to their neighbours.[70] While they claim that the "blacks of Queensland have long been hostile to whites" and that they have cooked and ate some sailors who had the misfortune of being shipwrecked on their coast this is a far cry from the Maoris of New Zealand, "whose renunciation of their heathen rites and customs dates back many years." The author in this case does not seek to forget the darker sides of what was carried out in New Zealand in the name of civilization, but they do use the positive example of the Maoris as a spur with which to give hope to those colonists facing the aborigines of

[68] 'THE FALKLAND ISLANDS.-The Following Has Been', *The Times*, 13 August 1844, p. 5, The Times Digital Archive.
[69] 'THE ANNEXATION OF FIJI.-Mr. Gladstone Fears', *The Times*, 10 August 1874, p. 5, The Times Digital Archive.
[70] 'CANNIBALISM IN AUSTRALIA.-Although The', *The Times*, 14 November 1878, p. 4, The Times Digital Archive.

Queensland. In both these cases the success of the civilising process, which was intrinsically linked to the 'curing' of cannibalism, is utilised to fuel the reproduction of its system elsewhere on the borders of the empire.

Two final articles describe ecclesiastical conventions, the first being the Missionary Conference of the Anglican Community. The President of this conference, Sir George Grey, opens the proceedings by calling to the groups attention "the state of the world at the beginning of the 19th century, for so they would be able to appreciate what had been accomplished in mission word during the century."[71] He recalls that "at the beginning of the century all the grosser forms of heathenism had not died out of the world. It would seem incredible now to many of them that in the 19th century over a large part of the earth human beings were offered as sacrifices to false deities and men and women consumed one another, indulging in the worst forms of cannibalism." He does however, warn his congregation that Africa still presented some of the grosser forms of heathenism. In a similar manner the bishop of Mashanaland, at the annual meeting of the Zululand mission, lectures that "Africa was becoming the America of the eastern hemisphere" and therefore his comrades had to ensure that religion followed flag so that antive life would develop in an orderly christian fashion.[72] Yet he too, allows some praise for the work of these missionaries, stating that "Finer Christian characters could not be found than those of many men who had only emerged in the last 10 or 20 years from centuries of cannibalism, polygamy, and slavery." These missionaries, who were so often at the forefront of colonial expansion, illustrate the perceived importance of the curing of cannibalism amongst many other savage vices and in doing so, lay the foundations for a new wave of imperial subjugation. This highlights the use of cannibal discourse in creating a positive feedback loop, whereby the more the Victorians could claim that they had tamed the so-called cannibals, the further they could push their expansion beyond the limits of the civilised world.

[71] 'Missionary Conference Of The Anglican Communion', *The Times*, 2 June 1894, p. 14, The Times Digital Archive.
[72] 'Ecclesiastical Intelligence', *The Times*, 7 May 1896, p. 10, The Times Digital Archive.

5. Debates over accusations of cannibalism

‘Men in this part of the world are not quite familiar with affairs in that part of Africa. Their knowledge depends on what they hear, which must not always be relied on. People sometimes state matters which, though based on fact, are yet much exaggerated’ - B. A. Allison, *Letter to Editor*, The Times, 1896

The passage above characterises what is to be the subject of this section; those who voiced their opinion in ‘The Times’ debating cannibalistic accusations that had been levelled at certain natives populations. Whilst this did not constitute a groundswell of public opinion against the use of colonial cannibal discourse, the remarkable frequency of such outbursts does at least exemplify some of the varied opinions that were held at the time. I believe this also helps to address a critique of Patrick Brantlinger’s ‘Rule of Darkness’, leveled by Douglas Lorimer in the ‘American Historical Review’, whereby he cites the need for a further investigation into not just racism but anti-racism as he believes that the Victorian era gave birth to such discourse.[73] Whilst perhaps only a couple of the articles in this section could be truly praised as being ‘anti-racist’, the inclusion of these accounts adds a level of nuance to the idea that all Victorians were scheming to manipulate images of cannibalism to their own imperial ends. These articles also serve to demonstrate a level of meta-discourse, whereby Victorian writers were seeking to debate the discourse of cannibalism itself, and in doing so demonstrate the inherent power that these accusations of cannibalism held to a Western audience.

Our first account, which details the remaining months of the “miserable existence” of the King of Deli on one of the Andaman Islands, illustrates a potential way in which misconstructions about cannibalism amongst indigneous people could arise. In the account we are told that the natives are often confused as cannibals because “with the skulls and bones of animals the islanders adorne their huts” and this led to a belief that “their favourite ornaments were the indigestible remains of human beings whom they had slain and devoured”.[74] This deconstruction of a common trope in western accounts of cannibal architecture, is a powerful recognition of the embellishment laid out in Vicotrian accounts when seeking to create a savage ‘other’. [75] However, rather than using this to critique those who had wrongfully misled the public, this account rather disappointingly settles

[73] Douglas A. Lorimer, ‘Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830-1914 (Book Review)’, *The American Historical Review*, 97.2 (1992), 554–555 (p. 554) <https://doi.org/10.2307/2165789>.
[74] ‘The King Of Delhi’s Prison Island.-The’.
[75] ‘AMONG CANNIBALS.-Mr. Charles Livingstone’, *The Times*, 9 April 1867, p. 10, The Times Digital Archive; J. FISHER., THOMAS J. HUTCHINSON., and H. A. ALLISON., ‘Cannibalism In Bonny’, *The Times*, 13 February 1874, p. 6, The Times Digital Archive.

back into familiar tropes of savagery and degeneracy in their description of the tribe. Indeed, they follow their deconstruction of this myth with the line, “They are, in truth, a cruel and savage race”.

A further article seeking to dispute an accusation of cannibalism is that containing a letter to the colonial secretary from the Chamber of Commerce (African trade section) on the recent disturbances in Sierra Leone. They argue that a supposed dispatch from Captain E. D. Fairtlough, the commissioner of the Ronietta district, was erroneous, stating, “The committee have reason to believe that several of the statements in the despatch are greatly exaggerated or inaccurate, as for instance the following statements'”.[76] The first statement that they highlight is “That relating to human sacrifices and cannibalism, which appears to be founded upon acts of individuals in the Imperri country, and not of the native community, who were alarmed at the abnormal character of the outrages committed and the mysterious nature of them”. Once more it is refreshing to see one of our sources take a more skeptical view of supposed instances of cannibalism, but again this lacks the conviction of a true defence of the natives. This is because, while they defend their own “native community”, they are equally happy to accuse those of the neighbouring “Imperri country”, and even use this to distance their own natives from the apparent savagery of their contemporaries. Therefore, this cannot be viewed as an attack on the colonial cannibal discourse, but instead, was just a further manipulation of it.

A series of letters to the editor, all under the title “Cannibalism at Bonny”, engage in a debate over claims made about the eponymous native’s diet.[77] It begins with an account from a Mr Allison who refutes the stories of cannibalism regarding Bonny natives which had appeared in the paper a few days ago, and which includes the quote that heads up this section. As well as attacking what he sees as gossip amongst those who were not familiar with the affairs of this part of the world, he appeals to his own status as an expert, by describing how he had been born in Bonny and lived their till adulthood, yet “never saw any native of Bonny who was a cannibal”.[78] He does however conceed that there are some tribes nearby “among whom this practise is common. These tribes are very little known by most people. Thus they always ascribe it to Bonny , it being better known than any other part. It is a falsehood for any to say that a native of Bonny is a cannibal”. He then ends his defence with a plea that “why are we, the inhabitants of Bonny, to bear the name of ‘cannibals’?”. Four days later a Mr Verney replies to Allison informing that Ja-ja, the Chief of the Bonny, had breakfasted with him on board a British ship, whereby he admitted, “that he was a cannibal, and that there was nothing so delicious as a

[76] ‘“In The Forbidden Land.”*’, *The Times*, 5 October 1898, p. 8, The Times Digital Archive.
[77] B. A. ALLISON., ‘Cannibalism At Bonny’, *The Times*, 6 February 1874, p. 12, The Times Digital Archive; VERNEY EDMUND H., ‘Cannibalism At Bonny’, *The Times*, 10 February 1874, p. 7, The Times Digital Archive; FISHER., HUTCHINSON., and ALLISON.; H. A. ALLISON., ‘Cannibalism At Bonny’, *The Times*, 18 February 1874, p. 5, The Times Digital Archive.
[78] B. A. ALLISON.

little boy's ankle". [79]Three days hence we have another article containing a reply from Allison to Verney and two more additions to the debate in the form of Mr Fisher and Hutchinson. The former replies that "Ja-ja was never known to any Bonny man as a cannibal, but let it be granted as Mr. Verney said, that he has acknowledged to him that he was a cannibal; Ja-Ja was not a native of Bonny, he was a slave redeemed by one of the chiefs there". [80]Fisher enters the debate to refute the supposed quote from Ja-ja about boys' ankles, saying that this "is no confirmation of their being cannibals, as the same chief and many other natives of Bonny have made use of similar expressions to me over and over again". Fisher then takes a leaf out of Allison's book, by seeking to blame neighbouring natives for the accusations as well as appealing to his own eye-witness status, saying that "I do not believe the chiefs of Bonny are cannibals, though I know from personal observation that a great deal many inhabitants of the adjoining river, New Calabar, do eat human flesh, and I have myself seen portions boiling in their cauldrons, and have been asked to partake of it." Hutchinson on the other hand sides with Verney saying that he is able to, "give positive proof that cannibalism was an institution of Bonny proper when I used to visit there 15 years ago. That it has been done away with since this time no one will believe". To evidence this he cites the skulls of enemy tribes situated upon the Juju house, as well as a floor of flayed skins, and references a talk he gave to the Ethnological Society of London 12 years ago, detailing a cannibalistic sacrifice he secretly witnessed in the region. Allison responds to Hutchinson's claims five days later, and again appeals to his personal eye-witness testimony, saying that "I am the son of a native chief, have lived there for nearly 18 years, and I assert it would be impossible for such to exist without my knowledge". He then seeks to end this exchange of letters between himself and the other contributors, concluding that he will "will leave it to the good sense of your readers whether the positive evidence of a native, borne out by the testimony of a late visitor, Mr. Fisher, is not more reliable than the mere assertion of a gentleman who has not been there for 18 years".

A few things to note from this debate. As with the earlier account of Sierra Leone, those who seek to defend natives from accusations of cannibalism often look to deflect these claims onto neighbouring tribes, voiding any notion that they object to the attribution of cannibalism to native people as a whole, as a means of slander. Indeed, by seeking to reject these charges, they demonstrate to us that they realise the power that lies within such discourse, as they understand the negative implications that would arise if "their natives were allowed to be tarred in such a way". It is also notable that the evidence on either side often boils down to claims of personal experience, with each contributor seeking to place themselves as close to the cannibal as possible.This illustrates an important point with regard to this discourse as a whole, namely that, the cannibals are unable to

[79] VERNEY.
[80] FISHER., HUTCHINSON., and ALLISON.

speak in defence of themselves, and are rendered poignantly mute in the entire conversation. Therefore we have western writers who appeal to their proximity to these cannibals in order to act as their mouth piece, but as we have already seen, the defences they then offer on their behalf are full of the same racist ideology as their accusers.

A further example of a debate between several contributors over the status of native cannibalism arises in the case of Fiji. This discussion is spurred by a contribution from a Mr. Coote who wants to call attention to the murder and alleged cannibalism of government officials by Fijian natives which he attributes to being a result of Sir Arthur Gordon's "experimental native policy".[81] This accusation is disputed by a Mr. Gordon, (not the same person), who wants the public to "withhold its judgment" until they have heard more details of the event.[82] He then cites his personal experience to demonstrate that the native taxation scheme was really quite lenient and therefore if there were any outbursts of idigneous violence it could only be down to "native jealousy or some other cause". A Mr. Cumming also replies to Coote pointing out that, prior to 1875 cannibalism was not the exception but the rule throughout the district, and was only suppressed by the strong measures then adopted by Sir Arthur Gordon.[83] To those best acquainted with all the circumstances it is a cause of thankful wonder that the progress of civilization has been so rapid and so steady that this is literally the only relapse which Sir Arthur's most watchful antagonists have hitherto been able to cite". To conclude this debate a Mr. Fillingham Parr takes umbridge with the two previous accounts, linking the problematic administration system once more with the supposed outburst of cannibalism. He reflects that "'if the people were happy and contented why should they, after 20 years of missionary teaching, resort to cannibalism and their old heathen practices?".

Once more those articles which defend the accusations of cannibalism, do so for their own political point scoring which masquerades as a good willed defence of native peoples. The crux of this debate is not really whether these natives engaged in man eating or not, as much as it professes to be. Instead, it is a debate over the system imposed in Fiji by Sir Gordon, and the veracity of such assertions of cannibalism is simply used to assess the success of this system. Once more it is a recognition of the potency of cannibal discourse within Vicotrian society, as those who defend the administration realise what a blow it would be to have their natives accused of anthropophagy, while those who used it to assert the need for the change to the regime understand how such claims could bring it all tumbling down.

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[81] WALTER COOTE., 'Alleged Cannibalism In Fiji', *The Times*, 26 August 1881, p. 3, The Times Digital Archive.
[82] ARTHUR J. L. GORDON., 'Cannibalism In Fiji', *The Times*, 31 August 1881, p. 6, The Times Digital Archive.
[83] C. F. GORDON CUMMING., 'Cannibalism In Fiji', *The Times*, 3 September 1881, p. 10, The Times Digital Archive.

A final article discussing alleged cannibalism, this time in New Zealand, best illustrates how some writers of the time did seem to truly understand the mechanisms of cannibal discourse as it was utilised by their contemporaries. This comes to us once more in the form of a letter to the editor, on this occasion addressing a story run a couple of days ago which contained a telegram announcing that "'advice from New Zealand state that a number of bush natives have murdered and eaten five Wesleyan missionaries".[84] It goes on to state that in retaliation, "the traders and coast natives have killed 80 bush natives". The response to this in the primary article is to warn the author's fellow readers that, "this report is calculated to occasion anxiety in the minds of those connected with New Zealand". This conviction cuts right to the core of the discourse we have examined in the previous sections, whereby such accusations were used to create a savage 'other' which the British public would then fear, and thus justified measures of imperial subjugation and 'civilization'. The fact that someone writing at the time was able to recognise this, serves as further proof of the existence of the discourse in Victorian culture, and shows that it was not necessarily an insidious process which went unbeknownst by those partaking in it. Arguably, this makes the whole discourse even worse, as such a racist means of 'othering' indigenous peoples was likely actively acknowledged in Victorian culture, yet still continued unabated.

[84] VOGEL JULIUS, 'Alleged Cannibalism In New Zealand', *The Times*, 11 October 1878, p. 8, The Times Digital Archive.

Part 2 - The Civilised World

1. Asserting the imperial world order

While up to this point this thesis has examined discourse of customary cannibalism in Africa and the Pacific, this next part looks toward regions where one might not usually associate the trope of the savage cannibal occurring. In this section several accounts of cannibalism in what may have been considered at the time to be more 'civilised societies will be examined. Overall I hope to show that while the system of discourse utilised for those on the fringes of empire differed from that used in these accounts, the primary aim of asserting a colonial world order and racial hierarchy with Britain at the pinnacle, remain the same.

The first instance of cannibalism occurring closer to home than many Victorians may have expected is recorded in an article entitled "Cannibalism in the Caucasus".[85] Immediately a comparison is drawn to instances of anthropophagy in the Pacific, as it is stated that such an example shows "that the superstition attributing magical power to the eating of human flesh is not confined to the Australian aborigines". This serves to reinforce the attribution of man eating to indigenous Pacific societies, as it is just taken as a self-evident fact that these aborigines consume other humans. The rest of the account describes the police stumbling upon this sorcerer, after first finding a grave of a recently buried child disturbed. When they search this hut they find "a large portion of the missing child hanging from a hook, and in the corner of the room were the skulls of several children". When questioned his daughter, who had been starved and threatened into silence by her father, told the authorities that he had stolen "bodies of little children, [which he liked to] cook and eat the flesh, and from the fat make ointments and medicines which he gave his child". Overall this description, especially aspects such as beliefs in the supernatural, the use of human flesh for medicinal purposes and the trope of a simmering pot filled with human remains, would not be at all out of place in any of our earlier articles situated on the borders of imperial expansion . While there doesn't seem to be a recognised political agenda carried out by portraying such a tale occurring in the Caucasus' it would have served to illustrate to Victorian readers that the boundaries of the civilised world were perhaps smaller than they have imagined. This could be linked to an idea of colonial anxiety, whereby those who saw themselves as on top of the global food chain constantly worried about how long this was to last.

In some cases, cannibalism was highlighted for a more pointed critique of a foreign government or people, which also just so happened to help push Britain's own global agenda. Firstly, we have a newspaper article describing the situation in India on the Queen's birthday. It starts off positively, praising the celebrations that

[85] 'Cannibalism In The Caucasus.-The Terskija', *The Times*, 6 June 1883, p. 5, The Times Digital Archive.

were held throughout the country. Yet it then includes reports from a leading Bombay newspaper which draw attention to events of a horrific nature. These "revolting incidents" involve the dismembering of animals in the streets and bathing in their blood, in what the article describes as "baccanalian rites" and "loathsome orgies".[86] While there appears to be no accounts of the consumption of human flesh, a comparison is once more made to societies of this nature, the article voicing its view that, "no cannibal feats among the most brutalized South sea savages ever exceeded in horrible details the two scenes just described. If such things are possible in India of today, we many readily picture what the country was before it came into contact with Western civilization". When one considers that the self-professed aim of this article was to spotlight these events in order to prove the necessity for "social reform and enlightenment", then it becomes quickly apparent why such comparisons are drawn. The author of this article creates this equivalence so that they can monopolize on the negative conceptions surrounding the cannibal savage, (as examined in the first part of this work), and foster similar ill-will towards those in India, who, for all their purported faults have not actually consumed any humans. The purpose of this negative sentiment is to push the idea of reform in the country, and the idea that the country must have been a barbaric land before the British arrived to spread their 'civilization' further emphasises the need to bring India's inhabitants further under the thrall of the colonial masters.

A further example of the British Imperial agenda being pushed through associations with cannibal discourse comes in an article presenting a discussion that took place in the house of lords. The subject of this deliberation was the state of Armenia, and the news article highlights the "Remarkable unanimity" which prevailed in dealing with this issue.[87] In this dialogue, we are told that "Nothing, indeed, even in the pages of Turkish misrule can surpass the wretched condition of the inhabitants of Armenia", evidence of these peers clearly attributing the suffering of the Armenians to the poor governance of the Ottoman Empire, which had suzerainty over the state. This suffering is embellished when it is recounted that, "corpses are common sights in the streets, and that, under the pressure of misery, cannibalism has made an appearance". One conclusion reached by the lords in response to these horrors is that the Turkish government is clearly unable to handle this situation alone. Instead, they claim, it requires the helping hand of European influence, which they assert is not meant as a hostility towards the Turks, but simply due to a desire to do what is best for the Armenians. In a manner quite similar to that when dealing with tribes of 'savages', cannibalism is here underscored to argue that a society is not able to lead itself and thus requires western guidance to help it truly function as a civilized entity. The idea that the Ottoman Turks were a barbaric people akin to cannibals was a common trope throughout the Victorian era, therefore adding an extra racial implication to this article.[88] Not only was the Ottoman governance of

[86] 'India', *The Times*, 28 May 1888, p. 5, The Times Digital Archive.
[87] 'Remarkable Unanimity Prevailed Last Night In'.
[88] Brantlinger, *Taming Cannibals,* p. 21.

Armenia so poor that its people were forced to dehumanise themselves with acts of cannibalism, but in a Victorian readers eyes, it could also be conceived that this was a wilful act from the 'barbaric' Turks who wanted to corrupt an innocent nation towards their own wicked ways.

The following three articles all contain reports of cannibalism in China and its surrounding states. Particular attention is paid to these examples because they underlie an imperial British anxiety associated with the idea of the 'yellow-peril'. The first is a report of the administration of the Shan states in 1888-89 which had been just received in the UK and more specifically describes the Tong San state and its inhabitants. In describing the indigneous people of this region, the report states that they are "very savage; they use poisoned arrows with the bow and blow-pipe, and dispense almost wholly with clothing. They are said to be cannibals, especially in the more remote hills towards the Chinese frontier. It is asserted that they eat their parents to save them from the misery of old age, and as a kind of refinement on the ancestor worship of China and Tonquin."[89] The connections between these apparently primitive people and their Chinese neighbours are stressed; in a purely geographic manner those who lived towards the Chinese frontier are described as the most cannibalistic, while the comparison is made between the religious practices of the Tang San and the Chinese. Therefore, in a manner befitting the connection drawn between a 'savage' Pacific or African society, the cannibal Tong San society is attached to that of the Chinese, to besmirch its claims to civility.

Two further articles both describe the 1878 famine in China. The first is a letter to the editor of 'The Times' explaining the situation in China, reporting "the existence of the most terrible suffering".[90] They go on to lament that "In places it is said that not a single living creature is to be seen; pigs, dogs, and even fowls have all either died or been consumed, and it is even said that cases of cannibalism have occurred". This report does the Chinese people the honour of disclosing the rumoured nature of this accusation, rather than asserting such alleged instances of man eating should be considered fact as they likely would have if this had taken place in a colonial context. The next article on the same events is less inclined to pull such punches, and gives a better indication of the use of cannibal discourse to smear the Chinese state. From the outset, negative images are connotated towards the Asian race as a whole, for example when the article informs its readers that the relatively of famines on this continent means that the current disaster will have "accustomed englishmen to regard these visitations as almost in the order of Asiastic nature"[91]. This particular occurrence which is reported to the times from their Shanghai correspondent, details pestilence in an area between 17 and a 100 thousand square miles, and references to King David allude to the biblical scale of this suffering. It cites Chinese official

[89] 'Cannibalism In The Shan States.-In The', *The Times*, 19 November 1889, p. 12, The Times Digital Archive.
[90] ARNOLD FOSTER., 'The Famine In China', *The Times*, 13 February 1878, p. 4, The Times Digital Archive.
[91] 'The Famines in Orissa, Bengal, and Madras Have', *The Times*, 21 June 1878, p. 9, The Times Digital Archive.

reports stating that the "population has already sunk into the condition of cannibals", whereby, "In the earlier stages the living fed upon the dead; next the strong devoured the weak; and now men massacre for food wives, and children, and parents". This widespread depravity is blamed upon the imperial Chinese administration for neglecting and willfully allowing their own populace to perish, as they attack the "stoid concrete and selfishness of the rulers of China", who will not accept a free railway from the British government and whose elites are not the ones who are starving. The article ends with a moralistic call to action addressed to the British people, to "quicken among happier populations the sense of obligation to take up a burden which has already crushed millions of lives'". Here, allegations of cannibalism are used to portray the Chinese government in a negative light, as they allow their citizens to degenerate into a state not befitting that of a civilised society. Meanwhile, the address to the British public plays on their European saviour complex, seeing the Chinese people as yet just another burden for them to nobly take upon their shoulders, just as they had already done with those natives living within their colonies. As stated earlier these accusations against China in particular are pertinent because they are likely expressions of western anxiety with regards to supposed 'yellow-peril' to the east. This was the racist imagining that barbarous hordes were emassing against European imperialism, and which saw the villainous east as the complete opposite of the values that construed western identity.[92] It therefore, of course, makes sense that the discourse of cannibalism, which was so adept at creating an 'other', was utilised to similar effect with regards to the nation of China.

A final example whereby Victorian authors manipulated the discourse of cannibalism to disparage a foreign nation was in regard to Haiti, and is expressed in an article reviewing the latest work by Sir Spencer St John, whose history of the nation was entitled "A Black Republic".[93] From the outset it is evident that the author of this article is an avid supporter of the work, stating that they believe there ought to be many readers of this history. The author also comments that due to the existence of Liberia and San Domingo, the title of the work could be a little more distinct, and offers "The Cannibal Republic as an alternative", believing that it would be "quite as accurate as the other". This foreshadows what is to be the dominant theme of both the article and the book it is reviewing, namely, that the Republic of Hatti is a degenerate nation, and that this degeneracy is best exemplified in the abundance of cannibalism that exists within its borders. Some of the claims made within the book are that " the bulk of the population are scarcely more civilized than were their ancestors when brought from Africa to slave for the former French masters of Hayti". St John reflects that this situation would be "a farce, were it not tempered by indiscriminate execution and assassination and the toleration of cannibalism". In regards to the cannibalism in particular St John produces "ample proof that human flesh is often a subject of

[92] John Kuo Wei Tchen and Dylan Yeats, *Yellow Peril!: An Archive of Anti-Asian Fear* (Brooklyn, N.Y.: Brooklyn, NY: Verso, 2014).
[93] 'A Black Republic.*', *The Times*, 16 October 1884, p. 2, The Times Digital Archive.

traffic, and that, apart altogether from Vaudoux worship, cannibalism prevails among a considerable section of the populace". The author of the review chimes in to voice his support for these opinions on multiple occasions, as well as crediting St John for being the first to give these claims "unrestrictive publicity". This entire article, and the work that it reviews, are a damning indictment of the anxiety that beset the colonial mindset at all turns. Just as with China, these writers see the nation of Haiti as a threat to the British empire and everything that it represents. In this case the status of Haiti as a nation founded by freed slaves offered an example to all those who may have felt subjugated living under British colonies and protectorates. Therefore, British writers such as St John looked to employ cannibal discourse to discredit the achievements of Haiti, as they understood the inherent power of these accusations.

These final two examples offer a contrast to those that have come before, as in both occasions reports of cannibalism in a foreign country are doubted and discredited by the author. The first of these is an expose on a gold mine which had exploded in the United States, and subsequently left a great number of people who had flocked to the area in search of fortune without means. Due to this, it was reported that "some are even said to have been driven to cannibalism, under circumstances too horrible to think of".[94] Yet the author of this article thinks this story is "rather doubtful" due to their belief that "there has been plenty of suffering without any exaggeration of this kind". Another who doubts allegations of cannibalism is the author of the front page column in the times entitled "What is to be done with Ireland?".[95] This is in reference to a debate in the House of Commons the night before and includes many stories about the hardships being faced by the Irish populus such as "60 families, or 300 fellow-creatures, disposed and flung out in one township alone; of men frenzied with hunger depriving the kennel of its food; of cannibalism so horrid that even a dead body cast on the shore was not spared, and other innumerable varieties of horror". The author however is keen to state that there are often those who exaggerate and make up stories for "dramatic effect". In addition to this they warn the reader that "these narratives, if they are not wholly disproved undergo a great change of character as soon as they come to be inquired into. If there is no positive invention, there is at least a studious omission of explanatory circumstances". While this may just appear to be good journalistic practice, what is strikingly evident is that no such consideration as this, or that taken by the author of the previous article, seems to exist with regards to the majority of cannibal allegations that are situated within the colonies or other regions which may be deemed 'uncivilised'. From this we can conclude that, when accusations of cannibalism are levelled in supposedly developed nations governed by white men, they are taken far less seriously due to the fact that they do not help to promote the imperial world order desired by colonial authors.

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[94] (FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.), 'The United States', *The Times*, 15 June 1859, p. 10, The Times Digital Archive.
[95] 'What Is to Be Done with Ireland? Such Was The', *The Times*, 26 May 1849, p. 4, The Times Digital Archive.

2. ‘White cannibalism’

This section follows on from the argument expressed at the end of the previous section, that charges of cannibalism against those who were seen to be at the top rather than the bottom of the racial hierarchy were often explained away or discredited as they simply didn't fit the agenda that was being pushed by Victorian newspapers, such as The Times. This section investigates these examples of what I have termed ‘White cannibalism’, to better understand the linguistic and rhetorical gymnastics carried out by Victorian authors in order to maintain their precious notion of white supremacy. This section will be split into two parts, the first dealing with examples of cannibalism in the lower classes, whilst the second investigates occurrences of survival cannibalism.

i . Not quite cricket

In several articles from The Times violent incidents are described involving disputes between members of the general populous which descend into alleged cannibalism. It is notable that in these cases the authors do not seek to explicate the actions of their compatriots, instead emphasising the barbarity of their offences to demonstrate that they belong to an underclass which is wholly other to the establishment. This is part of what Jahoda Gustav has identified as the dominance of the notion of civility in European discourse of the imperial age, which could be levelled not only against native peoples, but by rich against poor, or sane against insane.[96]

One of the more mild accounts of such a crime comes to us via an article on the “Middlesex Sessions” describing a number of judicial cases.[97] The case we are most interested in is that of “John Golden, 22, [who] was indicted for unlawfully and maliciously inflicting grievous bodily harm upon Timothy Roberts”. The report tells us that this was a “case of cannibalism, the prisoner having bitten off the prosecutor’s nose, and the details were most disgusting”. While this account is quite sparse on details, it demonstrates the appal that was elucidated in regards to such an act.

The following three accounts better illustrate how the disgust felt when dealing with crimes of a cannibalistic nature was weaponized into an attack on the perpetrators' humanity. To begin with we have an account of two

[96] Jahoda, *Images of Savages*
[97] ‘Middlesex Sessions, June 16’, *The Times*, 17 June 1863, p. 11, The Times Digital Archive.

men in the borough of Bolton who decided to settle a matter in a "real up-and-down Lancashire fight".[98] These men strip off and soon start wrestling each other on the pavement like "two genuine Lancashire fighters" but before long one siezes the thumb of the other in his teeth and bites on it causing his adversary to catch him by the left ear with his teeth and tear it completely off. The author of this column lets it be known their opinion of the matter, saying that the entire borough of Bolton was "disgraced by a fight between two brutes in human shape, who conducted the battle in a way that one would hardly expect to hear of in a civilized country". The two protagonists of this tale are repeatedly emphasised to be stereotypical Lancashire men, and therefore the contempt shown for them by the author can be seen as an expression of the disdain felt by the south towards their northern contemporaries. The idea that these men were a disgrace to their supposedly civilised nation is utilised in another article whereby the jury, casting their verdict on a ship broker man who was guilty of a "disgraceful act of cannibalism" accused him of carrying out an action that was "unbecoming of a man, much less and Englishman".[99] In both these cases the discourse of cannibalism was utilised in much the same manner that it was towards indigenous populations, whereby the consumption of one's fellow human was seen to disqualify a person from any claims to civility. Just like the natives of Africa and the South Pacific, these members of the lower classes were stripped of their humanity, or in the case of the latter their nationality. As the Victorian ideal of an Englishman was viewed as the pinnacle of the civilised world, with which all other claims to civility were measured up against, to strip a man of this reduced him to no better than the savage 'other'.

This comparison between members of the British lower class who expressed cannibalistic tendencies, and those who supposedly carried out customary cannibalism in the colonies was explicitly made in an article of the time. This dispatch lectures that, whilst missionaries "continually exerting themselves' by sending out men to barbarous places across the globe, 'we would beg to call attention to the state of things at home".[100] The author believes that "wilder and more uncultivated savages do not exist in any part of Africa than are to be found within a few miles of our own homes". The cause of this vitriol was an attack by a Mr Senior who seized a Mr Lawton "by the right cheek with his teeth, and tore his cheek down about four inches in length!' Not content with this, he bit him severely on the nose!". The author sees this attack as characteristic of the urban underclasses who they believe are constantly carrying out "similar brutal scenes" across the country. This attack, like the rest documented in this section, could perhaps be seen as incompatible with customary cannibalism and their desire to actually eat another human rather than simply make them. Yet the authors of each of these accounts have endeavoured to connect such transgressions with the act of regular anthropophagy,

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[98] 'On the Arrival of the Queen the Brighton Society of Change-Ringers Assembled in the Tower of St. Nicholas, And', *The Times*, 6 October 1837, p. 4, The Times Digital Archive.
[99] 'CANNIBALISM.-At the Ryde Petty Sessions Yes-', *The Times*, 6 January 1869, p. 10, The Times Digital Archive.
[100] 'CANNIBALISM.-Our Benevolent and Human', *The Times*, 13 March 1850, p. 6, The Times Digital Archive.

as they understand that in doing so they can best hope to create an ‘other’ out of their lower classes. So where does this fit within the imperial outlook of these Victorians? The answer is that such discourse protects the position of the white race at the top of a racial hierarchy from any anxieties of degradation and degeneracy by viewing the worst among them as a wholly different race altogether.

ii. Survival of the hungriest

The following section details the examples of cannibalism which Victorian authors could not simply blame on a disenfranchised lower class. These were often tales of explorers or sailors who had found themselves in life threatening situations and, in order to have any hope of survival, these men were forced to consider the possibility of eating one of their comrades. This was problematic for the imperial world-view, as these men often represented the best of the establishment, and thus to see them reduced to acts of cannibalism akin to that of savages was deeply troubling.

In several accounts within The Times, those men who were forced to confront their inner savage and consider eating their fellow man are explicated of their guilt through a construction of a narrative which emphasises that such an action was truly the last resort, and that it was all carried out in a proper manner, as close to civility as could be imagined in such circumstances. One such account is that of the Hornet, which was burnt and whose crew lost most of their supplies when disembarking to a smaller vessel. The article details the arduous conditions faced by these men in what ended up as more than forty days lost at sea, who at one point began to consider the possibility of cannibalism. We are told that in contemplating such a measure, they imagined that it should be done through "casting lots", and that even when they had gone through "rags, and bone, and boots, and a shell, and hard oak wood, they seem to have still had a notion it [cannibalism] was remote".[101] These sailors are described as vehemently against the murder of another human to sat their own hunger, and instead content themselves with waiting for the weakest of their crew to die. The fact that these men sought a democratic means to pick a potential victim, alongside their stolid refusal to even consider cannibalism until the very last, creates the impression in the reader's mind that these men went about their business with the good grace expected of proper civilized men.

An account of starvation cannibalism on the US plains also appeals to the reader for sympathy towards those who had found themselves in such a horrid situation. A party of travellers who were "almost in a state of starvation", found themselves in a condition that was so desperate that one of their group proposed that they "draw lots to see which one should be killed and eaten by the rest".[102] Again attention is drawn to the drawing of lots, as this offers at least a fair and rational outcome to the barbarity that is about to transpire. The author tells us that this was carried out "tremblingly and silently, and the old man's nephew was the unhappy loser in the terrible game for life". There is great reverence offered here for what is ultimately an act of cannibalism,

[101] 'A Tale Of The Sea', *The Times*, 10 September 1866, p. 10, The Times Digital Archive.
[102] 'FIRE IN SOUTHWARK.-Last Night, about 8 o'clock,' *The Times*, 29 June 1859, p. 12, The Times Digital Archive.

which can be contrasted with the account of colonial cannibalism whereby no remorse is shown towards the man-eating tendencies of the native.

While one could argue that in the previous account the men in question had little choice, and committed far less of a crime than the natives who supposedly ate whole neighboring tribes, this next article muddies this notion somewhat. This is a column dedicated to the misfortune faced by "The Flatter's Expedition" after the massacre of their leader, whereby they were forced to take refuge in a cave and began to soon starve.[103] We are informed that "these unfortunate beings had recourse to cannibalism, and ate 15 of their fellows in succession". This is a staggering number of victims to have eaten, and the fact that they did so "in succession", shows that they at no point stopped to consider the ethical problems presented by what they were doing. The deaths in this account actually far outweigh many of those in alleged instances of native cannibalism, yet the matter of fact way in which this is described, and in particular, the fact that the author sympathises with these "unfortunate beings" creates the impression that what proceeded was perfectly natural for so-called civilized men. It is at this point when it becomes apparent that the only real distinguishing factor between the account of these men and those in perhaps Bonny or Fiji is the race of the protagonists, yet for these authors this is all that mattered when casting their judgement.

One account which does not share this reluctance to admonish those who carry out survival cannibalism is entitled "Cannibalism at Sea".[104] This article celebrates the Albert Medal second class being given to David Webster for his refusal to partake in the act of cannibalism when stranded at sea, which the author believes is a "wicked tradition of our Mercantile Marine". Yet just when it seems like this may be an account which actually reprimands white-men for acts of cannibalism, the term itself goes noticeably missing. The author launches an entire diatribe against this "murder", "foul tradition", "dirty assasination" and "idiocy", but seems to refuse to call this act what it actually is: cannibalism. It is hard to believe that this is a mere coincidence, and it feels more likely that this is the coordinated efforts of an author who realises that to tar a civilized person with the brush of cannibalism is perhaps a step too far, as the implications of such an accusation are both wide ranging and severe. Here, in contrast to the opening sections of this thesis, it is the refusal to accuse someone of cannibalism, rather than the accusation, which endorses colonial power structures and world-views.

[103] 'News in Brief', *The Times*, 12 April 1881, p. 6, The Times Digital Archive.
[104] 'CANNIBALISM AT SEA.-The "Albert Medal', *The Times*, 20 July 1874, p. 10, The Times Digital Archive.

Conclusion

'The discourse of cannibalism is inextricable from discussions of imperial power'[105]
– Kelly Watson, Insatiable Appetites

As this quote, and hopefully this thesis has made clear, the discourse of cannibalism which existed in the Victorian era was defined by its utilisation as a means to diffuse an insidious imperial ideology steeped in ideas of racial hierarchies and eugenics, which primarily looked out for the interests of those creating it. Its prominence in the columns of The Times was down to a concerted effort from members of the British establishment to push an image which helped to keep public opinion on their side, the side of 'civility', rather than that of the savage. In this respect, it is worth remembering that these newspaper articles are not simply evidence of this discourse, but active participants within it. Through such papers as The Times, this discourse was spread to households throughout Britain, who would then go on to spread this throughout the entire empire. In doing so, these ideas of the 'otherness' of native peoples and the excellence of the white race, which are found in these articles within this paper, were further embedded into the collective psyche of the British public. While a system of such overt prejudice may seem more discernible today, there are still many ways in which the modern media is used to inspire hatred and bigotry. In Britain particularly, the legacy of empire means that that is all the more important to remember the systems of discourse used in the Victorian era, so that we are better able to spot the same tropes being utilised in the modern day. Hopefully this paper serves to highlight how racist discourses can be transferred through the media and become part of a collective national psyche.

The weaponisation of cannibalistic discourse as a voice for colonialism and all its inherent evils is something that has been well documented in both this paper and in much of the literature that has come before this.[106] The idea of calling someone a cannibal to dehumanise them is at its heart quite simple, and therefore to point out that the Victorians employed such a technique in their newspapers may appear to be stating the obvious. This paper, however, has offered a more in-depth examination of the different ways this was manifested in the period, using a greater amount of historical evidence, in the form of the many articles cited, than many of the theoretical works that exist. While some may have already pointed out the links between cannibalism and the projection of colonial hegemony in this period, they now have this corpus of articles to serve as a wealth of evidence for these claims. Furthermore, aside from the legitimisation of colonialism and the othering of natives, there are some more nuanced parts of the colonial cannibal discourse that are uncovered through this work. We know from these articles that there were tropes which seemingly all Victorians were aware of, such as the

[105] Kelly L. Watson, *Insatiable Appetites* ,p185
[106] See the literature section in the introduction

cannibalisation of little boys ankles, demonstrating the extent to which such ideas of indigenous peoples were imprinted on the collective psyche. As well as this, examples of the cannibals ‘speaking’ in the articles included often highlight how those who were accused of such crimes attempted to manipulate such stereotypes to their own benefit, for example inspiring a greater deal of fear in their western colonisers. Meanwhile other indigenous peoples sought to demarcate themselves from their neighbours by utilising the same accusations of man-eating, and in doing so presented themselves as the more ‘civilised’ people.

Beyond the fixation on cannibalism as a signifier of otherness, this thesis has also shown that there was a fascination amongst Victorian society with cannibalism as part of a greater fascination with human nature. This is manifested largely in the articles which detail those who become cannibals due to their circumstance changing, such as victims of famines or survivors of shipwrecks, and follows in part the theory of Frank Lestringant in seeing cannibalism as part of the human condition rather than as a cultural phenomenon.[107] The reason these stories had such great appeal to the Victorian public is that they allowed the audience to transpose themselves into the shoes of such ‘cannibals'. Outwardly this meant that these could be topics of lively household or public discussion, a hypothetical situation which invited the reader to question how they would act if such circumstances befell themselves, and compare their responses with others. But internally and perhaps more profoundly, these considerations would lead to a questioning of their own humanity, as if anyone could become a cannibal then how different were they really. This indeed is perhaps another reason for the abundance of stories on the ‘civilising’ of cannibals; people needed to believe that they could be saved in such a fate were to befell themselves. A major takeaway of this thesis is that, as often happens when any person frequently accuses another of a supposed crime, the accusations of cannibalism from Victorian society as a whole come from a point of insecurity. Therefore, the Victorian fascination with cannibalism stems from its fear of becoming a man-eater itself.

[107] Frank Lestringant, *Cannibals*.

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